

## NOTES



## PRAYER

*“Heavenly Father, we come before You with humble hearts, seeking Your guidance as we explore Your Word in Acts 10. Open our eyes to see Your heart for all nations and cultures. Teach us to embrace Your vision of reconciliation, especially between those who have migrated here over the last four centuries and First Nations peoples in Australia. May Your Spirit move among us, breaking down barriers and drawing us closer to one another in love. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.”*

## OPENING QUESTION (OPTIONAL)

“What is a unique dish or music style from your cultural background that you love? Share a bit about why it’s special to you.”

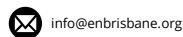


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## WORD

*1 At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, 2 a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God. 3 About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God come in and say to him, "Cornelius." 4 And he stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. 5 And now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter. 6 He is lodging with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea." 7 When the angel who spoke to him had departed, he called two of his servants and a devout soldier from among those who attended him, 8 and having related everything to them, he sent them to Joppa. 9 The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. 10 And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance 11 and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. 12 In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. 13 And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." 14 But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." 15 And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common." 16 This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.*

### [Acts 10:1-16 \(ESV\)](#)

In Acts 10, we see a profound example of God's heart for reconciliation and mission. God intervenes directly through dreams, first to Cornelius, a Gentile centurion, and then to Peter, a Jewish apostle. Through these divine encounters, God orchestrates a meeting that breaks down deep-seated barriers of cultural and religious separation.

God's heart for reconciliation is evident in the way He prepares both Peter and Cornelius. For Peter, the vision of the sheet filled with various animals represents the breaking of dietary laws, symbolizing the removal of barriers between Jews and Gentiles. The repeated command to "kill and eat" emphasizes that what God has cleansed should not be called unclean, highlighting God's inclusive mission. Cornelius, a Gentile who fears God and seeks Him earnestly, receives a vision directing him to Peter, demonstrating God's desire to bridge cultural divides and bring people together in Christ.

This passage illustrates that God's mission transcends cultural and ethnic boundaries. The inclusion of all types of food in the vision underscores that the gospel is for everyone, and no group is to be excluded. Through Peter's eventual visit to Cornelius' house, we see that God is actively working to dismantle prejudice and unify diverse peoples under the lordship of Christ.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

((NUMBERED ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF DEPTH AND READINESS TO SHARE))

1. How did God use dreams to guide both Peter and Cornelius? What does this tell us about God's willingness to reach across cultural boundaries?
2. In what ways was the Holy Spirit active in Cornelius' household even before Peter arrived? How can we recognize the Spirit's work in our own diverse communities?
3. What are some barriers (theological, philosophical, or cultural) that exist in our own context between migrant populations and First Nations peoples? How can these barriers be addressed and broken down?
4. How can we, as the Church in Australia, participate in God's mission of reconciliation? Share practical steps we can take to foster unity and understanding.
5. Reflect on any personal biases or misconceptions you may have about other cultures. How can you seek God's help in overcoming these to be a more effective witness for Christ?

**"Lord Jesus, we thank You for Your cross-cultural mission that reconciles us to God and to one another. Help us to embrace Your call to make disciples of all nations, starting with those around us. We repent of any biases and barriers we have upheld, and we ask for Your forgiveness. Empower us by Your Holy Spirit to live out Your love and grace, breaking down walls and building bridges of understanding and reconciliation. We commit ourselves to Your mission, trusting that You will lead us every step of the way. In Your mighty name, we pray. Amen."**