

Date: _____



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

A Miraculous Church Series, Lesson 55

Lesson Title: A Miraculous Vision – Peter and Cornelius

Take Home Point: God wants to include all kinds of people.

Warm-Up:

As a child and teenager, I was particularly unathletic. I was not the only one with that limitation, but I was one of the least. So when sports and games were played during recess or physical education classes, of course I was one of the last ones chosen for a team. Usually, I was the very last. And those children that were athletic made it clear in no uncertain terms that I was being chosen only because I was there and had to be picked. Typically it didn't bother me much, but I knew I was not athletic and their taunts and disparaging words sometimes made it worse. I wanted to fit in, to be part of the group, but I could not on the baseball diamond, football field or in the gymnasium. In the long run, God taught me through that experience; now I try to be considerate of people shunned or rejected by the "in" crowd, partly because I know how it feels, and also because God wants us to be as inclusive as he is – the one who included me.

Read: Acts 10:1-48; Ephesians 2:13-18

Observation (What happened?):

What was Cornelius doing when the angel appeared to him?

Did Peter understand the vision when it was first given to him?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What do you suppose Peter was thinking as Cornelius told him what happened?

Why were the Jewish believers astonished that the Holy Spirit was given to the Gentiles?

Insight:

We should thank God every day for our living on this side of the cross, and for his written word so carefully preserved and passed down to us. We should be thankful for the Spirit-inspired words that Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:13 & 18: *"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit."* (NIV) We should thank our gracious God for Peter, who wrote, *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you."* (1st Peter 1:3,4 NIV) We should be grateful for John, recording the words of Jesus in John 12:32: *"But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."* (NIV) That includes you and me! What greater proof of God's love could we possibly need? How thankful we should always be!

Application (What does it mean to me?):

How do you demonstrate to your family and others that you see God's value in everyone?

Pray for the children in your small group to not have prejudices against other people groups.