



WHO...Investigate the Characters

WHERE...Investigate the location

WHEN...Investigate the time

# Investigate the Facts of the Lesson

**Investigating the facts of Scripture confirms the truth in our hearts.**

1. Describe in detail the two visions from this story (Acts 10:3-6; 10:9-16).

How do you imagine each of the following responded to these revelations from God?

- Cornelius
- Cornelius' Servants
- Simon Peter
- Jewish Believers
- Cornelius' household in Joppa

Cornelius, a resident of Caesarea, responds to the vision by sending three messengers to contact Simon Peter, a visitor in Joppa. Simon Peter, in response to a vision of his own, then accepts Cornelius' invitation and travels with other Jewish believers back to Caesarea.

Scripturally, divine visions were a common means of communication between God and man (Jacob, Joseph, Daniel, Mary, Zechariah, Joseph, Paul, and John, for instance).

2. Do you think God continues to reveal Himself and His will through visions?

Ask LifeGroup members to share from their own lives or the lives of others.

3. Jesus said, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved, but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned" (Mark 16:15-16). Review the following verses from the story and try to find at least one happening or statement that shows that Christ's command in Mark 16:15-16 was being fulfilled: Acts 10:4; 10:15; 10:16; 10:20; 10:28; 10:34-35; 10:45; 10:47-48.

Guide your LifeGroup to consider how God works through many different means in order to accomplish His will that people come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

WHY...Find the intent

WHAT...Find the meaning

WHEREAS...Find the Significance

# Find the purpose of the lesson

**God always works with a purpose.**

1. Describe what you believe to be the primary intent of God for the people of this world. What are the implications of God's purpose for your life as a witness to His Son?

God is impartial. His salvation is available to Jews and Gentiles, and He desires for all to be saved. We are called to join so God's purpose can be fulfilled.

2. Discuss the characteristics of Peter and Cornelius that allowed them to fulfill the purposes of God. Why is it important to God to select such men and women in fulfilling His purposes?

In order to accomplish His purposes, God chose two uniquely qualified men. While Cornelius and Simon Peter were from very different backgrounds, they also possessed much in common. Simon Peter was an uneducated fisherman who became a God-fearing leader and man of prayer. Cornelius was a soldier and centurion who was devout, generous, just, and reputable. He was also a God-fearing man of prayer.

3. "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message...because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also" (Acts 10:44,45 NASB). What was the role of the Holy Spirit in your salvation?

The Holy Spirit works in many ways to bring us to salvation: for the conviction of sin, the need to be made righteous, the promise of a coming day of judgment for the saved and unsaved alike, a knowledge of the truth, a peace that surpasses all understanding, the joy of His salvation, and the full confidence in the promises of God.

4. Once again, baptism is revealed as a significant event in the lives of those who have received the Holy Spirit and have been saved (Acts 10:47). Clearly the phrase, “just as we did” speaks of the importance of giving witness to one’s faith in Jesus Christ. How is baptism a witness to the new believer, the church, and even to those whom have yet to believe? How did this act fulfill the purposes of God in the first century and how does it continue to fulfill His purposes today?

Baptism is a powerful symbol to witness to our family, church, and community of our spiritual death, burial, and resurrection through Jesus Christ. In the first century and in many parts of the world today, this bold step of obedience is an act of courageous faith, because the unbelieving community views baptism as an ultimate step in rejecting false religion and following Christ. Ask your LifeGroup to share how their own baptism or even how the experience of witnessing the baptism of others has encouraged them in their walk with Christ.

Experience the knowledge

Experience the change

Experience the joy

## Experience the Truth of the Lesson

**Experiencing the truth of God’s Word equips church members to be the church.**

1. How do the following verses further affirm the truths presented in Acts 10:34-35?

- “God is not one to show partiality” (Romans 2:11, Galatians 2:6)
- God is at work “in every nation” (Matthew 28:19)
- “The man who fears Him” (Proverbs 1:7)
- “(The man who) does what is right” (Romans 1:16,17)
- “(The man who) is welcome to Him” (Matthew 3:16,17 Romans 8:16)

2. Understanding the truth of this LifeLesson, why is prejudice so difficult to overcome?

What is the source of prejudice in the world today? How does God view such prejudice? How does it impact the role of the church in the completion of Christ’s kingdom?

Prior to the mid 1960’s, prejudice was a way of life for many Americans. Fifty years later, many in the global community continue to hold prejudicial views against people of other races, cultures, religions, and socio-economic backgrounds. Could pride or ignorance be the root of prejudice? Discuss how Christians must put aside all prejudice in order to reach all people groups with the gospel, including those of other backgrounds across the globe and in our own communities.

3. Throughout human history, God has worked to reveal truth in a consistent way. God used prayer, divine revelation, a witness, the Gospel truth, and the Holy Spirit to bring Cornelius and the Gentiles in Caesarea to faith in Christ. Though their lives were so different from our lives today, how can you personally relate to their conversion experiences? How is God’s manner of reaching Cornelius and the Gentiles similar to how He reached you?

**Be prepared to share your own conversion story.**

**Encourage your LifeGroup to invest time in reflecting, praying, and going, always remembering that going is important to God.**

# Truth Points

Caesarea (v. 1) – An important seaport city along the northeastern shore of Israel which commanded both political and military prominence.

Centurion (v. 1) – A Roman military officer in command of 100 men.

The Italian Regiment (v. 1) – Cornelius' command of the Italian Regiment indicates his military prominence.

Joppa (v. 5) –an ancient seaport located along the central coast of Israel, some 30 miles south of Caesarea.

Tanner (v. 6) –a common first-century occupation of tanning or curing the hides of animals.