

## Lesson 100

**TEXT** Acts 10:1-48; Romans 10:12,13

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES** Matthew 28:19,20; Luke 4:18

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to explain some of the miraculous ways the Holy Spirit enlightens people to their spiritual needs.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons. — Acts 10:34

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. — Romans 10:12

**ANSWER  
TITLE:** **An Individual Call**  
**SEARCH  
TITLE:** **A Universal Call**

### REFERENCE INFORMATION

Peter was an outstanding leader in the early days of the Church. He was the author of two Epistles, First and Second Peter. This was his second journey from Jerusalem (Acts 9:32; 11:2).

This particular outpouring of the Holy Ghost happened about A.D. 40. Up to this time the Gospel had been preached only to the Jews, Samaritans who observed the Law of Moses, and converts to Judaism, known as proselytes. The Apostles seemed to think that the Gentiles had to be circumcised before they could be accepted into the Church. However, God soon made it plain that the Gospel message was for all men.

Caesarea was a city which was built at a vast cost between 25-13 B.C. by Herod the Great. It was named in honor of his patron, Augustus Caesar. It was the official residence of the Herodian kings and of Felix, Festus, and the other Roman procurators of Judea. This sea-coast city was situated on the line of the great road from Tyre to Egypt, approximately seventy miles northwest of Jerusalem. A wall, some 200 feet wide and standing in

120 feet of water, formed the backside of the harbor. It was made of enormous blocks of limestone, some of them 50 feet by 10 feet in size.

The Italian band was a cohort of Roman soldiers stationed in Caesarea. The Roman army was divided into legions, the number varied from three thousand to six thousand. A legion was subdivided into ten cohorts (or bands), the cohort into three maniples, and the maniple into two centuries containing, originally, one hundred men. In addition to the legionary cohorts, independent cohorts of volunteers served under the Roman standards. One of these cohorts was named the Italian.

Joppa is a Mediterranean seaport town thirty-five miles northwest of Jerusalem. Timbers cut in Lebanon were floated from Tyre to Joppa for the building of Solomon's Temple (2 Chronicles 2:16), and also for the building of the second Temple (Ezra 3:7). Hence, it became the port of Jerusalem in the days of Solomon. Jonah boarded a ship at Joppa when fleeing from God. Today Joppa is known as Jaffa.

### YOUR OPENER

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# A Universal Call

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**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES:** Matthew 28:19,20; Luke 4:18

**KEY VERSE:** For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. — Romans 10:12

Up to this time the Gospel had been preached only to the Jews, Samaritans who observed the Law of Moses, and converts to Judaism. The Apostles seemed to think that the Gentiles had to be circumcised before they could be accepted into the Church. However, God soon made it plain that the Gospel message was to all men. In this lesson we learn that, by an extraordinary series of events, an orthodox Jew is witnessing to a Roman centurion. It was God's divine orchestration that caused this unusual occurrence.

## RESPONSES

1. Your students should see that Cornelius feared God and taught his family to fear God. He helped the unfortunate and prayed to God continually. We can conclude by these facts that Cornelius was a very unusual Roman centurion. He was evidently in direct contact with God, and therefore in a position that God could bless him.

2. Discussion with your class should bring out that this revelation is important to us as Gentiles, because it assures us that we, too, can be partakers of the blessings of the Holy Spirit, as well as the Jews of that day.

3. The point of this question is to develop fully the lengths to which the Holy Spirit will go in dealing with numerous isolated individuals all at the same time to bring about a common purpose. Allow time for your students to share similar experiences from their own lives.

1. What spiritual attributes did Cornelius, the Roman centurion, exhibit that caused God to take note of his life (Acts 10:2)? What conclusions can be drawn about the type of person this man was?

2. Peter had a vision of a sheet which was let down from Heaven. In the sheet were all kinds of animals that were considered by the Jews to be unclean, but God revealed to Peter that they had been cleansed. God used this to open his understanding that the Gentiles were to be full beneficiaries of God's graces. Why is this revelation of such great importance to us?

3. We see the moving of the Holy Spirit throughout this entire account. He moved in Cornelius' house in Caesarea, and then at the house in which Peter was staying in Joppa—He instructed Cornelius to send for Peter, and told Peter to return with Cornelius' servants. What is the limit to which God will go to reach a hungry soul? Relate an experience in your own life or in the life of an acquaintance wherein the Holy Spirit has worked in a special way in this regard.

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. Why would it have been natural for Peter and the Jews who went with him to hesitate to go into Cornelius' house? See Acts 10:28 and Leviticus 20:26.

5. As Peter preached Jesus to Cornelius and his house, they received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Verse 34 of our text states, "God is no respecter of persons." In the context of Peter's statement, what is the significance of this verse? Name several souls who would have been lost if Jesus had not reached out to them, even though others thought they were not worthy.

6. Paul the Apostle recognized the universality of the Gospel call, and this was reflected in his words to the Romans. He told them, "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call on him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:12,13). Elaborate on the ways the Lord is "rich" to anyone who comes to Him in honest repentance.

7. Read Matthew 28:19,20, and note here the phrase which ties these two verses to the theme of this lesson. Think of a story or conversion experience of someone you know about which illustrates this theme.

4. It was in the Jewish Law that Jews were not to keep company with those from other nations. However, by God's miraculous intervention, and Peter's openness to the teachings of the Holy Spirit, the doubts or questions were removed from Peter's mind and he went willingly.

5. This verse reconfirms what was brought out earlier in the lesson: Peter was thoroughly convinced that God's grace was being extended to the Gentiles as well as to his own people. Peter could see that there was no partiality with God. As your class offers their suggestions of "unworthy" people who were reached by God, the objective to our lesson will be emphasized.

6. Your students' responses may include the fact that God is rich in mercy, in forgiveness, and in grace to the one who comes in true repentance. Though the cultural influences and material advantages of believers in different areas of the world may vary to a wide degree, all true children of God will experience the same benefits of salvation.

7. The phrase is "teach all nations." Allow time for your students to share personal stories or testimonies reflecting the spread of the Gospel around the world. Come prepared with a missionary story to begin the discussion. Wrap up the lesson by reinforcing once again that God's call is for the "whosoever will."

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Who were the two men mentioned in our ANSWER story? How were their stories different?

How has God talked to you? Name some ways and times.

What is your responsibility when God calls you?

What two things did the angel say had gone up from Cornelius as a memorial before God?

Describe what Peter saw when he was on the rooftop. Why was this important at the time?

What did Cornelius and his household learn from this experience? What specific gift did they receive from God?

What did Peter and the brethren learn from this experience?

What are some ways the Holy Spirit speaks to people? Can you remember a specific time when God talked with you or warned you that you should give your life to Him?

## THINGS TO DO

Have a testimony tract appropriate to the lesson for each child to take home, read, and share with his/her family.

As you are teaching your class, turn on a hidden tape recording of a voice admonishing the children to serve the Lord. Explain that God sometimes talks to people just this plainly and at other times in very subtle ways. Have your class make a list of different ways or situations through which God might speak to us: a friend, a song, music, illness, injury, nature, a sermon, a testimony, etc. Ask your students how God spoke to them?

Have an adult with a testimony appropriate to the lesson come to class and tell the students of when God called him.


Have someone in class represent an atheist and let the rest of your students try to tell him the Gospel story.

Use this activity to illustrate that God is no respecter of persons. Take several metal object—paper clip, safety pin, nuts, bolts—that would be responsive to magnetic attraction. Add plastic or aluminum objects which will not respond to a magnet. Pass a magnet over them. All the metal objects will come up to the magnet. Point out that the magnetic power is still there (God calls everyone) but some things do not respond to the magnet. Some people do not say yes to God's call, and He won't force them to come. However if someone wants to become responsive to God they can ask Him for a heart that will answer His call. (Attach a paper clip to a lightweight object, and it will come to the magnet.)

## Answers for ANSWER

### Will You Serve Jesus?

People of the Early Church shared in the work of the Lord. Certain men were chosen for special jobs. Read the story in Acts 6:1-6 and unscramble the words below. Remember, the Gospel call was not just for the Early Church. It is for everyone today too.



Two groups of people:  
SWERBHE HEBREWS  
CNAISREG GRECIANS

What the Apostles did to set men apart for service:  
DYEARP PRAYED  
DAIL SNDAH NO METH  
LAI D HANDS ON THEM

Another name for Jesus' followers:  
SELPICSID DISCIPLES

What the Apostles would continue:  
REYPAR PRAYER  
YISMINRT FO ETH DRWO  
MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Kind of men chosen for special work:  
FO STOHN ROPTER  
OF HONEST REPORT  
LUFL FO ETH YLOH  
TOGHS DNA MODSWI  
FULL OF THE  
HOLY GHOST  
AND WISDOM

The seven men chosen to serve:  
EPTNHES STEPHEN  
CARNOIN NICANOR  
NITOM TIMON  
LIHIPP PHILIP  
SANMERAP PARMENAS  
SALINOC NICOLAS  
RUSOHCOR PROCHORUS