
Part III: Peter and Reaching Out to Gentiles (Acts 10-12)

Application Guide: Acts 10

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. What is the most interesting vision you have ever heard of someone receiving?

- b. If God were to give you a vision, on what subject do you think it would be?

- c. Why do you think racial tensions exist? What can you do understand people who are not like you?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Background: You have probably noticed that in these application guides there is a lot of talk about the Holy Spirit and the things He does, like giving people power to speak new languages, perform many kinds of miracles, preach incredible sermons, have a giving spirit, be in you and shine out of your face, and simply help you to experience the supernatural in many ways. All this is in these application guides because it is one of the main themes in the book of Acts! And now here, in Acts 10, both Cornelius and Peter are given visions by the Holy Spirit. Now that's up close and personal—it's in your mind!

How would you know if a dream (at night) or a vision (like a dream, but in daytime while you're awake) is just a regular dream/daydream or if it's from God?

More background: The topic of Peter's vision seemed to be about clean and unclean meats, but it was really about ceasing to treat people like they are unclean. The ancient Jews were some of the most extreme racists in history. Even people who were half Jewish, like the Samaritans, were considered to be worthless dogs! So here, Peter is being told in a vision from God to stop being so prejudiced. Does it seem weird that a man of God—a church leader—could be a racist?

Now we have seen that Saul had a good heart, but he misunderstood God's true mission by persecuting Christians instead of promoting Christ's teachings. Peter had a good heart, but he misunderstood God's mission as well. But the Holy Spirit spoke to them both to help them get their minds in tune with their hearts, and then they became leaders in God's unstoppable cause to take the Gospel to the entire world.

Have you ever seen someone act like a racist but claim to be Christian? How should you respond to that?

Do you think you are racist in any ways? Why?

How should you treat someone who likes different kinds of music, clothes, food, etc., than you?

How do you think churches should respond to different styles of music, clothes or food (at potluck) in church?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. In a journal or with a close friend, confess ways that you have been prejudiced in your life and in your dealings with others. Ask God to impress you with ideas for how you can be more loving to people who are different than you.
- b. Read Psalm 51 and ask God to create a new heart in you. Think of three new things you want in your heart and pray for these things morning, noon and night for the next week.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in your life.
- b. Ask God to help you to be more aware of the miracles He is performing around you.
- c. Ask God to perform a miracle of healing in your life for an issue that has been troubling you in your heart/mind/body.