

# Acts 10:1-48

## September 21, 2025



### CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?

What Scripture has been shaping you recently?

Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?

What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?

What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?

What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?

What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

### MAIN POINT

The gospel is for everyone.

### INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.*

**What are some misconceptions or prejudices about certain people or groups that exist in the church today?**

**Who are some groups of people you might prefer to avoid?**

During Jesus's earthly ministry, Jewish and Gentile cultures stood apart. Following their return from exile, religious legalism emerged among the Jews. By the time Jesus arrived, that legalism had created a culture that, in many ways, missed the mark of what God intended through His law. We see this through Jesus's teachings, clashes with the religious leaders, and parables like the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37. Devout Jews didn't associate with Gentiles.



Despite tensions between the Jews and Gentiles, Jesus was clear in His commands for the early church: the gospel was for everyone. This radical truth didn't make racial tensions go away, though. This was a very real challenge the early church had to work through, but this passage makes God's intent for the gospel even more clear. The gospel is for everyone.

## **UNDERSTANDING**

*Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.*

 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ ACTS 10:1-8.

**How does the passage describe Cornelius? What was His connection to God and to the Jewish people?**

**How did Cornelius display obedience before God upon hearing His message?**

Cornelius wasn't just any Gentile. He was a Roman soldier. This was two strikes against him from a Jewish perspective, but God would use Cornelius and his faith to teach Peter and the church that the gospel is for all nations.

Cornelius was devout and feared God. How wonderful and humbling this message from the angel must have been! God heard his prayers and saw the charitable acts he performed. God told Cornelius where to find the apostle Simon Peter and directed him to send men to him. A divine plan was unfolding.

 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ ACTS 10:9-33.

**What stands out from Peter's vision and his reaction to it?**

**How was this vision and the direction Peter received from the Holy Spirit particularly meaningful?**

**What are some ways we might let our tradition or comfort get in the way of what God is calling us to do today?**

God was working on Peter's heart and tearing down the cultural walls between the Jews and Gentiles. Jesus made no distinction between them in His church. God used the Israelite people to bless all the nations through Jesus (Genesis 22:18), and now, the gift of salvation through Jesus was open to everyone. Gentiles were as much a part of God's family as Jews were. This was a truly radical change in worldview and would have been hard for Peter to understand and accept (this lesson took Peter more than this one encounter to learn, as we will see later in the book of Acts). In His kindness, God made the message and next steps very clear!



Only God could align timing this perfectly. As Peter was wondering what his vision meant, Cornelius's men arrived, and, following the Holy Spirit's guidance, Peter went with them. While waiting on Peter's arrival, Cornelius had invited all his family and friends to his home. He knew God had something good in mind for this meeting, and he wanted all his loved ones to be present also.

 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ ACTS 10:34-48.

**How did Peter display faith in God's message as He spoke to Cornelius and those with Him?**

**What was the result of this divine meeting and why was it so important for the early church?**

**Where do you need to embrace God's will over your own tradition and preference now?**

Believing God's words, Peter lived out the command of the Great Commission here, delivering the good news to the Gentiles who had assembled. The work of the Holy Spirit is woven powerfully through this passage. Peter further understood the church that Jesus is building. It is open for everyone to believe and be saved.

Look how open and eager the Gentiles were to receive the good news. While Peter was speaking, they believed, and the Holy Spirit came down upon them, stunning the Jews that were present. God's plan for the good news to be for all nations was unfolding clearly and beautifully. God was bringing followers of Jesus from all different backgrounds. Having believed and received the Holy Spirit, Peter commanded the new believers to be baptized.

## **APPLICATION**

*Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.*

**What can we learn about the gospel and sharing it in today's passage?**

**What does this story teach us about preconceived notions and how God might use us despite those?**

**In this passage, Luke recorded that Cornelius did many acts of charity, and they "ascended as a memorial offering before God" (v.4). What are some ways we could serve God's people in our community? How might this give opportunity for gospel conversations?**



Many of us know or encounter people who we assume want nothing to do with the gospel message because of their situation, life choices, or backgrounds, but God is bigger than any preconceived notions we have and can (and often does) divinely intervene in surprising ways. When we're obedient to the nudges of the Holy Spirit (even when He is leading us places we think don't make sense), we get to be a part of His work and plan unfolding in surprising ways.

## **PRAYER**

*Close your time together by sharing prayer requests, praying for each other, and the group.*

Thank God for building His church from people of every background and context. Ask for His help as you consider how you can share the gospel in the community where God has placed you. Ask Him to show you any preconceived notions you may have about people in your life and how to move forward with sharing your faith with those people.

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

*Encourage your group to look ahead as we continue the series on Acts next week.*

**September 28, 2025 --- Acts 11:1-30**

## **COMMENTARY**

**Acts 10:1-48**

**1. The Vision of Cornelius (10:1–8).** Cornelius is identified as a Roman soldier, residing at Caesarea, and a particularly pious “God-fearer.” God-fearers were gentiles who devoutly believed in God and attended the synagogue but who had not become full converts (“proselytes”) to Judaism. Cornelius had a vision of an angel who directed him to send to Joppa for Peter.

**2. The Vision of Peter (10:9–16).** Peter’s vision was more graphic—of a sheet descending to earth filled with all sorts of animals, both clean and unclean. Three times he was instructed to “kill and eat” of these animals. To do so was to break the Jewish food laws. It went against everything Peter had been taught from his childhood. How could a heavenly voice direct him to break the food laws?

**3. Peter’s Visit to Cornelius (10:17–23).** Peter’s vision coincided with the arrival of the messengers from Cornelius. Directions from the Spirit to accompany them served to convince Peter that God had something special in store at Cornelius’s house. Next day Peter went with the messengers on the thirty-mile journey to Caesarea.



**4. Shared Visions (10:24–33).** When Peter arrived at Cornelius’s house, both he and the centurion shared their visions with one another in some detail. The narrative is quite repetitious, but this serves to underline the importance of the events.

**5. Peter’s Witness (10:34–43).** Convinced by his vision that God considered no one “impure or unclean” Peter now proceeded to share the gospel with Cornelius and his fellow gentiles. It is Peter’s third and final major sermon in Acts. The sermon basically was a summary of Jesus’ ministry, emphasizing the significance of His death and resurrection. What was really striking about it was Peter’s opening statement which recognized that God accepts people of all races and nations.

**6. The Impartiality of the Spirit (10:44–48).** Peter didn’t finish his sermon. The Spirit descended on the gathering of gentiles, who outwardly demonstrated the Spirit’s presence by their ecstatic speech. Recognizing their possession of the Spirit, Peter arranged for their baptism. Now he fully understood his vision. He had no trouble accepting the hospitality of his gentile brothers and sisters in Christ, although it surely involved some relaxation of the kosher food laws.

