

Pentecost Lesson 8 (March 16/17)

Stephen's Speech and Peter's Vision



Read Acts 7

1. Stephen sounds like he is teaching the original version of the C.A.S.K.E.T. series to these men who are about to stone him. Why does he give a “history lesson” as he works his way up to indicting those who “betrayed and murdered” the Righteous One?
2. In Acts 6 there are several descriptions made about Stephen. Which one of these descriptions stands out to you the most and why?
3. To whom is Stephen comparing the high priest, the council, and the people surrounding him?
4. Upon hearing the words of Stephen’s speech, the Jewish leaders stone him. Why do you think his speech elicited such a response?
5. How do Stephen’s last words echo some of the words of Christ on the cross in Luke’s account of the crucifixion? Why do you think Stephen demonstrates enemy love with his final breath?

Read Acts 10:1–33

6. What was Cornelius’ vocation and to which people group did he belong? Why might this account be surprising to a devout Jew, including even those who were followers of the risen Christ?
7. Based on what we learned in C.A.S.K.E.T, should it be surprising that God chooses to bring a Roman household to faith and into the kingdom of God? Why or why not?

8. Read Daniel 9:20–23 then Acts 10:1–4 again. Compare and contrast Daniel and Cornelius—what stands out to you? What do we learn about prayer?



9. Do you know anyone like Cornelius, one who shines in his or her Christian devotion in an otherwise brutal world opposed to Christ? What is it specifically about such people that we should emulate and celebrate?

10. Peter experiences being perplexed at the revelation given to him in the vision. Describe a time when you have been perplexed or confused about what God is calling you to do?

11. Immediately prior to this story, Acts 9:36–43 tells us that Peter went without hesitation to help when called by Jewish followers of Jesus at Tabitha’s death. Why do you think Peter had to experience the same vision three times, along with the direct command of the Holy Spirit, to prepare him for visiting the household of Cornelius?

12. Peter is told three times “What God has made clean, do not call common.” What was the purpose of the visions: redefining what food may be eaten or something else greater?

13. When Cornelius meets Peter, Cornelius bows down to worship him. How does Peter’s response demonstrate the change that has taken place in his life since denying Jesus (Luke 22)?

13. Jonah went down to Joppa in order to avoid preaching to the enemy of the Jews (Ninevites/Assyria), and when they repented he was angry; Peter was called out from Joppa in order to preach to the enemy of the Jews (Rome), and when they received the Spirit he and his friends were amazed. How do we avoid Jonah’s sin and follow Peter’s example instead?

14. In this passage Peter makes a radical change and comes to a new understanding from a revelation from God (Verse 28). Where in your life do you need reorientation based on God’s revelation?