

### LESSON 5

## PETER AND CORNELIUS

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** The Holy Spirit Is for Everyone Who Believes

**SCRIPTURE:** Acts 10

**GOD'S BIG STORY:** An angel instructs a Roman military official named Cornelius to meet Jesus' disciple Peter. Meanwhile, God shows Peter through a vision that God's Holy Spirit is for everyone—Jews and non-Jews—preparing Peter to meet Cornelius.

**WORD OF WONDER:** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will tell people about me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria. And you will even tell other people about me from one end of the earth to the other. —Acts 1:8

- PRESERVICE
  - OPTION 1- Interactive Game: Healthy or Not?
  - OPTION 2- Interactive Game: Continent Corners
- Welcome Question: What is your favorite food?  
What is your least favorite food?
- SMALL GROUP
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: Take You at Your Word, You Have Overcome
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- In Awe of God's Wonder
- Responding in Worship: Worthy of it All
- Blessing Your Kids



### INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** The Holy Spirit Is for Everyone Who Believes

**SCRIPTURE:** Acts 10

**WORD OF WONDER:** Acts 1:8

Most clubs are only for those who qualify.

Good luck swimming in a members-only pool or deciding you're on the city council without being elected. You'll get to the door—and no further.

But the kingdom of God is open to anyone who trusts Jesus because Jesus invites everyone in. That includes you ... me ... and each child who'll hear this lesson.

Read Acts 10:1–5, 9–17, 34–35. See if these passages feel familiar.

Maybe you've run headlong into racism, agism, or some other form of discrimination that made it clear you're on the outside, that you're neither wanted, nor accepted. Perhaps you know what it is to be excluded.

Your kids know the feeling well. They're used to not being tall enough to ride the rollercoaster or not being old enough to sit at the grown-ups' table. Their lives are boxed in because they're not quite ready to do what the bigger kids can do.

But they're not too young to believe in Jesus and receive the Holy Spirit. They're not too short, too weak, or too unschooled to trust God.

It's your privilege to make sure they know the Holy Spirit is for everyone who believes ... even children. Perhaps especially children.

- How do you feel about inviting the kids in your ministry to trust God? Why?
- How would you share your faith story with a child?
- What will you do if a child chooses to follow Jesus because of your leading?

—Mikal Keefer

Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS**

**WHO?**

Cornelius was an officer in the Roman army and a gentile, or a non-Jew. Although he feared and prayed to God, Jews were suspicious and afraid of associating with him because of his allegiance to Rome. Rome was occupying and exacting taxes from all the surrounding lands.

**WHAT?**

God showed Peter a vision of animals that the Torah (Jewish teaching and law) forbade Jews from eating. Food laws of the Torah (Leviticus 11) made it awkward for Jews and Gentiles to share a meal, but through the symbolism of food, God wanted to show that gentiles can be children of God.

**WHERE?**

The rooms inside most homes were small, lacking many windows, and filled with cooking smoke. For this reason, Peter probably made it a habit to pray on the rooftop while he was visiting a tanner named Simon. He was residing in Joppa, a seaport today called Jaffa.

**WHEN?**

Acts tells how the Christian movement began with Jews in Jerusalem and then spread to include people of all nations. Peter later shares this very experience (Acts 15:7), and as a result, the Jesus-followers in Jerusalem agree that gentiles, not just Jews, can be saved by Jesus.

**CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:**

God chose to save the world through Abraham's children, and this happened through Jesus. God didn't intend for just one nation or ethnicity to be His children. Rather, God wants everyone who believes in Jesus to join His family—forever!

### Large Group

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

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### As kids arrive...

20 minutes before service begins, leaders are in place ready to welcome kids.

Display series theme loop. Play high-energy music in the background.

LG Leader walks around the room on mic and greets kids by name as they enter the room. Be intentional about introducing yourself to new parents and kids.

**SLIDE: SERIES THEME LOOP**

**VIDEO: COUNTDOWN** (2min OR 30sec) Start a countdown to begin game 10 minutes prior to service start)

### OPTION 1 Interactive Game: Healthy or Not?

**SUPPLIES:** masking or painter's tape

Ahead of time, make a line with tape on the floor in the center of the room and decide which side of the line you'll designate for healthy food and which you'll designate for not healthy food.

Display the first of the *Healthy or Not? Slides*, which is a title slide. **We all eat food every day, but I wonder if we would all agree which are healthy foods and which are not. Let's play a game to see! I'm going to show you a type of food, and after I show it, you'll decide if it's healthy or not. Look down at the line on the floor. If you think the food is healthy, you'll go to this side of the line. Indicate one side of the room.**

**If you think the food is not healthy, you'll go to this side of the line. Indicate the other side of the room. If you think the food is somewhere in the middle, you can pick a spot on the line that's not on either side!**

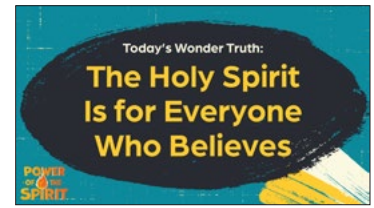


**Make It Inclusive:** This activity can be adapted easily so that kids remain seated. Simply give each kid a red and a green slip of paper. Kids can raise the green slip for healthy food or red for not healthy.

**Leader Tip:** Add more physical activity to this game by giving kids a different way to move each time they decide if something is healthy or not. For example, they could tiptoe, walk in slow motion, and move like a robot or a dancer.

**Let's give it a try!** Advance to the next slide. **Are apples healthy or not healthy? Go to the side of the room that describes your choice.** Give kids time to move. Then advance to the next slide. Continue through all the slides, giving kids a chance to move to one side of the room or the other each time. For your reference, here is a list of the items pictured on the slides: apples, potato chips, taco, lasagna, cereal, ice cream, and carrot. There are no answers to reveal; simply allow kids to move to wherever they think is appropriate on the line.

Display the **Cornelius Wonder Truth Slide**. **Everyone doesn't always agree on what is healthy and what is not. That's because food isn't good or bad, or right or wrong, in and of itself; it's just food. (Though based on our bodies' needs, some foods help us feel and function better than others!) In today's part of God's big story, Peter learns not to give anything—food or people—unnecessary labels because God made them all. And because God made all people, He wants a relationship with everyone. Today's Wonder Truth is **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS FOR EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES.****



## OPTION 2 Interactive Game: Continent Corners

**SUPPLIES:** paper (7 sheets), permanent marker (prep only), masking or painter's tape

Ahead of time, make seven signs, one for each continent name: Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, South America. Tape each of the seven continent signs around the room.

Display the **Continent Corners Slide** and gather the kids together for the game. **Today we're going to find out what you know about the continents of the world! There are signs posted for each of the seven continents.** Point to the signs. **I'll give you a clue, and you guess which continent the clue is about. Race to the sign that represents your guess, and we'll find out the right answer together!**



- This continent has the fewest people living on it. (Antarctica)
- This continent has the most people living on it. (Asia)
- This is the smallest continent. (Australia)
- This continent has pink dolphins swimming in one of its rivers. (South America)
- This continent has the most countries. (Africa)
- This continent is where the hot dog was invented. (Europe)
- This continent has the longest known cave system. (North America)
- God loves people on this continent. (Trick question: all of them!)

**Leader Tip:** To make the game a competition, have kids sit down if they go to the wrong sign. Whoever is still standing at the end is the winner!

**Make It Inclusive:** If you have kids that aren't able to run around the room, you can make cards or signs for them to hold up for each continent.

Display the **Cornelius Wonder Truth Slide**. **You all sure know a lot about different places! Who learned something new in that game?** Invite one or two kids to share what they learned. **There are lots of different kinds of places and people all around the world, and today we're going to find out that Jesus' good news wasn't—and isn't—just for one group of people in one part of the world. God doesn't just give the Holy Spirit to certain people. Today's Wonder Truth is **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS FOR EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES.****



## Welcome Question

**SUPPLIES:** paper, coloring utensils, poster board OR , whiteboard, dry-erase markers (if needed)

### SLIDE: WELCOME QUESTION

**At service start time**, draw kids' attention to the Welcome Question. Invite kids to write answers on the poster board or whiteboard. **Today we're going to hear about a time God told Peter to eat something that Peter didn't think he should. Peter discovered something new, and we will too. But first, it's time for small group.**



## Small Group

Introduce small group time. While kids are in small group, consider sitting in the groups for a few minutes each. Engage and interact as is appropriate.

## Countdown

After about 15 minutes of small group, give a 5 minute warning and begin the countdown.

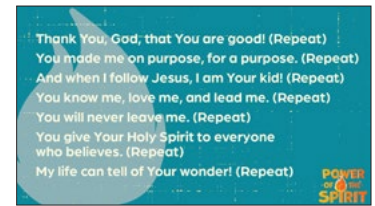
### VIDEO: COUNTDOWN

**"Hey everyone! Welcome to our Large Group Worship time! My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm excited to take this time to worship God, review what we just read, and talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning about God! We are going to pray as we prepare our hearts to worship God!"**

## Declaring God's Wonder

Display the [Cornelius Declaration Slide](#). Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.

**Thank You, God, that You are good!** (Kids repeat.)  
**You made me on purpose, for a purpose.** (Kids repeat.)  
**And when I follow Jesus, I am Your kid!** (Kids repeat.)  
**You know me, love me, and lead me.** (Kids repeat.)  
**You will never leave me.** (Kids repeat.)  
**You give Your Holy Spirit to everyone who believes.** (Kids repeat.)  
**My life can tell of Your wonder!** (Kids repeat.)



## Prayer of Invitation

Lead kids in a prayer of invitation before entering into worship and God's big story: **God, thank You for sending Jesus who loves us with Your amazing love, and thank You for Your Holy Spirit, who You give to everyone who believes in You. Help us to see others the way You see them. And help us hear from You today. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

## Worship

**Today we'll hear about how God sent the Holy Spirit to everyone who follows Jesus. Let's praise and thank God for the Holy Spirit—His powerful, wise, and loving presence with us!**

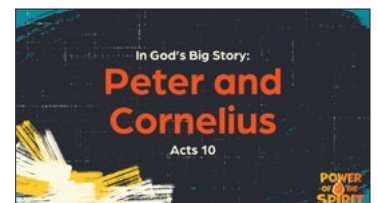
Play songs [Take You at Your Word](#), [You Have Overcome](#) and encourage the kids to sing and dance as they praise God.

## God's Big Story

Display the [Cornelius Title Slide](#).

**Today we are learning about how God changed Peter's understanding of who the gospel is for. As you watch, think about what God wanted Peter to realize and how that truth might change the way we see and treat others.**

Watch the [God's Big Story Video](#).



## LESSON 5 PETER AND CORNELIUS

### EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

**SUPPLIES:** posterboard, permanent marker (prep only), masking or painter’s tape, drawing utensils, paper (1 sheet per kid plus 1), whiteboard that rotates (optional), easel (optional)

Ahead of time, write “Listen” in large letters on one side of a posterboard and “Draw” in large letters on the opposite side. Tape the posterboard to the wall at the front of your teaching area with the word “Listen” facing the audience. (Use just one piece of tape so that you can easily take the poster down, flip it over, and retape it multiple times.) Alternatively, if you have a whiteboard that can rotate easily from one side to the other, write “Listen” on one side and “Draw” on the other. Or if you have an easel, place the posterboard on the easel with “Listen” facing the audience.

**Make It Inclusive:** Provide a variety of drawing utensils to benefit kids of varying fine motor skill levels. For example, markers require less muscle strength/pressure than crayons or colored pencils. If possible, also have simple adaptive tools on hand, such as pencil grips.

Gather the kids. Set out drawing utensils and give each kid a blank sheet of paper. **Are you ready to help me tell today’s part of God’s big story?** Pause for kids to respond. **Great! To get started, let’s fold our papers in half.** Demonstrate folding a sheet of paper in half side to side, so the short edges meet. Explain that it should look short and wide, like a hamburger bun. Then invite kids to set their papers in front of them, along with some drawing utensils. **As I tell the story, you’ll have two jobs. Your first job is to listen.** Point to the “Listen” sign. **Whenever you see the word listen, you’ll listen carefully to the story.** Flip the sign so that “draw” is facing the audience. **Your second will be to draw. Whenever you see the word draw, you’ll draw whatever is happening in the story on one section of your paper.** Show kids that their papers are folded into four sections—two on one side and two on the other. **Got it?** Pause for kids to respond. Then flip the poster back to “Listen.” **Let’s get started!**

**Jesus’ first disciples were Jews. They were related to God’s special people from the Old Testament and followed the laws and teachings God had given His people. Jews usually didn’t interact with people who weren’t Jews. They even believed that non-Jewish people, called gentiles, needed to become Jewish in order to have a relationship with God. So, when the disciples first started sharing the story of Jesus with others, they only told it to other people who were Jews.**

**God loves the Jewish people, but He wants a relationship with everyone. One day, God sent an angel in a vision to a Roman military officer named Cornelius. Cornelius was not Jewish, but he loved God and wanted to follow Him. The angel told Cornelius how God was pleased with his generosity and his devotion to God.**

Flip the poster to the “Draw” side. **Ready, draw! On one section of your paper, draw a picture of an angel visiting Cornelius.** Give kids about one minute to draw. Assure them it’s OK if they don’t finish now. They can always take their papers home and finish their drawing later.

Flip the poster back to “Listen” and invite kids to set down their papers and drawing utensils.

**The angel told the officer to send men to bring Jesus' disciple, Peter, to his home. Cornelius immediately obeyed and sent two of his servants and another soldier to find Peter.**

**While the men were on their way, Peter was having a vision of his own. At around noon, Peter went up onto the roof of the house where he was staying to pray. He was very hungry, and the meal was being prepared for him. Suddenly, Peter looked up and saw what looked like an enormous sheet coming down to earth from the sky. The sheet was filled with all kinds of animals that Jews were not allowed to eat because they were considered impure. When Peter heard a voice tell him to kill and eat some of the animals, he refused because he had never eaten anything impure. But the voice told him, "Do not say anything is not pure that God has made 'clean' " (Acts 10:15). This happened three times in Peter's vision. Then the sheet was taken back up to heaven.**

Flip the poster to the "Draw" side. **Ready, draw! On one section of your paper, draw a picture of this scene.** Give kids about one minute to draw. Then flip the poster back to "Listen" and invite kids to set down their papers and drawing utensils.

**At first, Peter didn't understand the vision. But the Holy Spirit spoke to Peter: "Three men are looking for you. Get up and go downstairs. Don't let anything keep you from going with them. I have sent them" (Acts 10:19–20). When Peter came downstairs, he found the men Cornelius had sent.**

Flip the poster to the "Draw" side. **Ready, draw! Turn your paper over. Now on one section, draw a picture of Peter with the men Cornelius sent.** Give kids about one minute to draw. Then flip the poster back to "Listen" and invite kids to set down their papers and drawing utensils.

**Peter and the men traveled together to Cornelius' home. When Peter asked why Cornelius had sent for him, Cornelius told him about the vision of the angel he had seen. He then asked Peter to tell him whatever God wanted Peter to say.**

**Peter then understood the vision he had seen on the rooftop. God wasn't just teaching him something about animals. God was telling Peter that He wants everyone to be in a relationship with Him, even people who aren't Jews. Peter told Cornelius, "I get it now! God doesn't play favorites. Anyone who loves God and does what God asks is invited to be a part of God's family!" So Peter shared the story of Jesus with Cornelius and all the people in his home. While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit filled everyone in the house. The Holy Spirit is God's powerful, wise, and loving presence. God had also given the gift of His Spirit—who is God—to people who weren't Jewish!**

Flip the poster to the "Draw" side. **Wow, what a scene! Go ahead and draw it on the last section of your paper.** Give kids about one minute to draw. Then flip the poster back to "Listen" and invite kids to set down their papers and drawing utensils.

**God doesn't play favorites. He doesn't reject people because of race, gender, ethnicity, or where they're from. Anyone who believes in Jesus will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is for everyone who believes.**

If time allows, invite kids to finish any drawings they didn't complete. Encourage kids to take their drawings home. They can show them to friends and family and retell the story!

## Connecting the Wonder Truth

Display the [Cornelius Wonder Truth Slide](#). Our Wonder Truth today is **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS FOR EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES**. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in action in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.



God chose to save the world from sin and death through Abraham's family. God fulfilled His plan through Jesus, who was a descendant (or relative) of Abraham. But God didn't intend for only people related to Abraham to be His children. Rather, God wants everyone who believes in Jesus to join His family and be His kids forever!

## In Awe of God's Wonder

Spend a few moments allowing kids to think about the wonder of God's story.

**This story is fascinating! How do you think Peter felt after God told him to change his way of thinking?** Allow kids time to think before answering.

**Sometimes God will challenge us to think about something in a whole new way. Have you ever been challenged to think differently about something or someone?** Consider having your own example ready to share to help kids begin thinking about their own answers.

## Responding in Worship

### SLIDE: RESPONDING IN WORSHIP

Talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning with next steps such as tithing, prayer, asking questions, and worship. Encourage kids to ask their SG leaders any questions they were wondering during the lesson. \*\*\*Introduce this next song and invite kids to respond and participate in worship. See the "Worship Posture Tutorial" on the RBKids Resource Page.



### WORSHIP VIDEO: WORTHY OF IT ALL

## Blessing Your Kids

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

**Blessing:** May your hearts be tender toward the God who loves you.

May you sense His love for you each and every day. The Holy Spirit is for everyone who believes. May you believe and receive His precious Holy Spirit!