



Harvest Growing Deeper

A Disciplemaking Tool of Harvest Evangelical Free Church
(for personal and/or small group study)

Week of Aug 2, 2020

Acts 10:1-48

Q: This story reminds us that God can use dreams/visions to point seekers to Jesus, but His main way, according to Scripture, is to share the gospel is through *other believers* (like Peter, and you and me). The Holy Spirit goes before us, preparing our hearts and the hearts of others as well. How does this give you Holy Spirit-confidence to share the gospel with others?

Q: Considering the cultural and ethnic makeup of our community, what unnecessary barriers may still exist in our church that might prevent some from feeling welcome? What are some things we can do to help break down (non-Biblical) barriers (or even cultural/traditional American church barriers), so we can keep the focus on Jesus? (i.e. invite them over, learn their story, etc.)

Q: Think of the people in your life (or those far away) that, to be honest, you wish would just go away. How might you respond if God clearly called you to share Christ with them?

Q: What crucial lesson was God teaching Peter and the disciples? (see vv.43-48)

Q: What does this passage tell us about God's heart for all people, about our own sinfulness, and about God's going before us to prepare hearts to receive Christ? Who are you praying for to receive Christ? Be ready for God to use you!

Lord, break down all prejudice in my heart, change me, fill me with Your Spirit, give me boldness to witness for You, knowing You are preparing hearts to draw others to a saving relationship with You Jesus, in Your name we pray, Amen!

In Acts 9, we saw the complete transformation of Saul (Paul) when he encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus. God can truly save anyone! Keep praying! Someone prayed for you to be saved too! The disciples at first were very skeptical but God used key people like Ananias and Barnabas to speak on Saul's behalf that indeed, Jesus had transformed him by His grace. Thus began the new journey for the man who would become known as the Apostle Paul. With persecution subsided for the moment, the church experienced peace and multiplied in the power of the Holy Spirit. Peter, empowered by the Spirit, healed a bedridden man and raised a dead gal back to life. God used miracles to point to His saving grace! God will also continue to work on Peter's heart, as we will see in chapter 10.

Q: Since placing your faith in Christ, how has God worked to change your attitudes about other people, especially those very different from you? How does your perspective reflect that of Jesus?

Q: (Read Acts 9:32-43) Describe what *the Lord* did through Peter as well as the impact this had on the people nearby.

Q: (10:1-2) What do we learn about Cornelius, his character and reputation?

Q: (vv.3-8) At about 3pm (the 9th hour after sunrise—6am), describe what Cornelius experiences and what he is told to do next?

Q: How can others see that you are a “God-fearing” person? _____

Q: (vv.9-16) What was the immediate lesson of Peter’s vision? (see Leviticus 11 for Jewish food laws against eating unclean animals). What is verse 15 key?

Q: (vv.17-29) When the messengers from Cornelius arrive, what further application of the vision (and v.15) becomes apparent to Peter? (see 10:28)

Q: (vv.24-26) When Peter arrives at Cornelius’ home, what did Cornelius do and how did Peter respond?

Q: Peter was raised Jewish and had certain beliefs about non-Jews (see 10:28). Cornelius was a Roman Soldier (seen as an “occupying force” to Jews in that day). From an outside perspective, this could have seemed to be a very awkward meeting. But what was God orchestrating here behind the scenes?

Q: What prejudices might you still hold onto that hinder your reaching out to people who are different than you? How can we learn to see all people as God does (even those with whom we disagree)? (Ask God to reveal any buried prejudices and ask Him to change you!)

Q: God was showing Peter through the vision and the encounter with Cornelius, that God’s grace through Jesus is available to all people (10:43). Jesus is not just the Jewish Messiah, but Messiah for all people who receive Him by faith. What can you do this week to help others know that God’s grace, mercy, forgiveness and new life through Jesus is available to everyone who receives Christ by faith?

Q: Can people who have never heard the gospel of Jesus be saved? Did Cornelius’ good works earn his salvation (vv.34-35)? Look at the context of the whole story (10:22, 33, 43-48). How does this account illustrate the importance of responding to God’s Word and that all people still need to choose Christ? (see 10:44 & 11:13-14) _____

**note the Holy Spirit immediately came upon all who believed—no apostle laid hands on them to receive the Holy Spirit (as at Pentecost or with the Samaritans). Today, the Holy Spirit comes to reside in us in this same way, immediately upon receiving Christ.*

Q: God spoke to both Peter and Cornelius through visions. (Read Jer 29:12; Mt 7:7). Jesus says “if you seek me, you’ll find me.” How might God be using visions and dreams to reach lost people today who are seeking, yet don’t have God’s Word or someone to share with them?
