



**But I've Never Done Life That Way Before!
What Happens When the Spirit Turns Our World Upside Down?
Acts 10:1-23**

Scripture quotations are taken from the following translations:

ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

**Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible® (NASB),
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973,
1975, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation
Used by permission. www.Lockman.org**

Scripture quoted by permission. Quotations designated (NET) are from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996, 2019 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://netbible.com> All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked (NLT) are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

The Good News Translation Bible (GNB) text used in this product is being used by permission. Copyright © American Bible Society, 1966, 1971, 1976, 1992

Scripture taken from the Holy Bible: International Standard Version® Release 2.0. (ISV) Copyright © 1996–2011 by the ISV Foundation. Used by permission of Davidson Press, LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED INTERNATIONALLY

Scripture quotations contained herein are from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition Bible (NRSVue), Copyright © 2021, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide

**Scripture taken from the New King James Version (NKJV).
Copyright 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.**

**Scripture taken from The Holy Bible: The Contemporary English Version (CEV).
©1995 by The American Bible Society, Thomas Nelson, Nashville TN.**

Scripture quotations marked (CSB) have been taken from the Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright © 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Christian Standard Bible® and CSB® are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers.

Taken from the Complete Jewish Bible (CJB) by David H. Stern. Copyright © 1998. All rights reserved. Used by permission of Messianic Jewish Publishers, 6120 Day Long Lane, Clarksville, MD 21029. www.messianicjewish.net

Peter is the epitome of a working-class observant Jew of 37 AD, even though he is a follower of Jesus Christ. Culturally, he is Jewish and is fully conversant with all that means. In other words, he is still learning the difference between being Jewish versus what all this now means as a follower of Jesus Christ.



He has seen some of the differences Jesus enables, but he is now going to be shown something he never would have guessed he would do when he had said yes to Jesus a few years back. And this will hit more than a few taboos for him. Romans, or much worse, gentile Roman soldiers, and on top of that, ones from Italy serving the empire in the local capital of the Roman occupation.

Philip has been running amuck empowered by the Holy Spirit preaching the word to whoever would listen and that included working his way to Caesarea, the Roman capital and military center for the occupation of Judea. Peter has been following in Philip's steps up to this point, but now he will learn firsthand what he agreed to when Jesus said, "follow me and I will make you fishers of men."

Mark 1:16–18

"Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. **And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed him.**" (ESV)

When we say yes to Jesus, we are no different than Peter, we say yes accepting the salvation He provides and then, as we walk with Jesus and grow to become more like Him, we begin to discover exactly what that means.

The Holy Spirit doesn't drop it all on us at once, not at all. He teaches us and leads us. As we take each step of faith that He brings us to, we are in the process of being made more like Jesus. The process has a name, sanctification. We can move forward or backwards in the process just like we have seen in Peter's life.

And like Peter, we also follow Jesus doing nothing more than taking the next step of faith He has placed before us. Peter has done this and just recently, the next step has included miracles in communities that are more gentile than they are Jewish. He has walked to the edge of the world of his comfort zone and stopped. He is enjoying time there on the beach at Simon the Tanner's home.

Time to learn that with Jesus, under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit, where He is leading us, there are no comfort zones. Or as my friends in New Jersey would say – "Fogeddaboit."

Caesarea is seriously outside of Peter's comfort zone. "Although well known, this city would not feel culturally welcoming to a Galilean or even the average Jerusalemite. By this period, Gentiles dominated the city (Jos. War 3.409); the patron deity, as of many other cities in the East, was the goddess Fortune." (Keener 2012-2013, 1733)

And yes, that is indeed where Philip went. He was obviously a bit further down the road in terms of maturity. Peter is to experience some rather urgent spiritual growth.

As Acts carefully chronicles, the messianic movement started quite naturally among Jews who were anticipating the coming of Messiah. And Yeshua of Nazareth, in their estimation, fulfilled the requirements. Acts now makes a major shift to show how (surprise!) this Messiah would also be offered to the non-Jews of the world. (Kasdan 2022, 76)

A careful study of the Torah would show this possibility in Genesis 12:3. But it was not something that would be easily considered in 1st century Judea.

God will do amazing things to expand this from the Jewish community to pagans some of whom were seekers like Cornelius, but most who were not. We will see here in the book of Acts that some of these things God does will indeed be revolutionary and seriously controversial. Almost like a fish switching directions in a school and going the other way, totally unheard of.



Logical obstacles for Peter would include his pride, which we will see, and even though he is following Jesus and walked with Jesus for three years, he still struggles with the culturally accepted standards of racism. Most likely why he and John were sent to Samaria by the church.

What needed to be resolved for Peter was not whether the gospel was for Gentiles (cf. Lk. 24:47; Acts 1:8; 2:39; 3:25–26), but how they could receive it in view of their ‘uncleanness’ in Jewish eyes and be one with Jewish believers in the fellowship of the church. In practical terms, Jews and Gentiles could not share food and shelter. ‘By means of the issue of hospitality, Luke demonstrates that the conversion of the first Gentile required the conversion of the church as well.’ (Peterson 2009, 324)

The obstacles and biases imposed by Judaism, none of this has a place in any church, but since he is still learning here, we will extend grace to Peter and go with him as he learns. “In Christ there are no distinctions of race, sex, or social class, and none should exist in us. This unity of Jew and Gentile in Christ was perhaps the most difficult obstacle for the early Jewish converts to overcome, and it remains a very difficult obstacle for many today.” (Fortner 2007, 133)

Our first act begins in the Roman military town of Caesarea, the capital of the occupation of Rome.

Acts 10:1–8

“Now there was a man in Caesarea named Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian cohort, a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, and made many charitable contributions to the Jewish people and prayed to God continually. About the ninth hour of the day he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God who had just come in and said to him, “Cornelius!” And he looked at him intently and became terrified, and said, “What is it, lord?” And he said to him, “Your prayers and charitable gifts have ascended as a memorial offering before God. Now dispatch some men to Joppa and send for a man named Simon, who is also called Peter; he is staying with a tanner named Simon, whose house is by the sea.” When the angel who spoke to him left, he summoned two of his servants and a devout soldier from his personal attendants, and after he had explained everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.” (NASB 2020)

The very first thing that pops out here is, God is the initiator of all the events we are about to study. This is His plan, and it is a really big deal. It will change everything for the growing church. It is all about the mission Jesus provided just prior to His ascension to the Father.

Acts 1:8

“but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem (done) and in all Judea (done), and Samaria (done), and as far as the remotest part of the earth(pending).” (NASB 2020)

Peter has been involved in or been a witness to each and every phase the mission has gone through. The reason is to show him that what Jesus said, He indeed meant. Peter has been changing along with each phase of the mission as it has changed and now comes the biggest paradigm shift of them all. Gentiles. Shades of Jonah.

Remember him? Jonah went to Joppa to flee from God rather than go to preach to a bunch of gentiles who were hated by the nation. Peter is going to be asked the same thing.

God indeed overcame Jonah’s reluctance with a three-day ocean cruise in a large fish. And once all that drama was done, the message was still the same, “arise and go.” Peter will be told the same message.

The Assyrians, gentiles, repented and were saved. Peter will see Romans, imagine that, saved.



Jonah was not happy about it and neither will Peter.

And as Jonah learned, it is all about God and what He wants, Peter will learn the same.

The whole story here in Acts begins with the Lord providing this Roman centurion a vision. This is not just any centurion, he is of the Italian cohort. A centurion in the Roman legion would be the leader of 100 soldiers. A cohort would have up to 600 soldiers in it, possibly up to 1,000, which would mean they would also be 6 to 10 centurions in a cohort. In today's terms, think of a battalion in terms of the size of a cohort.

A Roman legion, with a nominal six thousand troops (but actually generally closer to five thousand), consisted of ten cohorts, each of which in turn consisted of six centuries. (Keener 2012-2013, 1738)

Rome would typically recruit locals into their legions throughout the empire. For example, the legions led by Julius Caesar into Gaul were predominately Spaniards. But the Roman military also maintained professional, highly loyal legions made up entirely of Italian volunteers.

With Cornelius being part of the Italian cohort, possibly meaning all volunteers from Italy, the heart of the Roman Empire, what this shows us is how this man coming to Christ is a strategic move by the Holy Spirit. He represents the heart of the empire.

As a centurion, he is not a young man, he would have at the very least, one twenty-year tour already under his belt and now, as a senior NCO and leader, he is leading 100 men who are in their first tour while he may be in his second. Those who served as centurions were usually the best soldiers and would be ones who would prefer death to retreat.

In the Bible, we don't see very much negative written about any centurion.

We see that Cornelius is a God fearer. "Cornelius has not become a full Jewish proselyte but as a Gentile has been exposed to the God of Israel. The description means that he has responded positively to this exposure without embracing in any detailed way elements of Jewish legal practice." (Bock 2007, 386)

The text tells us he was devout, the word used is εὐσεβής (eusebes), meaning he is "profoundly reverent or respectful, devout, godly, pious, reverent." (Arndt, et al. 2000, 413)

As a leader, a God fearer, devout and godly, he had also led his entire household to the same place he was. We also see he was one who gave to the Jewish people, which is supposed to be a picture of an observant Jew but here we see this is being said of a gentile.

On top of that, he prayed all of the time.

When we are told he is praying at the ninth hour, that tells us his prayers are not simply random, but he was also praying during traditional Jewish service times. These include Shachrit in the morning (sunrise to noon), Mincha in the afternoon (between 12:30 and sunset) and Ma'ariv (starting in the evening when three stars are visible). For convenience, it became customary to combine Mincha with Ma'ariv so a minyan of ten people is only needed two times daily." (Kasdan 2022, 77)

During his afternoon prayers, Cornelius is disturbed when someone else shows up in the room.

Acts 10:3-4

"About the ninth hour of the day he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God who had just come in and said to him, "Cornelius!" And he looked at him intently and became terrified, and said, "What is it,



lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and charitable gifts have ascended as a memorial offering before God." (NASB 2020)

As he prays, Cornelius has a vision and clearly sees an angel who is talking to him.

In other words, the angel is spiritually present and showing up to Cornelius openly. Not only does an angel show up, but he calls Cornelius by name, and the reaction of Cornelius reflects that he knows this being is a messenger from God.

Is it possible to have visions or dreams such as this today? Yes, it is. Peter tied verses in Joel into his description of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost which tells us, in these last days we live in, that dreams and visions will indeed take place.

This is not just happening with followers of Jesus either, as we see here with Cornelius.

Joel 2:28–29

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and **your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.**" (ESV)

But this is not what was taking place with someone who was not yet a follower of Jesus. Why a vision and does this still take place today. Indeed, it is.

Look at what is happening in the Islamic world today. Tom Doyle in his book *Dreams and Visions*, relates the following.

Medina, where Muhammad died at age sixty-two, is similarly honored and is as hostile to outsiders as Mecca. Yet in both places, Jesus is at work. Hajj pilgrims like Amir and Muhammad continue to report new phenomena. One leader in Jordan recounts that a man sought him out after making the hajj. His friend told him, "I went to the hajj to get close to Allah, but I kept having dreams about Jesus. Every night He would visit me. He told me to follow Him." (Doyle 2012, 45)

God is still doing the same thing He did with Cornelius, today.

"We find that about one out of every three Muslim-background believers has had a dream or vision prior to their salvation experience. Some more precise surveys are a bit more conservative and suggest a little over 25 percent of Muslims had a dream or a vision before becoming disciples of Jesus. Either way, the percentage is significant. As powerful as dreams and visions are, though, they are just the door opener for most Muslims, the starting point for conversion to overcome the substantial obstacles between Muslims and Jesus." (Doyle 2012, 127) No different than what we see here in Acts 10.

Pray for those in the Middle East who have dreams and visions and then seek after Jesus. This has resulted, in Iran, in a church there now estimated to be over 1 million strong. Lela Gilbert wrote in 2023 how it is taking place.

"Confirming these statements, a significant survey taken in 2020 by Gamaan, a secular Netherlands-based research group, reported that there are far greater numbers of Christian believers in Iran than ever before — more than a million. In fact, those involved with the "house church" movement in Iran are convinced that there are likely several million Christian believers there.

In my research and interviews, it has become clear that new Christians' witness to others is mostly shared in quiet conversations, encouraged by low-profile online Bible studies, and affirmed by visions, dreams,



and miraculously answered prayers. Due to their risky circumstances, recent Christian converts are enthusiastically communicating about their changed lives with friends and loved ones — but quietly and carefully. However, their discreet but persistent witness accounts for the extraordinary number of new Iranian believers, who meet in small house churches.” (Gilbert 2023)

Returning to our text, Cornelius was not sleeping though, he was praying in the middle of the afternoon. Remember, this man is a twenty-year combat veteran. He is on his second tour and most likely not scared of much of anything. But when he sees this angel, he is terrified. He knows about angels, but has never seen one much less have one show up in the middle of prayer time. He knows who this angel represents and thus, the terror.

What he hears from the angel though is encouragement and embedded in the encouragement is something he is familiar with, orders.

The encouragement Cornelius receives is that his prayers and his giving has been seen by God. He is told that they have “ascended as a memorial offering before God.” “A “memorial offering” was a food offering that produced “an aroma pleasing to the LORD” (Leviticus 2:2, 9). The angel, in effect, was telling Cornelius that God was pleased with his life.” (Taylor and Greig 2012, 110)

The angel then follows up with a command, instructions for Cornelius to act on. That he indeed knows how to do.

Acts 10:5–8

“Now dispatch some men to Joppa and send for a man named Simon, who is also called Peter; he is staying with a tanner named Simon, whose house is by the sea.” When the angel who spoke to him left, he summoned two of his servants and a devout soldier from his personal attendants, and after he had explained everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.” (NASB 2020)

There is one thing that the Centurion knows how to do, receive, give, obey and act on orders. God has initiated the contact through an angel and this man, upon hearing instructions, acts immediately.

When we hear God’s voice, whether in the word or in prayer, and there are instructions, things we must do, when do we act? Do we act like Moses did at first and tell the Lord you have the wrong person, do we run like Jonah, do we object like we will see Peter do?

What we should do is modeled for us by a pagan, a Roman soldier who hears the instructions and then takes immediate action.

Literally, as soon as the discussion is ended, Cornelius calls in his two servants as well as a soldier who believes as he does.

Stop and consider this, God has initiated the contact and said call for Peter.

God has gone to an official of the Roman government there in the Roman capital of Caesarea and charged Rome with finding Peter and bringing him to town.

Rome, the powerful world empire, has been charged by God with having the message be brought to the gentiles by searching for, finding and bringing Peter to Cornelius. God will use anyone and anything in order to have His word taken to those who need to hear.

He still does this today as well. “God sent an angel in a vision to Cornelius, but He used a man to preach the gospel to him.” (Guzik 2013, Ac 10:3-6)



Couldn't God have used the angel? Yes, but He chooses to use us instead. Wow, that to me is amazing. God had an angel in the room who could have told Cornelius everything he needed to hear, but instead God uses a fish out of water fisherman from Galilee, Peter.

And he is going to have to work on Peter first to get him ready to go.

"God's choice of the people He uses has nothing to do with their abilities, social status, wealth, or human achievement. God uses very ordinary people to do extraordinary things so that no human being might boast in His presence. God uses people who know they do not deserve to be in His kingdom. He does so because such people know anything they accomplish is because of God's grace, love, and power." (Higle 2013, 21)

Peter is a great candidate because what has been taking place in and through him has only been possible because of Jesus.

1 Corinthians 1:26–31

"Think about the circumstances of your call, brothers and sisters. Not many were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were born to a privileged position. **But God chose what the world thinks foolish to shame the wise, and God chose what the world thinks weak to shame the strong. God chose what is low and despised in the world, what is regarded as nothing, to set aside what is regarded as something, so that no one can boast in his presence.** He is the reason you have a relationship with Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."" (NET 2nd ed.)

Look at the moving parts the Lord is coordinating in this story. First you have Peter in Joppa enjoying some time at the beach at Simon the Tanner's home. That is as close as Peter will ever get to Caesarea as far as he is concerned. God has other ideas. Meanwhile, 25 miles or so to the north, there is a man in prayer who receives a visit from an angel and receives instructions. If the instructions are not followed, then nothing happens, if the instructions are followed, then the Roman Empire will be responsible for introducing gentiles to Jesus Christ; and they are followed. A Roman search team is put together and sent north to Joppa.

Cornelius had zero issues with searching for and bringing Peter to him. He was commanded by an angel to do this.

This team was sent out mid to late afternoon on a trip that would normally be a full day trip, but it is late, and they will have to stop during the night and then reach their destination towards lunch time the next day.

Now the picture shifts to Joppa and where Peter is staying, there on the beach.

Where Cornelius had no issues, Peter has several. Time to deal with those.

Remember, Peter is still an observant Jew. Because of that, he had some biases that had been trained into him over the years. "These had to be removed, and their removal could be effected only by divine authority, for they were part and parcel of Peter's ancestral religion. Gentiles were idolaters. Cornelius might be a worshipper of the God of Israel, but he was still a Gentile and a Gentile house was likely to be tainted by idolatry. Jews believed that the Gentile idols were malignant demons who might well haunt Gentile houses. A Jew who entered such a place would therefore expose himself to their evil influence. Moreover, any one who paid a social visit to a Gentile would be invited to accept food, and the eating of such food could involve the breaking of several Jewish dietary laws. (Bruce 2017, Ac 10:9-16)



The idea of eating unknown food is real even today. Prior to heading out to Kuwait, I received a briefing on all the reasons why I should not ever, under any circumstances, accept food, drink, or pretty much anything edible from anyone I would be working with who happened to be members of the Kuwaiti military. I listened, asked my questions, and then ignored the briefing in its entirety.

Part of my job entailed maintaining a good working relationship with the Kuwaiti Air Force as well as the Royal Air Force. And yes, I was indeed offered things to drink and to eat.

I had no problem with Early Grey white at teatime, none at all or chai either. But when I was offered a camel milk ice cream bar, it was an immediate brain recall of this event from Acts 10. I thanked my host for the ice cream and accepted it as was socially appropriate and then ate it in front of them exclaiming, per cultural norms, how good it was. It wasn't bad, but I do understand what will go through Peter's head here in Acts 10. He has no idea anyone is coming to see him.

Acts 10:9–16

"On the next day, as they were on their way and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. But he became hungry and wanted to eat; but while they were making preparations, he fell into a trance; and he saw the sky opened up, and an object like a great sheet coming down, lowered by four corners to the ground, and on it were all kinds of four-footed animals and crawling creatures of the earth and birds of the sky. A voice came to him, "Get up, Peter, kill and eat!" But Peter said, "By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean." Again a voice came to him a second time, "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy." This happened three times, and immediately the object was taken up into the sky." (NASB 2020)

It is the next day now; around noon time and Peter has gone to the roof where he can catch the breeze coming off the Mediterranean and do his midday time of prayer. As he starts praying, he realizes that he is hungry and apparently asks for others in the house to begin preparations for lunch. While that was going on, he falls into a trance. Literally in the Greek, he goes into a new state of being and falls into ἔκστασις (ekstasis). We get the word ecstasy from this.

The meaning of the word is much the same as we would take it in English. The Greek word means "a displacement; hence, a displacement of the mind from its ordinary state and self-possession; amazement, astonishment, excess of fear; fear, terror...an ecstasy, a trance." (Mounce 2006, 1137)

It is a "trance, ecstasy a state of being brought about by God, in which consciousness is wholly or partially suspended." (Arndt, et al. 1979, 245)

It is God doing this and He is the one who has now placed Peter into an altered state of consciousness there on the roof top. What he sees is both familiar and unfamiliar at the same time. He sees a large sheet, lowered to the ground by its four corners.

"This depiction would instantly remind Jewish readers of the arba kanafot ("four-cornered") garment known as a tallit (prayer shawl).

Of course, this fits the context of Kefa's prayer time perfectly. But Kefa is shocked to see in the tallit all kinds of four-footed animals, crawling creatures and wild birds; things expressly forbidden in the Torah as non-kosher (Lev. 11). If it wasn't enough to see such treif (unkosher) things on a tallit, Kefa is told to "get up, slaughter and eat!" (Kasdan 2022, 78)

I have dreamt of food before but not of those things I would never eat. Peter, who eats kosher, is presented animals and foods on a tallit, and none of them are kosher.



On the sheet he would see shrimp, crab, lobster, ham, bacon, as well as the sources of the food. Pigs and other ritually unclean animals. And Peter is hungry. So, the Lord says to him, Get up Peter, kill and eat.

Peter is then challenged to satisfy his hunger with any one of these creatures—clean or unclean in terms of the Mosaic law—by a voice telling him, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.' The verb translated kill (thysen) is regularly used with reference to sacrifice and may imply a ritual killing before eating. (Peterson 2009, 329)

Of course, Peter objects, normal for him and the Lord tells Him "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy."

And this happens three times. The Lord is showing Peter that He is reaching out to all man kind and in Christ, we are indeed all one. For those who are observant Jews, this will be a problem, thus Peter's objections. But in Christ, we are indeed all in the same family.

The food laws underscore Israel's separation from the nations. By making unclean food clean, God is showing how table fellowship and acceptance of Gentiles are more easily accomplished in the new era. The vision symbolizes that what separated Jews from Gentiles is now removed. (Bock 2007, 390)

Three repetitions of this for Peter hits him hard. He has learned that the Lord never does anything without a specific reason, this time, he will not have to wait long to know what the reason is.

As the vision ends, he is deep in thought, perplexed at what it means, and we learn that the Lord has provided some just in time training for Peter for what comes next.

Acts 10:17–23

"Now while Peter was greatly perplexed in mind as to what the vision which he had seen might mean, behold, the men who had been sent by Cornelius had asked directions to Simon's house, and they appeared at the gate; and calling out, they were asking whether Simon, who was also called Peter, was staying there. While Peter was reflecting on the vision, the Spirit said to him, 'Behold, three men are looking for you. But get up, go downstairs and accompany them without misgivings, for I have sent them Myself.'" Peter went down to the men and said, "Behold, I am the one you are looking for; what is the reason for which you have come?" **They said, "Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews, was divinely directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and hear a message from you." So he invited them in and gave them lodging. Now on the next day he got ready and went away with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him."** (NASB 2020)

Having someone call on you and you are waiting for lunch could be a problem, especially when you have not been expecting them, which is indeed the case. Overlay the vision and then when you see them, you really now are wondering what is going on.

The search team that has shown up at the door consists of a roman soldier, meaning this is already getting really dicey about the "what's up" factor. But then there are some others with this soldier, and they may also have an additional group of soldiers with them as protection.

They are well equipped and have also brought along transportation as well.

Nothing like having a small search party led by the Roman military asking if Peter is there.



Peter is still on the roof, hears this gong on downstairs and most likely can see the gate from his perch and the distinctly Roman military appearance. Does this concern him? Obviously as the Holy Spirit tells him these men are looking for him and He is the one who sent them.

That is called a close working relationship with the Lord. As we look on at this from the outside, we all are wondering if we can have a close relationship as well. One where we can immediately know what it is the Spirit wants to do at this given point in time.

Jesus referred to this type of relationship inferring that it is indeed possible to have today.

John 3:4–8

“Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ **The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.**” (ESV)

As follower of Jesus, we are to be Spirit filled and Spirit led.

Where is it that the Spirit may lead us? He may have us minister to someone who is a known persecutor as He had Annanias due for Saul. He may send us to minister right next door or across the planet. But there is one thing we know for sure as followers of Jesus, as we surrender to Him each and everyday ask Him to empower us anew with the Holy Spirit and lead us.

Romans 8:14

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” (ESV)

Christ was led by the Holy Spirit; He wants the same for you and me.

Here, we see the reality of allowing the Lord to call the shots. That is what Peter is doing, he is fully leaning on the Holy Spirit for guidance and direction knowing that the Lord, as He guides, will indeed provide his needs and not leave him all on his own.

The idea of being led by the Spirit, as Paul tells us in Romans, means that the “Spirit leads the believer and carries him through the trials of this life. He bears the believer up, carrying him over the corruptions of this world.

...The Spirit leads and guides the believer along the way of righteousness and truth. He guides the believer by moving in advance and going ahead of him. He blazes the path, making sure the believer knows where to walk (see Jn. 16:13; see Ga. 5:18; 2 Pe. 1:21).

...The Spirit directs the believer where to go and how to get there, directing him to live righteously and conforming him to the image of Christ. The Spirit becomes involved in the life of the believer, bringing the believer to his destined end, that is, to heaven, to live eternally in the presence of God Himself. (Leadership Ministries Worldwide 1996, 79)

Just as Peter is experiencing the joy and excitement of living Spirit filled and led, we can too. This is an everyday kind of a thing we can experience as we surrender to Him daily.



Because of the Holy Spirit confirming to him he is to go, Peter becomes bold. He walks downstairs and tells the search team, I am the one you are looking for. And since the Spirit did not tell him the why they were sent by the Spirit, he asks the most logical question of the day. “Why are you here?”

Acts 10:22–23

“They said, “Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews, was divinely directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and hear a message from you.” So he invited them in and gave them lodging. Now on the next day he got ready and went away with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him.” (NASB 2020)

What do they tell Peter. Basically, the Holy Spirit sent us. They do indeed take the time to introduce who it is that sent them, this is someone who is a God fearer, someone who is recognized by the Jewish community but is not Jewish.

In just a few minutes, Peter, still processing what the Spirit has shown him in the vision and now talking to these men whom the Spirit sent, is beginning to see just how the Lord may be leading in this. They have just invited Peter to go to the home of a military official of the Roman occupying force there in the occupation capital of Caesarea.

That would be like someone providing an invitation on behalf of the military officer of North Korea to come to North Korea and share with him. But the Holy Spirit said to go. Peter has indeed learned to follow. The first sign of change comes next, these non-Jews, Roman gentiles, are invited to spend the night in a Jewish home.

We are already beginning to see the picture that the Lord has in mind.

Galatians 3:28–29

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.” (ESV)

We will move back to Caesarea and witness a highly unusual meeting that will bear amazing fruit that we still see even today.

In Christ, just as Paul says, we are indeed one.

Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)



ABC's of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.

Works Cited

- Arndt, William, F. Willbur Gingrich, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer. 1979. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature: A Translation of the Fourth Revised and Augmented Edition of Walter Bauer's Griechisch-Deutsches Worterbuch Zu Den Schrift En Des Neuen Testaments Und Der Ubrigen Unchrste*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker, Walter Bauer, and F. Willbur Gingrich. 2000. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Early Christian Literature*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Bock, Darrell L. 2007. *Acts, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Bruce, F. F. 2017. *Acts: Bible Study Commentary*. Nashville, TN: Kingsley Books.
- Doyle, Tom. 2012. *Dreams and Visions: Is Jesus Awakening the Muslim World?* Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.
- Fortner, Don. 2007. *Discovering Christ in Acts: Life After Pentecost*. Danville, KY: Don Fortner.
- Gilbert, Lela. 2023. "Good News from Iran: A Million New Christian Believers." *The Washington Stand*. June 14. Accessed July 19, 2025. <https://washingtonstand.com/commentary/good-news-from-iran-a-million-new-christian-believers>.
- Guzik, David. 2013. *Acts, David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible*. Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.
- Higle, Tommy C. 2013. *Journey into Biblical Problem Solving: A Study of First Corinthians, The Journey Series*. Marietta, OK: Tommy Higle Publishers, Inc.
- Kasdan, Barry. 2022. *Acts of the Emissaries: The Early History of the Yeshua Movement, A Messianic Commentary*. Clarksville, MD: Lederer Books: An Imprint of Messianic Jewish Publishers.
- Keener, Craig S. 2012-2013. *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary & 2: Introduction and 1:1-14:28*. Vol. 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Leadership Ministries Worldwide. 1996. *Romans: Chapters 6-11, The Teacher's Outline & Study Bible*. Vol. 2. Chattanooga, TN: Leadership Ministries Worldwide.
- Mounce, William D. 2006. *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Peterson, David G. 2009. *The Acts of the Apostles, The Pillar New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Taylor, Bayard, and Gray S. Greig. 2012. *Christians on the Move: The Book of Acts, What the Bible Is All About Bible Study Series*. Ventura, CA: Gospel Light.