

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

Opening Our Eyes to a Widening World
Acts 10:1-17, 23-48

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.
2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)
3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Ask four different people to help in reading "We've a story to tell to the nations." Practice together if possible. Make enough copies so that the entire group can join in reading the chorus together.

Bible Study Leader:

For the "Comfort Zone" chart-making activity, bring blank paper and pencils. Since they will be drawing on the paper, they will each need some kind of cardboard, binder, or other backing to help them draw and write. Each teen will need two sheets of paper—one for class, and one for **Youth!!! Take Ten.**

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Opening Our Eyes to a Widening World – 03-08-07-en

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(See home church supplies and equipment suggestions in the **How To:** manual on the Home Church Online website.)

Worship Time Leader:

For the time “Praying for the World”, look for a missionary request regarding a group of people who live far from you, perhaps on the other side of the world. Many missionary information websites are available. For instance, Google: International Mission Board and select “Peoples Around the World”. The site has a large selection of text and graphics on people groups across the globe. Under “Stories”, dozens of stories of need and opportunities are told. Photos, videos, fact sheets, etc. are on the site as well.

Music Sources:

“Tell the Good News” Baptist Hymnal (1991) , # 566.

“Tell It on the Mountain” Baptist Hymnal (1991), # 95.

“Great is Thy Faithfulness” (Baptist hymnal (1991), # 54.

“Wonderful Words of Life” (Baptist hymnal (1991), # 261.

“We’ve a Story to Tell” (Baptist hymnal (1991), # 586.

1

Copy this section for the Gathering Time leader.

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

Opening Our Eyes to a Widening World
Acts 10:1-17, 23-48

Focal Text

Acts 10:1-17, 23-48

Background Text

Acts 10

Main Idea

The Lord led Peter to open his eyes to a widening world to witness for Christ to Cornelius and his family and friends.

Question to Explore

To what opportunities for witness in the world does God want you and your church to open your eyes?

Teaching Aim

To lead participants to identify the opportunities for witness that they and their church may be ignoring.

Gathering together:

Choose two or three choruses to sing that reveal God's will for us to win the world for Christ. "Go Tell It on the Mountain" or "Tell the Good News" are good possibilities.

Distribute the copies you have for the congregation of the hymn "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations."

First thoughts:

Thousands of young girls, in an organization designed to educate and inspire about missions, have thrilled to sing the song "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations." One missionary, after thirty-seven years of mission service, says that it is one song that calls her to a renewal of commitment every time she sings it. Let us participate in the reading.

Reader 1:

We've a story to tell to the nations,
That shall turn their hearts to the right,
A story of truth and mercy,
A story of peace and light,
A story of peace and light.

Reader 2:

We've a song to be sung to the nations,
That shall lift their hearts to the Lord,
A song that shall conquer evil,
And shatter the spear and sword,
And shatter the spear and sword.

Reader 3:

We've a message to give to the nations,
That the Lord who reigneth above,
Hath sent us His Son to save us,
And show us that God is love,
And show us that God is love.

Reader 4:

We've a Saviour to show to the nations,
Who the path of sorrow hath trod,
That all of the world's great peoples
May come to the truth of God,
May come to the truth of God!

All:

For the darkness shall turn to dawning,
And the dawning to noonday bright,
And Christ's great kingdom shall come on earth,
The kingdom of love and light.

Words and music by H. Ernest Nichol, 1862–1926

Say: We've a Saviour to show to the nations in order that all of the world's great peoples may come to the truth of God. May that be our prayer and commitment as we study this morning.

Closing the Gathering Time:

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth and adult Bible study outlines or paper for note taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the Teacher Preparation for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the Bible Study Plan for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

Opening Our Eyes to a Widening World

Focal Text

Acts 10:1-17, 23-48

Background Text

Acts 10

Main Idea

The Lord led Peter to open his eyes to a widening world to witness for Christ to Cornelius and his family and friends.

Question to Explore

To what opportunities for witness in the world does God want you and your church to open your eyes?

Teaching Aim

To lead participants to identify the opportunities for witness that they and their church may be ignoring.

Introduction to Your Personal Study

Recently, an article in a religious magazine accused many Christians of shying away from anyone who looks, talks, or acts differently from how they behave in their own safe environments; in fact, the article stated that the majority of Christians never look beyond their own churches or families in an effort to share the gospel. Most people who call themselves Christians are happy to stay where they are—insulated from the world's harsh realities, never having to confront the needs of the world beyond their doorstep. Isn't that sad?

The truth is that evangelism should be part of every believer's life. Each of us, as Christians, should be vitally interested in the eternal destination of every person with whom we cross paths. Where will that green-haired teenager with multiple body piercings, perhaps even bags your groceries, spend eternity? What about the turban-

clad man who cleans the bus depot where you work or the immigrant mother with four little children at the drug store—the one struggling to understand the pharmacist’s instructions? Evangelism is part of the joy of who we are as Christians. We need to have our eyes wide open to see the opportunities God is bringing our way. We, too, may have the joy of seeing whole groups of people won to belief in Christ, if we are alert to who He is bringing into our areas of influence.

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study**”, found at the beginning of this Unit. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you as well.

This account of the conversion of Cornelius, the centurion, is a significant one in scripture. It is so important that it is recounted three different times in the book of Acts. The vision of the sheet full of creatures demonstrated the truth that what God had declared clean was indeed clean. Christianity was ready to move beyond the Jewish race—the Gentiles and the entire world were waiting for an opportunity to respond to Christ. Peter was chosen to play a significant role in introducing the message to a wider audience.

Focusing on the Meaning:

A God-fearing Gentile Soldier (Acts 10:1-9)

10:1,2 Caesarea was the seat of Roman government for Judea—an important and beautiful city. Cornelius was a Roman soldier who was in charge of one hundred men of the Italian cohort. These men were originally from Italy, not local soldiers. The New Testament generally speaks very kindly about centurions, perhaps because they were generally kind to the Jews. Cornelius was well known among the Jews in Caesarea as being a fine, God-fearing man who prayed daily and was generous to those in need. Perhaps he had grown tired of the pagan gods that the Romans worshipped. Cornelius had not become a Jew, but was very interested in the God of the Jews. He was actively looking for the way of salvation.

10:3 On this particular day, while Cornelius was praying during the afternoon, he had a vision of an angel of the Lord. The angel distinctly spoke Cornelius’ name.

10:4-6 Although Cornelius was very frightened, he timidly spoke to the angel. Because of the consistent prayer life and generosity of Cornelius, God chose to use him in an extraordinary way.

The angel gave him directions to send for the apostle, Simon Peter, who was staying with Simon, the tanner, in Joppa, about thirty miles to the south.

10:7,8 In true military fashion, as soon as he received his orders, Cornelius went into action to obey them. He called upon two faithful servants and upon one of his soldiers who was also God-fearing. Cornelius related to them everything that had transpired with the angel. Then he sent them south to Joppa, to locate Peter and bring him back.

Peter's Vision (Acts 10:9-16)

10:9 While the three were on their way, God was preparing Peter's heart to be used to open doors in the ancient world in which he lived. At noon on the next day, Peter retreated to the roof of his host's home, to pray privately while he waited for lunch to be served.

10:10 As Peter prayed, he fell into a trance. The dictionary defines trance as a state resembling sleep. A person may remain conscious while in a trance, or a trance can be the result of intense concentration.

10:11,12 In the trance, Peter saw a vision of a sheet full of creatures being lowered from heaven. It contained all sorts of animals, birds, reptiles, and creeping things.

10:13 While he was wondering what all this might mean, he heard a voice tell him to go to the sheet, select an animal, kill and eat it.

10:14-16 Peter absolutely refuses to obey the command. It is interesting that he says, "No, Lord." He calls him "Lord" but is unwilling to obey his command. Peter has always observed the strict Jewish dietary laws, which forbade the eating of unclean or impure animals (see Leviticus 11). The voice admonished him to consider nothing unclean that God had cleansed from defilement. The vision was repeated three times. Then the sheet full of creatures was taken back into heaven.

Visitors from Caesarea (Acts 10: 17-23)

10:17-23 While Peter was puzzling over what the vision meant, the men Cornelius had sent arrived at the gate of Simon's home, and asked for Peter. The Spirit prompted Peter to go downstairs and invite them in. The Spirit indicated that Peter must not hesitate to go along with them, since it was He who had sent them. The three men explained why they had come, and encouraged Peter to return to Caesarea with them—to speak with Cornelius. At this point, Peter does something very uncharacteristic of a Jew—he invites these Gentiles to be his overnight guests. He is already putting into practice what he learned from the vision of the unclean animals.

Peter Moves beyond His Comfort Zone (Acts 10:23b-33)

10:23b, 24 For the trip to Caesarea, Peter invited six fellow Jews along as witnesses to the event. (We will discover in subsequent chapters why it was important that there were witnesses to this event.) When they arrived at the home of Cornelius, they found

him anticipating their arrival. Cornelius had invited many friends and family to hear the news that Peter would share.

10:25,26 Cornelius embarrassed Peter by falling, in reverence, at his feet. He was appreciative of Peter. But Peter put a stop to his adoration quickly. He told Cornelius that he (Peter) was just a man like Cornelius, and that he was simply doing the work Christ had sent him to do. Peter also said that he, himself, did not require special recognition for his obedience. Neither do we require special recognition when we carry out the work that Christ has called us to do. Each Christian is responsible, before God, to live out his or her Christianity.

10:27-29 Peter's initial greeting to the crowd that had assembled might easily have been taken as an insult. This was very likely the first time Peter had entered the home of a Gentile. He reminded the group that he was unaccustomed to associating with Gentiles, but that he had learned a lesson from the vision he had had. He would call no one unclean whom God had made clean. God had opened his spiritual eyes to a whole world of people who needed to hear the gospel. Then, surprisingly, Peter asked Cornelius why he had sent for him. Perhaps the Holy Spirit was keeping Peter from rushing into the message.

10:30-33 Cornelius recounted the story of his visit from the angel. He told how the angel had instructed him to send for Peter exactly where to find him. Then he thanked Peter for coming so willingly and invited him to share the message God had laid upon his heart.

Message for Gentiles (10:33-43)

10:34-43 Peter had a very eager audience that day as, once again, he told the lesson he had learned from the vision at Simon "the tanner's" home. God does not show partiality. He does not play favourites. He accepts, on equal ground, every person who believes in Jesus and declares Him to be his or her Lord. He reminds his audience of the good news declared through faith in Jesus. Obviously, the crowd was familiar with the events of Jesus' life and ministry. Peter makes it clear that this same Jesus was crucified on a tree and rose from the dead, three days later. It was God who raised Him from the dead and showed Him openly to many people. The apostles themselves were witnesses to Christ's resurrection. They were commissioned to preach the message that every person who believes in Jesus will receive forgiveness for their sins.

Authentication (Acts 10:44-48)

10:44-46 Even before Peter had finished his message, the Holy Spirit came mightily upon those who were present. The six Jewish witnesses who had accompanied Peter were astonished that the Spirit was poured out on these Gentiles in the same manner in which He had been poured out upon Jewish believers at Pentecost. These Gentiles were speaking in tongues and praising God.

10:47,48 Peter wholeheartedly endorsed the Gentiles' salvation. He called for them to be baptized in the name of Christ, as a demonstration of their obedience in following Jesus. The friends and family of Cornelius were so impressed by Peter and his message that they begged him to stay on with them for a few days—for continued training in the Word.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

God gave Cornelius a vision in order to prepare his heart and to bring Peter to Caesarea to share Christ with his family. He also gave Peter a vision to prepare his heart to move beyond his own race of people, with the gospel message. God is interested in reaching people of every different racial, ethnic, religious, and language background. We must dare to reach across cultural barriers today if we are to see God's kingdom enlarged. We have to get beyond relating just to those within our comfort zone. God would have us share His message of hope with those who are very different from us.

For Personal Reflection:

1. **What have I learned from this study?**
2. **What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?**
3. **What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?**

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

Opening Our Eyes to a Widening World

Regroup the church after the **Gathering Time** and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc. Children who stay with their parents in the Youth or Adult study should have the material on worship as suggested in **The Children's Corner** at the **beginning of this Unit** of studies. (Ask your leader who downloads the studies for those suggestions.)

Begin by helping the group locate the **Focal Text** in their Bibles. Also, share with them the **Main Idea** to be learned from the scriptures, and the **Questions to be Explored** by the group.

Focal Text

Acts 10:1-17, 23-48

Background Text

Acts 10

Main Idea

The Lord led Peter to open his eyes to a widening world—to witness for Christ to Cornelius and his family and friends.

Question to Explore

To what opportunities for witness in the world does God want you and your church to open your eyes?

Teaching Aim

To lead participants to identify opportunities for witness that they and their church may be ignoring.

Connect with Life:

Give each person a sheet of paper. Have them draw a circle, in the middle of the sheet, and label it “My Comfort Zone.” Outside the circle, have them write down people groups or individuals with whom they would feel uncomfortable having coffee at the local coffeehouse. Encourage them to be honest in listing those they might diligently seek to

avoid—possibly those with alternative lifestyles, substance-abuse problems, those who are New Age thinkers, the highly educated, the very wealthy, and so forth. Ask the group members to put their paper aside to be used later.

Guide the Study:

Invite someone to read Acts 10:1-5.

Ask: "What do we know about this man named Cornelius? Was he a Christian?" You might need to define "Christian" as we understand a born-again follower of Jesus Christ.

Ask: "Why did God choose to use him?"

Have a group member describe Cornelius' relationship with his family, his regiment, and the community.

Read the next segment scripture: Acts 10:9-17.

Discuss what kinds of creatures were considered unclean. Invite a member to check the law in Leviticus 11.

Pose the question: "Is it possible for a Christian to say 'No, Lord'?"

Discuss the reason behind Peter's refusal to obey the voice of God.

Have members skim verses 18-23 to find proof that Peter was beginning to understand the lesson of the vision. Encourage the members to share what they discover.

Finish reading the passage Acts 10: 24-44.

Ask: "Why do you think Peter took along the Jewish witnesses?"

Discuss the significance of Peter's statement in verse 26.

Inquire as to whether group members have ever felt the need for personal recognition.

Help the group understand what is meant by the phrase "***the Holy Spirit was poured out on them.***"

Seek an answer to this question: "Why do you think Peter suggested these converts be baptized there and then?"

Recall the lesson Peter understood on the rooftop in Joppa. Confirm that members understand that God is calling us to be witnesses to all persons, regardless of their background or position.

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to go away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Invite members to retrieve the comfort-zone chart they made earlier, and to examine their initial response.

Call for personal testimonies of what the vision, of the creatures in the sheet, has come to mean to each person.

Ask: "Has God opened our eyes to a world beyond what is familiar to us?"

Urge some honest responses to this: "Are there still individuals who might feel unwelcome in our church?"

Have a time of silent prayer as each one asks God to help him know how to establish relationships with types of individuals that they have listed as being outside their comfort zone.

Close in a prayer of commitment that all might be genuine witnesses for Christ—to everyone God brings into our paths.

Take a **five-minute break** to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! Take Ten

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

Opening Our Eyes to a Widening World **Acts 10:1-17, 23-48**

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

Comfort Zones: Circles Within Circles

Retrieve the circle that you drew during the Bible Study. Think about your comfort-zone circle. Who would you include—and whom would you exclude—from your comfort zone?

On a clean sheet of paper, draw five concentric circles (circles within circles).

In the inner circle, place the names of your closest friends. In the second circle, place the names of classmates or others you know well enough to exchange a few pleasantries with, from time to time.

In the next circle, place the names of people in your school that you do not know but could know if you made the effort.

In the next circle, place the name of ethnic groups represented in your community.

Outside the last circle, place the names of countries or people groups that have recently been in the news.

Discuss ways in which you can have a more positive witness to the people in each of these circles.

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***Opening Our Eyes to a Widening World***
Acts 10:1-17, 23-48**Beginning the Service:**

Sing, "Great is Thy Faithfulness" (*The Baptist Hymnal*, 54)
"Wonderful Words of Life" (*The Baptist Hymnal*, 261)

Offering:**Praying for the World:**

Find and share a spiritual need from a group of people who live far from you, perhaps on the other side of the world. Pray that God will reveal to your church how you might help those people find Christ and then share His message with their relatives and friends.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

We Are All Here in the Presence of God
Acts 10:33

Egocentrism is a concept studied in classes of developmental psychology. It refers to the very young child's inability to see the perspective of another person. As a child's mental abilities grow, they begin to understand that someone else is doing and thinking something different from what they are doing and thinking. This growing ability helps a

child to understand that he or she cannot take a toy away from a friend. It will eventually help them to understand that if mother is ill, they need to play quietly.

Moving away from egocentrism is an important part of moral development, as well as social and emotional development. While egocentrism in the young child is a normal part of childhood development, the older person who cannot see something from another person's point of view is truly hampered in their ability to be productive in the world.

Yet, there are many things that hamper movement away from egocentric thinking. We may live in a small community where everyone thinks much like we do. Our religious beliefs may reinforce our sense of "rightness." We may not have had the opportunity to travel and experience other cultures.

Our own selfishness may also keep us encapsulated in our own point of view.

The writer grew up on an isolated ranch, thirty-five kilometres from the nearest small town—two hundred kilometres from the nearest city. She and her siblings attended a small school and an even smaller church.

At their house, every morning began with them waking to a radio devotional program. Their dad had already been out doing morning chores, and had turned the radio on when he came back in. The program was called *Strength for the Day*, and it began with the song, "Great is Thy Faithfulness."

The morning news followed the devotional, and they got ready for school and ate breakfast while listening to the news.

In the evening they listened to the evening news and to their parents, who were teachers, as they talked to them about the events that were happening around the world. They would look up new countries in their atlas. They came to understand that the world was far bigger than their little community.

They had only a few pieces of sheet music. One of them was called, "Far Away Places". Sometimes the teenage girl would play the piano and they would sing:

Far away places with strange sounding names;
Far away over the sea.
Those far away places with strange sounding names,
Are calling, calling me.

(Public Domain)

When she and her brother went away to university, their group of Christian students were eager to make friends with students from other countries. Her brother often invited these students home for holidays. She particularly remembers Abdul Suleiman from Syria and Harbajon Singh from India.

These important influences led her brother into a career of giving aid to developing countries—aid in the form of agricultural and economic assistance. He has travelled to many, if not most, countries of the world. Her own path has not led so far from home but has involved living in two countries (for thirty-seven years) that are outside of her country of origin. Like Peter they were limited, by place and culture, to a rural area—far from places where cultures meet and interact. But God had a plan—not so dramatic a plan as Peter’s experience—but a plan, nonetheless, for opening their eyes to the world.

In our story today, Cornelius, a God-fearing and good man, had a vision in which an angel of God told him to send for Peter.

And on the following day, Peter had a vision as well which broke through the egocentric view of Judaism, to say—for all eternity—that the message of Christ was for all people.

Peter went to Cornelius’ house where Cornelius had gathered his relatives and close friends. Peter and Cornelius shared with one another the visions God had given them, and then Cornelius says, “Now we are all here in the presence of God to hear everything you have been commanded by the Lord” (Acts 10:33).

Peter’s message includes the following:

1. God has no favourites.

“Now I understand that God doesn’t show favouritism, but in every nation the person who fears Him and does righteousness is acceptable to him” (Acts 10:34-35). This is an amazing concept that Christians have struggled to incorporate into their lives. It means, fundamentally, that the barriers of national and racial prejudice that see others as “unclean” or unworthy have forever been broken down.

Yet, because of sin, those barriers still exist. We are aware of religious and ethnic conflicts in many places in our world today. We examine our own hearts and realize that feelings of superiority exist even in the hidden recesses of our being.

We need to reaffirm, with Peter, “Now I understand that God doesn’t show favouritism, but in every nation the person who fears Him and does righteousness is acceptable to him” (Acts 10:34-35). The gospel and Christ’s peace are for all.

2. Stories about Jesus are for everyone.

Peter’s sermon reviews for us the story of Christ’s earthly ministry, beginning with the baptism of John, telling of the Galilean period with its extensive healing ministry and speaking of the death and resurrection and Christ’s appearance to apostles.

This is a reminder that the story of Jesus is forever powerful. Within us is a longing to hear those stories as is expressed by the hymn writer, William H. Parker.

Tell me the stories of Jesus I love to hear;
Things I would ask him to tell me if He were here:
Scenes by the wayside, Tales of the sea,
Stories of Jesus, Tell them to me.

“Tell me the stories of Jesus” Words by William H. Parker (1845-1929). Public domain.

The stories of the believing community must be told, and told again. Little children, teenagers, mid-lifers, and older people, draw strength and courage from those stories.

It is through the stories of faith that the Holy Spirit works. On this day, as Peter was speaking, the Holy Spirit was present and the people began speaking in tongues and praising God. This was an audible, visible, and objective demonstration of the Spirit's coming.

And Peter responded by asking, “Can anyone withhold water and prevent these from being baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” (v. 47)

3. Present before God

Our text for the message is Cornelius' statement, “So we are all present before God, to hear everything you have been commanded by the Lord” (v. 33).

The “we are all present” referred to the Gentiles as well as to Peter and the Jewish Christians who accompanied him. When the church of God gathers in small groups and large groups, it gathers in unity—one people before God.

The purpose of the gathering is to hear the message given by the Lord, himself, to a messenger. The messenger is not the important element here; the message is.

When we are all present and we hear the message, amazing things may happen. The service in Cornelius' house ended with a blessing of the Holy Spirit, the Gentile's Pentecost as it is sometimes called, and the water baptism of those new believers.

Peter stayed on then, in the home of Gentiles, eating with the Gentiles and teaching them more of the faith to which they were now committed. A radical change had taken place in their lives and in Peter's life as well.

When we are all present and we hear the message God has for us, we want to continue fellowshiping with fellow believers. We want the message to permeate all of the happenings of our days, until we meet again to worship.

May it be so, Lord Jesus.

Call to Commitment:

Lord, we pray that we may be all-present—present in mind and spirit as well as being present physically—and that we may hear your message for us today and act upon it. Amen.

Concluding the Service:

“We’ve a Story to Tell to the Nations”

Reader 1:

We’ve a story to tell to the nations,
That shall turn their hearts to the right,
A story of truth and mercy,
A story of peace and light,
A story of peace and light.

Reader 2:

We’ve a song to be sung to the nations,
That shall lift their hearts to the Lord,
A song that shall conquer evil,
And shatter the spear and sword,
And shatter the spear and sword.

Reader 3:

We’ve a message to give to the nations,
That the Lord who reigneth above,
Hath sent us His Son to save us,
And show us that God is love,
And show us that God is love.

Reader 4:

We’ve a Saviour to show to the nations,
Who the path of sorrow hath trod,
That all of the world’s great peoples
May come to the truth of God,
May come to the truth of God!

All:

For the darkness shall turn to dawning,
And the dawning to noonday bright,
And Christ’s great kingdom shall come on earth,
The kingdom of love and light.

Words and music by H. Ernest Nichol, 1862–1926

Prepare a sufficient number of copies for the congregation:

“We’ve a Story to Tell to the Nations”

Reader 1:

We’ve a story to tell to the nations,
That shall turn their hearts to the right,
A story of truth and mercy,
A story of peace and light,
A story of peace and light.

Reader 2:

We’ve a song to be sung to the nations,
That shall lift their hearts to the Lord,
A song that shall conquer evil,
And shatter the spear and sword,
And shatter the spear and sword.

Reader 3:

We’ve a message to give to the nations,
That the Lord who reigneth above,
Hath sent us His Son to save us,
And show us that God is love,
And show us that God is love.

Reader 4:

We’ve a Saviour to show to the nations,
Who the path of sorrow hath trod,
That all of the world’s great peoples
May come to the truth of God,
May come to the truth of God!

All:

For the darkness shall turn to dawning,
And the dawning to noonday bright,
And Christ’s great kingdom shall come on earth,
The kingdom of love and light.

Words and music by H. Ernest Nichol, 1862–1926