

## PETER TALKS ABOUT JESUS TO CORNELIUS

All Activity Sheets

### KEY WORDS

LOVE DISCIPLE JESUS CHRIST

### BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Acts 10

### LESSON OBJECTIVE

That the children understand that God's love, shown through Jesus Christ is for everyone.

### MEMORY VERSE

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19, NIV\*).

### PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Elementary-aged children are beginning to discover that the world is bigger than their homes and their community. They still have difficulty understanding the concepts of time and space. They are learning that some places in the world are far away, and that not all people speak, act or look the same way.

Your children should understand that Jesus died for all the people of the world, and that the mission of the Church is to tell everyone about the love of Jesus.

Emphasize the teaching of Acts 10:34: "God does not show favoritism." When your children understand that God loves all people wherever they are, it will be easier for them to reach others for Christ, and tell them about his love.

### BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

Read Acts 10. Christianity spread very rapidly, and the time had come when the gospel of Christ would cross the barrier that

separated Jews from Gentiles.

In this story, there are four important aspects that we must highlight:

1. The first Jewish Christians were reluctant to take the gospel to the Gentiles.
2. God himself incorporated the Gentiles into the Church of Christ, and in doing so showed his approval.
3. God did not use Paul, but Peter, to open the door of the kingdom of God to the Gentiles.
4. The acceptance of the Gentiles into the Church in Jerusalem, even though they had no connection with Judaism, was a sign that God himself had adopted them as part of his family.

In this passage, we find two different visions: that of Cornelius in Caesarea and that of Peter in Joppa. In both cases, God worked separately with each of them in preparation for the meeting they had.

Cornelius lived in Caesarea, the main port of Palestine. Being a centurion of the Roman army, he had under his command 100 soldiers. He was gentle. He did not belong to the Christian church or the synagogue of the Jews. However, he was faithful in his worship of God. Cornelius received his vision at 3:00 in the afternoon when an angel of the Lord approached him while praying.

The next day, Peter had a vision that questioned his belief in strict Jewish laws regarding pure and unclean foods. While meditating on the meaning of the vision, the messenger of Cornelius arrived from Caesarea. No one could have imagined that Peter would receive Gentiles as guests. The fact that he received them indicates that the vision produced a significant change in his life.

Another evidence of the change was that he entered the house of Cornelius when he arrived in Caesarea. And his reaction when Cornelius prostrated himself before him showed that he did not consider himself superior to him because he was a Jew and Cornelius was a Gentile.

Cornelius invited his family and friends to listen to Peter's important message, and they received him with joy in their hearts. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles stunned the Jews who were present. Peter understood that God accepted Gentiles, as well as the Jews, in his kingdom, and baptized them in the name of the Lord Jesus.

## INTRODUCE THE LESSON

### Mysterious characters

Write on a card the names PETER and CORNELIUS, and cut out each letter. Keep them in a bag, and ask your children to draw out the letters and try to put together the names of the two characters. If you wish, make two sets of letters. Divide into two groups and tell them that the group that forms the names in the shortest time will be the winner.

## TEACH THE LESSON

### Peter talks about Jesus to Cornelius

One day Cornelius was in his house. Suddenly, he saw an angel of God enter where he was and said, "Cornelius!"

Cornelius was amazed, and looking at the angel, asked him, "What do you want, Lord?"

The angel replied, "God has heard your prayers and knows everything you have done to help those in need. Send some men to Joppa to bring Peter. You will find him in a house near the sea."

Cornelius was a centurion, that is, a Roman soldier who was in charge of many men. So he called two of his servants and a soldier and communicated the angel's message to them. They knew that Cornelius was a good man, so they immediately obeyed and left for Joppa to look for Peter.

The next day in Joppa, Peter went to the roof of his house to pray. While there, he had a vision. He saw a large cloth that descended from the sky, hanging from the four corners. In it were all kinds of animals, including reptiles and birds.

Then, a voice said to him, "Get up, Peter, kill and eat."

When Peter looked at what was in the cloth, he saw that all the animals it contained were those that the Jews did not eat.

"No, sir, by no means! I have never eaten anything impure or prohibited," Peter answered firmly.

"Do not call impure what God has cleansed," the voice answered.

This happened three times. Then, the cloth rose again to heaven.

Peter was still on the roof when the men sent by Cornelius arrived at his house.

“Does a man named Peter stay here?” they asked.

While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Peter, three men are looking for you. Get up and do not be afraid to go with them because I have sent them.”

Peter obeyed and came down from the roof. The men who waited for him were Gentiles. The Jews thought that Gentiles were impure people and did not want to be with them. They never invited Gentiles to their homes, but Peter remembered the words of the vision: “Do not call impure what God has cleansed.”

Then Peter invited them to rest at his house that night. The next day he chose some friends to accompany him, and they left for Cornelius’ house in the city of Caesarea.

When they arrived the next day, Cornelius was waiting for them with a group of relatives and friends he had invited.

Peter told them, “You know that according to our law, we Jews must not visit Gentiles, but God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure. That is why I came when you called for me. Could you tell me why they came for me?”

Cornelius replied, “Four days ago I was praying at my house, about 3:00 in the afternoon. Suddenly, I saw before me a man in shining clothes who said to me, ‘Cornelius, God has heard your prayers and has seen your alms for the poor. Send men to Joppa to bring Peter. He is in a house near the sea.’ So I sent for you, and you have done well to come. Now we are here in the presence of God to hear all that God has commanded you.”

Then Peter said to them: “Now I understand that in truth God does not favor certain people, but accepts people of all nations who fear him and do what is right.” Then, he spoke to them about Jesus and his love for all people.

Cornelius and his friends began to praise God. While they were doing that, the Holy Spirit descended on all those who had heard the message.

The Jews who had gone with Peter were surprised to see that the Gentiles were also receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Then, Peter said to them, “They have received the Holy Spirit just as we received it.” Then he told them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Cornelius was happy to know about Jesus, so he invited Peter to stay at his house for a few more days.

## CONNECT THE LESSON

### God loves Peter and Cornelius

Pass out Student Activity Sheet #181-A and #181-B. Discuss the differences and similarities between Peter and Cornelius in Student Activity Sheet #181-A. Ask the children to draw a line by joining the point of each sentence with the character it describes. Some phrases refer to Cornelius, some to Peter and others to both.

### God loves all people

Turn to Student Activity Sheet #181-B, and explain to your children that in the first frame they must draw themselves; in the second, someone they love; and in the last one, a person whom they do not know very well.

Another option is that in the first frame, glue a piece of aluminum foil to simulate a mirror; in the second frame, they can draw their family; and in the third one, they can paste clippings from magazines that show other people. As they work, talk about God’s great love for humanity and the responsibility we have to tell others the message of salvation, just as Peter did in Cornelius’ house.

## PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Place the cards you made for the previous session on the table. After repeating the verse a couple of times as a group, ask a volunteer to order the words in 10 seconds. Then call another, and so on until everyone participates.

## **WRAP-UP**

### **Pray**

Pray with your group to be witnesses of Christ wherever they are.

### **Encourage**

Praise God and give thanks for loving all of us equally.

### **Invite**

Challenge the children to invite their friends and family to church. Tell them something interesting about the next session.