

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 2ND-3RD, 2026 //BOOK OF ACTS

VISIONS (ACTS 10:1-16)

A LOGICAL TARGET

In the Bible, God often targets influential people for practical reasons. Cornelius was a centurion who led a 300- to 600-man Italian cohort.

- Though Cornelius was an officer, he “was a devout man and feared God along with his whole household,” and he was known for charitable work.

CORNELIUS WAS ALSO A MAN OF PRAYER

One day at 3:00 pm, while praying, “he distinctly saw in a vision an angel of God.” The angel told him that his “prayers and...acts of charity have ascended as a memorial offering before God.”

- Prayers of righteous people who live out their faith are effective (James 5:16).

PREPARED TO LEARN THE TRUTH

Cornelius was a good person who sought out truth. Though he hadn't learned of Jesus yet, his understanding of honor, his desire to be righteous (good), and his longing for truth would lead him to salvation.

- We keep going back to this question: “Are we inquisitive people?”

RESPONDING WITH OBEDIENCE

This influential man was also humble, understood authority, and knew to respond. The angel told Cornelius to send men to Joppa and find Peter, and he did so immediately.

- Knowledge, direction, and even prayer are pointless without action. If we seek, listen, and obey, we will see God work.

A VEGETARIAN'S NIGHTMARE

The next day, Peter had a vision while praying on the roof. When he became hungry, he went into a “trance” and saw a “large sheet coming down” with all kinds of animals on it. He then heard a voice say, “Get up, Peter, kill and eat.”

- Peter responded, “I have never eaten anything impure and ritually unclean” (Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 4).

IT WASN'T REALLY ABOUT FOOD

The command to change the Levitical dietary restrictions wasn't about food but about the expansion of salvation to Gentiles. This was setting up the encounter with Cornelius.

- How can we reach people with truth if we cannot even share a meal together? God wants us to connect with lost people.

GOD-FEARING (ACTS 10:17-33)

LEADING STEP-BY-STEP

Peter was “perplexed” by the vision, but “right away the men who had been sent by Cornelius...stood at the gate.” Simultaneously, “the Spirit told” Peter that three people had just arrived.

- In times of confusion, we must pray, listen, and be patient. Eventually, Jesus will show us our next steps.

TAKING THE NEXT STEPS

Peter got some men from Joppa to travel with him to meet Cornelius. Cornelius was a “God-fearing” man, but he was still ignorant of the gospel. This is why he “fell at [Peter's] feet and worshiped him” when he arrived.

- Peter quickly diverted praise from himself and acknowledged he was “also a man.”

PEOPLE ARE THE MISSION

There was a large gathering of people at Cornelius's house. Peter told them that Jewish tradition forbid him from associating with “foreigner[s],” but “God has shown me that I must not call any person impure or unclean.”

- The church's goal shouldn't be tradition or recognition but the souls of people.

THIS ISN'T CONDONING NON-CHRISTIAN LIFESTYLES

To “not call any person impure” doesn't mean that everyone is right with God. This simply means that everyone is welcome to approach Jesus and accept the gift of salvation.

- We must never let go or compromise the love of all people and the love for truth and holiness.

“SO MAY I ASK WHY YOU SENT FOR ME?”

Peter was obedient, even though he was still unsure where God was leading him. He finds out that all of this took place so Cornelius could hear the gospel and it could more rapidly spread to the Gentile world.

- If we're obedient with small steps, God will lead us to bigger things (Luke 16:10).

CONVERSION (ACTS 10:34-48)

“GOD DOESN'T SHOW FAVORITISM”

Peter, once an impulsive, brash disciple and now the leader of the church, would sweep away centuries of religious and racial prejudice.

- He proclaimed that “in every nation the person who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him.” Simply, anyone who wants to know Jesus is invited to.

THE GOOD NEWS

Like Peter, we should be able to concisely share what Jesus has done and how he desires to “[heal] all who [are] under the tyranny of the devil.”

- The ways of the world do not liberate but actually enslave. Jesus has come to set us free and offer us a better road.

“WE ARE WITNESSES”

Peter told Cornelius and his family that he not only witnessed the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus but also salvation and change through a relationship with Him.

- We are also called to be witnesses. It is by the cross and our testimony that we and others find salvation and change.

FORGIVENESS AND JUDGMENT

Peter told them that “everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins” and that Jesus is “the judge of the living and the dead.”

- In this life, we are offered forgiveness, salvation, and guidance if we accept it. If we deny it, we then have to face Jesus as a judge, not the Savior.

“WHILE PETER WAS STILL SPEAKING...”

As Peter was sharing the gospel, the Gentile listeners were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in tongues. The Jews in the room were amazed that the Spirit had filled the Gentiles and that they had physical proof.

- After this, they continued in obedience through water baptism (2:38).

SUBMISSION TO THE SPIRIT OF GOD

This chapter is full of people—even people of great influence—who are humble and willing to submit to higher authority. Later, in 1 Pt. 5:5, Peter tells us to “clothe [ourselves] with humility” because God “resists the proud.”

- Jesus will only work with people who are humble and submit to His authority.

LIVING OUT OUR BELIEFS

- Cornelius desired to know the truth and to live out what was right to the best of his knowledge. Like Cornelius, Peter positioned himself to hear God, and both men responded, even when the entire plan wasn't clear.
- We must act on what we believe because faith without works is dead (James 2).

TAKING STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

- Acting on what little light we may have will lead us to more light.
- Though we may not have or know much now, if we will be faithful in and grateful for the small things (Zechariah 4:10), God will give us more. Maybe we haven't been given more because we haven't stewarded well.

ANYONE WILLING TO SUBMIT

- If we will be humble, understand authority, and submit to Jesus, the Bible, and the people He has put in our lives to lead us, God will save, forgive, restore, empower, and even trust us with authority to advance His Kingdom and bless others, and He will bless us as well.

TAKING AN INVENTORY

- Do we desire truth and righteousness?
- Do we know the principles of God's Word, and do we practically live them out?
- Are we grateful and faithful with the small things? If not, why would we get more?
- Are we fully submitted to Jesus and His Word? What if it contradicts our desires?