

# ACTS

## Chapter 10

### Note from Kathy

*This may be one of my favorite chapters in the Bible. Our pastor was preaching on Cornelius the night I gave my heart to Jesus. Cornelius wanted to know God and to live pleasing to him. God revealed himself to Cornelius and he revealed himself to me. My life has never been the same. I am so thankful for the faithfulness and the patience of my God.*



### Observation

#### ▣ Acts 10:1-4

*“At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. <sup>2</sup> He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. <sup>3</sup> One day at about about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, ‘Cornelius!’ <sup>4</sup> Cornelius stared at him in fear. ‘What is it, Lord?’ he asked. The angel answered, ‘Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God.’”*

1. The chapter begins by introducing us to a Gentile man named Cornelius. What was his occupation?  
  
Do a bit of research to find out what that means. Some Bibles have commentary on the verse, or you could Google search his occupation.
2. What else did you learn about this man from Acts 10:2?
3. The scripture tells us Cornelius had a vision. He saw a messenger from God. How did Cornelius respond to this unusual appearance?
4. The angel spoke to Cornelius. His message was one of commendation. What had this Roman soldier done that had brought pleasure to God?

**Acts 10:5-8**

*“Now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter. <sup>6</sup> He is staying with Simon the tanner, whose house is by the sea. <sup>7</sup> When the angel who spoke to him had gone, Cornelius called two of his servants and a devout soldier who was one of his attendants. <sup>8</sup> He told them everything that had happened and sent them to Joppa.”*

**Acts 10:17-20**

*“While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, the men sent by Cornelius found out where Simon’s house was and stopped at the gate. <sup>18</sup> They called out, asking if Simon who was known as Peter was staying there. <sup>19</sup> While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, ‘Simon, three men are looking for you. <sup>20</sup> So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them.’”*

**Acts 10:23**

*“Then Peter invited the men into the house to be his guests.”*

5. God is about to spread the gospel to the city of Caesarea. Notice how God directed the events to get Peter there to share the good news. Write out the details from verses 5-8.
6. God is determined to accomplish His purposes here on earth in union with the prayers of His people. Peter is a man of prayer. According to verse 9, what time of day was it when Peter was praying?
7. Scripture tells us Peter was hungry. While he was waiting for a meal to be prepared, he chose to be alone and talk to God. What happened while he was praying?

What did Peter see and hear?

8. How many times did Peter see this vision? What does that say about these instructions?
9. While Peter was pondering the vision he had just seen, who arrived at the gate of Simon the tanner’s home?
10. God’s timing is always perfect. Had the men arrived that morning do you believe this story might have turned out differently?  
Why was this vision necessary?  
According to Acts 10:23, what was the custom of that day?
11. After he arrived at Cornelius’ home, Peter asked the reason he had sent for him. Who was present that day, and why had they come?
12. Briefly state what Peter shared with those present that day.

9 Acts 10:44-45

*“While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message.<sup>45</sup> The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles.”*

13. While Peter preached, what significant event took place in verses 44-45 that was proof that God loves and desires a relationship with the Jews and Greeks alike?
14. What was the next step of faith for new believers?

---

## Application

1. Peter had been raised to adhere carefully to all the customs of Jewish law. God had established these laws as a protection for his people as he was forming and establishing the nation of Israel back in the day of the patriarchs, judges and kings. Now, God is doing a new thing in Israel, and he wants Peter, as well as all believers, to open their hearts and share the gospel with all men. Ridding ourselves of old thinking and biases may not be easy, but when God gives a command, is it up for debate?

When God reveals his will to us, what is the only proper response?

The notes in the Life Application Bible on this verse ask the question, “Are you trying to argue with God over some point that he has already made clear?”

Let me ask you one more time, when God speaks how should we respond?

2. Do you recall a time when you were in the same situation as Cornelius? You wanted to be pleasing to God, you even cared for others, but you had not experienced forgiveness for your sins. We each come to God in a different way and different time. What events do you recall that you now recognize as your heavenly Father wooing you?
3. Cornelius did what was necessary so that he and those he cared about could hear the truth. What are some things we can do today to help our friends and loved ones come to know the Lord, so they too can enjoy a relationship with Him?
4. Originally, the children of Israel were to separate themselves from other nations. God was growing his people, and he wanted them to be different. He wanted them to learn to walk in obedience to him so that they could be an example, a light that pointed the way to God. In the gospels and in the book of Acts, we see God is fulfilling the

promise he gave to Abraham in Genesis 12:3, "...all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." In what way was God using these Jewish followers to bless other nations?

What part are you playing in sharing the blessing of knowing Him?

5. Have you ever wondered if God was listening to your prayers? The story we read in this chapter should serve to build our faith. God is not only hearing prayers but is coordinating the events of each day to answer them when they align with his purposes. Cornelius and Peter were in separate cities talking to God, and yet, God orchestrated the details in an amazing way. What are you asking God for right now?

Do you believe God is busy on your behalf?

6. I love word pictures. They help me visualize the underlying truth. The Lord painted a vivid word picture for Peter while he was up on the roof that day. What was the truth the Lord wanted Peter to see?

What truth is God teaching you that will help you know him better?

7. God's timing is always perfect. He is never early or late. Does this give you comfort?

Why?

There were many barriers to Cornelius ever hearing the gospel: he was not Jewish; he was a Roman soldier, and he lived in a different city. You may be praying today for a loved one to be saved, and you may feel there are too many barriers for that to happen. Has this story shown you the great lengths God will go in order to bring salvation?

8. It is well over 20 miles from Caesarea to Joppa. Peter graciously invited the men in and shared lunch with them and allowed them to rest before heading back to Caesarea. Are you prone to hospitality?

Are you sensitive to the needs others might be experiencing?

Are you quick to meet those needs to the best of your ability?

What have you done lately that met a need for someone else?

9. Cornelius not only wanted to hear from the man of God, he wanted those he loved to hear as well. The text tells us he invited a large gathering of people to hear Peter. Is your home a place that is open for God to use?

There was a time when I thought everything needed to be perfect before I would be ready to entertain. It did not take long for me to realize things will never be perfect. There will always be walls that need new paint or doorknobs that need tightening or furniture that needs reupholstering and laundry that needs folding. I want to serve him today. How are you using what God has graciously provided to share the love of Christ with others?

Of course, our home is not the only provision we can use to share the love of Christ. What other possessions do you have that you could use for kingdom work?

**P Genesis 1:3, 9, 12, 18, 21,31**

*<sup>3</sup>And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light...<sup>9</sup>And God said, 'Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.' And it was so...<sup>12</sup>The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good...<sup>18</sup>...to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good...<sup>21</sup>So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to its kinds...<sup>31</sup>God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day."*

10. We are never too old or too wise to learn something new about our heavenly Father. Peter realized that God is no respecter of persons. God does not have favorites. All of creation is important to him. Read Genesis 1:3,9,12,18,21 and 31. What does God say about his creation? When my children were young they would say, "I know I'm your favorite mom." To that I would smile and reply, "You are my favorite (insert the proper birth placement, first-born, second-born, third-born or fourth-born) child." What their young minds could not understand is a mother's heart is big enough to love all children the same, unconditionally. What do you think of God's creation? Take a minute to ponder what God's thoughts are about you. When you look around are you overwhelmed by the diversity of his creation? Have you, like Peter, thought God has favorites?
11. Peter took some time sharing the good news with the people gathered at Cornelius' home that day. And because he shared, the scripture tells us they believed and were filled with God's Spirit. When was the last time you spared a few minutes to simply share the good news with someone?

We might picture it this way. Say you were given \$1,000,000, and if you gave it away, everyone would get \$1,000,000, and yet, even though you gave it away you would still have all you started with. This really does not even compare with sharing the gospel. We have been given forgiveness of sin, restoration and relationship with God our Father. He has lavished on us his mercy and his grace, and when we share it we have no less and yet, their destiny is forever changed. Find someone to purposefully share the gospel with today. Remember, the gospel is simply the good news of Jesus Christ. Step out by faith and share something about Jesus with someone else today. Share this experience in your small group.