

LESSON 6

PETER WORKS FOR GOD



BEFORE YOU TEACH

Joppa

Joppa was a seaport city located twelve miles northwest of Lydda and thirty-eight miles northwest of Jerusalem. This ancient harbor was the same port from which Jonah tried to escape from God (Jon 1:3). Both gentiles and Jews lived in Joppa. Thus it was common for the residents to have two names, one Hebrew or Aramaic, and the other Greek. For example, in Acts 9:36, the disciple in Joppa was named both Tabitha (Aramaic) and Dorcas (Greek), both meaning “gazelle.”

Caesarea

Caesarea was a city thirty miles north of Joppa. It served as the capital city of the Roman province of Judea and thus was named in honor of Augustus Caesar. Caesarea was also the first city to have Gentile Christians and a non-Jewish church. Cornelius was stationed at Caesarea and commanded a military unit of one hundred men. The Latin word for one hundred is centum, thus the commander of a hundred soldiers is called a centurion. Although Roman centurions were well-respected, Cornelius was humble and generous. He prayed regularly to God and often helped those in need (Acts 10:2).

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

Through the blessings of God, your students enjoy comfortable and carefree lives. They possess more than the basic necessities of food and clothing. Thus they may take God’s blessings for granted and fail to appreciate His love. Students need to be reminded from a young age to acknowledge that their prosperity is a blessing and gift from God. They should be reminded not to waste the resources God has given. Most importantly, the students must understand that they should not use God’s blessings to glorify themselves, but rather use them to glorify God by doing good deeds. They should use God’s blessings to live for Christ and to serve others. The examples of Peter and Dorcas are great examples of those who lived for Christ and for men.

BIBLE TEXT

Acts 9:32-43; 10

BIBLE TRUTHS

1. As instruments of God, we work to bring good news and peace to men.
2. God bestows blessings not only for us but also for the kingdom of God.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To establish a life of living for Jesus and doing good deeds.
2. To use God’s blessings to help others.

MEMORY VERSE

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

(Matthew 5:16)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus, we pray. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for choosing us to be Your special people. You love each of us very much. You also chose us for a special purpose: to help others and to tell others about You, just as Peter did. There are still many people in this world who do not yet know You. Every day, they meet with many problems and troubles. They have no joy or peace in their lives. Help us bring them to You so You can help them. Help us to live for You and glorify You. Hallelujah! Amen.

VOCABULARY

centurion: a Roman officer commanding a military unit of one hundred men

vision: a message from God seen in a dream or prayer

submissive: willing to yield to another person, especially to someone of authority

paralytic: someone who has lost complete or partial movement of his body

REVIEW

Last week, we learned how Philip shared the gospel of the Lord Jesus. First, he preached to the people of Samaria, where many people believed. Then, God called upon him to preach to an Ethiopian eunuch. After Philip explained a passage to the eunuch, his understanding of the Scripture deepened. The eunuch then asked Philip to baptize him, which Philip did after hearing the eunuch proclaim his complete belief in Christ. Upon coming out of the water, God carried Philip away so that he could preach to more people in other areas. The eunuch returned home with great joy. We learned that we should be like Philip and always be ready to share the gospel of the Lord Jesus with others.

BEFORE YOU TEACH

This lesson takes place in three different cities and involves four Biblical characters. To help your students with the lesson, draw a map and identify the cities of Jerusalem, Lydda, Joppa, and Caesarea. Also draw pictures of Peter (a man with traveling gear), Aeneas (a man lying on a bed), Dorcas (a woman surrounded by garments), and Cornelius (a Roman soldier). Place Aeneas, Dorcas, and Cornelius next to the cities of Lydda, Joppa, and Caesarea, respectively. Move Peter from Lydda, to Joppa, then to Caesarea in accordance with the lesson.

BIBLE STORY

Introduction

Have you ever been on a road trip? Where did you go? Perhaps during one of your road trips you had a chance to visit another church. You may have met brothers and sisters you had never met before. Today, we will learn how Apostle Peter went to different places to preach the gospel and help the believers he met on the way.

Aeneas in Lydda

In the beginning, the good news about Jesus began in Jerusalem. That was where all the disciples lived. But the good news was spreading to many different areas. Many people came to believe in places outside of Jerusalem. When Apostle Peter learned there were believers in other places, he decided to go on a trip to visit them and to spread the gospel.

Peter first visited a city called Lydda, which was 25 miles from Jerusalem. [Locate Lydda on the map.] At Lydda, Peter met a believer called Aeneas, who was a paralytic. Due to his condition, he had been unable to leave his bed for eight years. How do you think Aeneas felt about having to lie in his bed all the time? If you were Aeneas, what would be your greatest wish? [Allow students to respond.]

When Peter saw Aeneas, he felt very sorry for him and

wanted to help him.

So Peter said to the man, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ has healed you. Get up and make your bed!"

Immediately, Aeneas got up and walked. The people in the town were amazed at the miracle. Many believed in God and began to spread this news to the people in neighboring towns.

Dorcas in Joppa

When the news of the miracle reached Joppa, the believers there were very excited. [Locate Joppa on the map.] They wanted to invite Peter to their town because there was someone there who needed help. A believer named Dorcas had become sick and died. Many people loved Dorcas because she helped others and did many good deeds. She would sew fabric together using a needle and thread to make clothing and then give them to people who needed them. When the believers heard about the healing of Aeneas, they sent two messengers to ask Peter to come quickly. When Peter got the message, he hurried to Joppa.

When he arrived at Dorcas' house, he found widows crying around her. As the widows wept, they showed Peter the coats and garments that Dorcas had made for them. She had helped them so much but now she was no

longer with them.

Peter knew that there was nothing man could do to bring Dorcas back to life. Only God had the power. He sent all the women out of the room, then knelt down and prayed to God. After, he turned to look at Dorcas and said, "Tabitha, get up."

Immediately, Dorcas opened her eyes and sat up! God had listened to his prayers and made Dorcas alive again! Peter called all the believers and women into the room. They couldn't believe their eyes! Dorcas was alive! God is indeed an almighty God!

After this, the people in town couldn't stop talking about Jesus. Many people came to believe in God. Peter remained in the city for some time longer sharing the good news of the Lord Jesus.

Cornelius at Caesarea

Joppa and Lydda were not the only towns where people believed in God. In the city of Caesarea, there lived a Roman centurion named Cornelius. [Locate Caesarea on the map.] Cornelius was not a Jew like Jesus and Peter, and at that time, all the believers were Jews because the gospel was only preached to the Jews. The Jews were the descendants of Abraham and thus were chosen by God to be His people. The Gentiles, people who were not Jewish, were considered by the Jews to be unholy and unclean. Because of this distinction, the Jews and Gentiles did not get along and never ate together.

Though Cornelius was a Gentile, he and his family feared God. He was a generous man who helped the poor and also prayed to God regularly. This demonstrated how good of a person Cornelius was. Though he had not heard the gospel, he was able to do things that pleased God.

One day, while Cornelius was praying, an angel of God appeared to him. The angel said, "Cornelius, God has seen your prayers and your good works and they are remembered by God. Now go and find a man called Peter and ask him to come to you."

Cornelius did not know Peter, and he did not know what all this meant, but he obeyed and sent men to find Peter in Joppa.

Peter's Visions

During the afternoon of the next day, Peter was praying on the roof when he also saw a vision. He saw heaven opened and a great blanket coming down towards earth. Inside the blanket were all sorts of animals, insects, snakes and birds that the Jews were not allowed to eat.

Then Peter heard a voice say to him, "Rise, Peter; kill the animals and eat them."

Peter was shocked when he heard this command. "No, Lord, I have never eaten anything common or unclean in my life." To the Jews, these kinds of animals were unclean and Moses' laws instructed them not to eat them.

Then the voice said, "Don't call something unclean when God has made it clean!" This vision was shown to

Peter three times. Then the blanket was taken back up to heaven. Peter was very puzzled. What could the vision mean? What was he supposed to do? What was God trying to tell him?

As he was thinking this, Cornelius' three messengers had found the house where Peter was staying in. God told Peter, "Three men have come to see you. Go down, meet them and go with them. All is well. I have sent them."

Peter Visits Cornelius

The next morning, Peter, along with some believers from Joppa, went with Cornelius' men to Caesarea to see Cornelius. Normally, Peter would not have gone into the house of a Gentile, but he trusted and obeyed God. When Peter arrived at Cornelius' house, he saw that Cornelius had invited his relatives and close friends and they were waiting excitedly to listen to Peter.

Peter then began to preach to them the gospel of Jesus Christ. He preached about how Jesus had come to the world to die on the cross for sinners, and after three days, resurrected and ascended to heaven. Because Jesus resurrected, anyone who believed in Jesus would have their sins forgiven.

All of a sudden, as Peter was speaking, the Holy Spirit came upon all who were listening to the message. They spoke in tongues and praised God. Peter was so amazed. How could it be that the Holy Spirit had also been given to the Gentiles? Could it be that God had chosen the Gentiles, too? They had received the Holy Spirit not while praying but while listening to the word of God. There was no doubt about it. It was very clear that God wanted to save not only the Jews but the Gentiles, too. Peter understood that the Lord Jesus did not just love the Jews, He loved all mankind and hoped that everyone could be saved. With great joy, Cornelius and all the people with him were baptized in the name of Jesus.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. **Peter healed Aeneas on his own.** False; God's power healed Aeneas.
2. **Peter's vision showed that God saved not only the Jews but the Gentiles, too.** True.
3. **When the voice told Peter to eat the unclean animals, Peter killed one and ate it.** False; he said he had never eaten anything unclean in all his life.
4. **As Peter was preaching, the Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius and all those who heard the word.** True.
5. **What did the people of Lydda do when they saw Aeneas walking?** They believed and praised the Lord.
6. **How do we know that Cornelius was a good person?** He feared God, prayed often and helped the poor.
7. **Why did many people cry when Dorcas died?** She was a woman who helped and cared for others.
8. **How did Peter demonstrate that he loved and cared for the believers?** He visited them and helped them.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

**"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."
(Matthew 5:16)**

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. False; he had remained in bed for eight years.
2. False; Peter said that he didn't eat unclean animals.
3. True
4. True
5. B
6. B
7. C
8. A
9. Answers may vary.

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

Living for Jesus

In today's lesson, we learned about three people who dedicated their lives to Jesus and to help others: Peter, Dorcas, and Cornelius.

Before Peter knew Jesus, he had been a fisherman. When Jesus called him, Peter decided to quit fishing and followed Him to do God's work. God gave Peter special gifts and powers, such as healing the sick and resurrecting the dead, to preach the gospel and to help people.

Dorcas also lived for Jesus. Dorcas was a skilled seamstress. She used her gift to help others by making clothes for the widows.

Cornelius was a Gentile who helped the poor. The Bible says that he feared God, generously gave alms to the people, and prayed to God always (Acts 10:2).

God wants us to dedicate our lives to Him and to serve Him. He has given us good food, beautiful homes and has

blessed us with many talents and gifts. God might have given us the ability to draw or play the piano. Or He might have blessed us with good food, nice toys, and clothes. How else has God blessed you? [Allow students to respond.]

God blessed us so we can share our gifts and serve Him with our talents. By demonstrating our charity and love, others will see that we are different from the selfish people of the world. Then they will praise our Father in heaven. This is how we live for God through our good deeds and bring glory to His name.

Let us read Matthew 25:34-40. Here, the Lord Jesus reminds us to serve and help others. When we do these things, we are not only helping people, but also helping God. The Lord will remember all of our good deeds and will bring us to heaven.

Ways to Live for Christ

Read God's Word

Bible reading is necessary for nurturing our relationship with God. Remember to read God's word several times a day: before you go to school, after you come back from school, and before going to bed. Also, be sure to read different parts of the Bible and not the same stories multiple times. Put up memory verses around the house to see God's word when you are walking around.

Serve and Love Others

Serving others is another way to show that we serve the Lord. The best way to do this is to serve your parents and other members at church or in your community. That is why we were created: to be helpers. We can step outside of ourselves and reach out to others. Keep this verse in mind when you are serving others: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30).

Worship Jesus

Praise Him throughout the day. "Thank You, Jesus, for such a beautiful, sunny day!" "May all the praise be unto You for Your mercy and grace today! You are wonderfully beautiful!" Another way to praise Him is to bring Him up in a casual conversation: "God is so miraculous for taking care of all of us!"

Pray in the Holy Spirit

Begin each day by inviting the Holy Spirit to be active in everything you do. Spend time in the mornings and evenings praying *with your parents*. Pray for your day, for others, for struggles you are having, for friends and relatives, or for whatever or whomever you think needs help. There is no end to who or what you can pray for. The idea is to pray, *not by yourself, but with family members*.

ACTIVITY

1**How Can I Help?****Objectives:** To encourage students to think of ways that they can serve God.**Preparation**

Write the scenarios listed below on index cards. If needed, prepare more scenarios so the activity may be extended for several additional rounds.

- I have lots of toys.
- My brother does not have the Holy Spirit yet.
- I can play the piano.
- I have a lot of money in my piggy bank.
- I am good at drawing.
- Dad has just come home from work.
- My friend has not heard about the Lord Jesus yet.
- At school there is a girl/boy who has no one to play with.
- My little brother has spilled a cup of juice on the floor.
- Mom is unloading lot of grocery bags from the car.
- Grandma is in hospital.

Instructions

1. Pass out one index card to each student and place the rest in a box.
2. Ask each student to read the scenario on the card silently.
3. Tell them to come up with one way they can help or serve others based on the scenario on the card. Give them some time to think about it and then call on a student to come up to the front of the room.
4. The student will read the scenario and then tell the class how he will serve or help others.
5. Give each student a chance to come up and, if time permits and if there are enough cards, give the students another card to read and think about.
6. End the activity with an encouragement, telling the students that God has blessed them with many different gifts and opportunities to help and serve others, so they should always do it when they can.

E1 Year 3 Book 3 Lesson 6—Peter Works for God

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truths: 1. As instruments of God, we work to bring good news and peace to men.
 2. God bestows blessings not only for us but also for the kingdom of God.

Lesson Objectives: 1. To establish a life of living for Jesus and doing good deeds.
 2. To use God’s blessings to help others.

Bible Reading: Please put a check mark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

Prayer: Please put a check mark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Matthew 5:16)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

True or False

1. Aeneas was a paralytic who had remained in bed for two years. _____
2. When the voice told Peter to eat of the animals, Peter took one and ate it. _____
3. The unclean animals in the vision represent the Gentiles whom God will also save. _____
4. Cornelius was a God-fearing man who prayed to God and gave alms to the poor. _____

Multiple Choice

5. _____ : Many people wept when Dorcas died because _____.
 - a. They would miss the beautiful clothes that she made.
 - b. She helped and cared for others.
 - c. They would miss the good food that she made.
6. _____ : God showed Peter the vision to tell him that _____.
 - a. The gospel was to save the Jews only.
 - b. The gospel was for everyone, not just the Jews.
 - c. The gospel was for the Gentiles only.
7. _____ : As Peter was preaching, _____.
 - a. Cornelius refused to believe what Peter said.
 - b. Cornelius and his family were very joyful.
 - c. The Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius and all those who heard the message.
8. _____ : God gave Peter power and strength so he could _____.
 - a. Help the believers and preach the gospel to others.
 - b. Help himself.
 - c. Show off to others.
9. Think of one way that you can live for Jesus.

10. Follow the instructions below to find out what Jesus wants us to do:

First: **Cross out** all the names of people and places from today's lesson.

Second: **Cross out** all the names of colors.

Third: **Cross out** all the names of unclean animals.

Fourth: **Cross out** all the numbers.

AENEAS	BROWN	SEVEN	LET	PIG	WHITE	YOUR
THREE	LIGHT	CAMEL	GOLD	EIGHT	SO	DORCAS
SHINE	HORSE	FOUR	RED	BEFORE	PETER	ORANGE
PURPLE	MEN	SIMON	ALLIGATOR	FIVE	THAT	FIFTY
MOUSE	THEY	DOG	BLUE	MAY	CORNELIUS	TWO
THIRTEEN	GREEN	SEE	TABITHA	NINETEEN	SNAKE	YOUR
DORCAS	GOOD	SQUIRREL	WORKS	LYDDA	TIGER	AND
GLORIFY	YOUR	PINK	CAESAREA	YELLOW	FATHER	BLACK
LIZARD	IN	CORNELIUS	HEAVEN	TORTOISE	FIVE	JOPPA

What do the remaining words say? Write them in order on the lines below.

Matthew 5:16