



NEW TESTAMENT • LESSON 51

THE GENTILES WERE CONVERTED

The promise of the gospel is for all men.



MONDAY

THE STORY: ACTS 10:1-23

Cornelius, a Gentile soldier, received a vision of an angel telling him to send men to Joppa to get Peter. While these men traveled, Peter received a vision from the Lord concerning animals, both clean and unclean. Peter was commanded to kill and eat both the clean and unclean animals. Peter refused because Jews were commanded not to even touch unclean animals, much less to eat them.

God repeated the command and told Peter not to call unclean those things that God has made clean. We learn from Peter's later account in Acts 11:10 that the vision and command came to Peter three times. Still, Peter did not understand. While Peter pondered the vision, the men sent by Cornelius arrived. The Spirit of God told Peter to go with them without hesitation. When the Gentiles invited Peter, a Jew, to go with them, Peter agreed.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Read Deuteronomy 14:4-20. Name some unclean animals.

Why did God tell Peter he could eat unclean animals? (God was going to show Peter that Jesus broke down the barrier between Jews and Gentiles, the clean and unclean. The unclean animals represented the Gentiles. Salvation would be extended to Gentiles. Through the sacrifice of Jesus, they would be made clean.)

PRAY:

Thank the Lord for dying for both Jews and Gentiles.



TUESDAY

THE STORY: ACTS 10:24-34

When Peter arrived, Cornelius tried to worship him as if he was divine. But Peter refused, explaining to Cornelius that he was only a man. Peter goes on to explain the meaning of his vision to the people gathered there. Gentiles, formally considered to be unclean by God and to be avoided, are no longer to be considered unclean.

After sharing his story and his encounter with God, Cornelius asked Peter to share all that God had commanded. Peter realized that God had been speaking and directing Cornelius, a Gentile, just as God had directed Peter himself. He concluded and announced that God shows no partiality, but accepts men from every nation. Peter went on to freely share the gospel with those present.

TALK ABOUT IT:

How are Cornelius and Peter similar in this story? (God visited both men with amazing visions and words.)

Did God show favoritism to one of these men over the other? (No. God did not show favoritism.)

Why is this significant? (God had defined Himself as the God of the Hebrews - the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He was the God of Israel. Now, God is saying that He is also the God of all nations. Through the sacrifice of Jesus, all men are being called to God.)

PRAY:

Thank God for drawing all men to Himself, both Jew and Gentile.



WEDNESDAY
WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

THE STORY: ACTS 10:39-43

The gospel is clearly spoken by Peter in Acts 10:39-43. Even while Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles, filled them, and gave them the gift of tongues.

Clearly what the apostle Paul wrote is true when he said in Romans 1:16-17, “ ... it (the gospel) is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.”

TALK ABOUT IT:

Where is the gospel in Peter’s message to Cornelius? (Help your children pick out the components of the gospel from Peter’s exhortation.)

How did Peter connect the gospel to the Old Testament? (Peter explained in verse 43 that all of the prophets bore witness to Christ.)

PRAY:

Thank the Lord for the gospel, which was foretold by the prophets and lived out by the death and resurrection of Christ.



THURSDAY

THE STORY: ACTS 10:44-48

The Holy Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles. While Peter preached the gospel, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the Word. They spoke in tongues. Peter described it this way in the next chapter: “The Holy Spirit fell on them just as on

us at the beginning,” and “God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ” (see Acts 11:15,17). The gift of tongues became a regular occurrence in the church among believers.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Is the gift of tongues available to the entire church? (Paul, in addressing the Corinthians, said that although the gift of prophecy is more desirable, he would like that all of the Corinthians would speak in tongues [see 1 Corinthians 14:5]).

What is the gift of tongues? (We know from the Bible that the gift of tongues involves uttering words in a language unknown to the speaker. A person who speaks in tongues speaks to God in praise and thanksgiving. Think of it this way: Believers can praise God with words not limited by their small vocabulary. Praising God in tongues enables the speaker to go beyond his understanding and his usual words in praise of the Lord.)

PRAY:

Thank God for His marvelous gifts. Pray that God would touch the lives of each member of your family, just as He touched Cornelius and his household.



FRIDAY ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

THE STORY: PSALM 53:6

Peter said that all the prophets bore witness to Jesus. This is also true of the Psalms. In Psalm 53:6 we read that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion. This was a name given to Jerusalem from the days of David. Salvation, indeed, did come out of Zion. Jesus was crucified there.

TALK ABOUT IT:

When it says that all of Israel will be saved, how does that leave room for the Gentiles? (The true Israel of God includes many who are natural descendents of Abraham. But it is not limited to his natural descendants. And not all of Abraham's descendents inherit the promise. The blessing of salvation is reserved for those who have faith in the promise, like Abraham did. The true Israel of God is comprised of Jews and Gentiles who have put their faith in the promise of God's salvation, which came through Abraham's descendents. That salvation came through Jesus Christ, Abraham's promised seed [see Galatians 3:16]).

Was Peter surprised that the Gentiles were included in God's plan of salvation? (Yes. It is easy to see how men like Peter were only thinking of the nation of Israel and not the Gentiles.)

What Scriptures did men like Peter forget or not understand? (Peter forgot or just didn't understand many Scriptures. But primarily he forgot the very first covenant promises to Abraham where God told Abraham that all of the nations on earth would be blessed through him [see Genesis 12:3]).

PRAY:

Thank the Lord for dying on the cross and providing a way for us to be saved.