



What Can We Learn From Peter? (Part 3)

Matthew 4:19-20: (KJV) ¹⁹*And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.* ²⁰*And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.*

On this past May 20th we embarked on a journey through the Apostle Peter's life and on June 10th, we continued that journey. Our ending point was his conversation with our Lord after Jesus' resurrection - the conversation that let Peter know that Jesus was counting on him as a lynch pin of what would become Christianity, in spite of Peter's shortcomings. Today, we look at some of Peter's experiences that followed, from Pentecost to the conversion of the first Gentile to the writing of Peter's epistles. Stay with us as we look at how God's spirit influenced Peter in his mistakes, his impetuosity and his courage.

It was just after Jesus had been taken up to heaven before their eyes that the Apostles went to Jerusalem as Jesus had instructed. While there and waiting for Pentecost, they decided at the prompting of Peter that they needed a replacement for Judas.

Acts 1:24-26: (NASB) ²⁴*And they prayed and said, You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two you have chosen* ²⁵*to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.* ²⁶*And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.*

Interesting event: no Jesus, no Holy Spirit, just 120 followers trying to fill a void. Hmm... good decision? Peter once again ran ahead of the Lord.

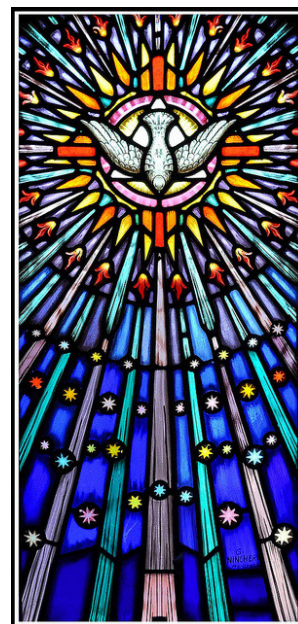
Next is the defining moment for Christianity as a movement in the post-Jesus era:

Acts 2:1-4: (NASB) ¹*When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.* ²*And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.* ³*And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them.* ⁴*And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.*

Upon hearing this noise, a crowd gathers and is amazed. They even accuse the followers of Jesus of being drunk! ...Who stands up to put this in order? Of course...Peter, who now has received God's Spirit.

Acts 2:14-15: (NASB) ¹⁴*But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words.* ¹⁵*For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day;*

Peter then immediately quotes the Prophet Joel. Interestingly, he never before quoted from a prophet. He had been given enlightenment.





Next he goes into the first public witness of the Gospel:

Acts 2:22-24: (NASB) ²²Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— ²³this man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put him to death. ²⁴But God raised him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for him to be held in its power.

Peter then quotes David from the Psalms.

What has changed? Peter the spokesman is confidently reasoning on the life of Jesus, quoting Old Testament prophecy, and boldly speaking of the crucifixion and resurrection!

How did Peter and the Apostles handle their new found fame?

A bit of a side note: There is much disagreement among different denominations as to where Peter was during much of the ministry of Paul.

 **Where Peter was, Apostle Peter Series Part 2, Was Peter ever in Rome?**
www.youtube.com

- **1 Peter 5:13:** (NASB) *She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark.*
- *Peter tells us he was in Babylon, modern day Iraq. That was the scene of his ministry. Babylon is where he was writing his letters and epistles.*



Next we have the first recorded miracle performed without Jesus on the scene. This miracle in many ways serves as a template for the path that Peter's life would now follow.

Acts 3:1-17: (NASB) *(selected verses)* At the gate of the Temple there was a man lame from birth asking for alms from Peter and John. He had probably been a beggar for years.

⁴But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, Look at us! ⁵And he began to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. (Notice - look at us!) ⁶But Peter said, I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—walk! ⁷And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened. ⁸With a leap he stood upright and began to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. ⁹And all the people saw him walking and praising God;

Peter actually did perform the miracle as he spoke with the great authority of the name of Jesus.

¹⁰and they were taking note of him as being the one who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate of the temple to beg alms, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. ¹¹While he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them at the so-called portico of Solomon, full of amazement.



Even though Peter spoke the words, the man clung to both, recognizing their unity in Jesus' power.

¹²But when Peter saw this, he replied to the people, Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk? ¹³The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, the one whom you delivered and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. ¹⁴But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, ¹⁵but put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses.

Christianity is not supposed to draw attention to "me," but to Jesus. Publicly Peter put the focus on Jesus, not himself and John. That is a good template for us to follow.

It is again Peter who speaks, but he speaks as a co-laborer together with John and not as his superior.

¹⁷And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also.

Peter had compassion and understanding, but all this good brought trouble!

Acts 4:1-4: (NASB) ¹As they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to them, ²being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³And they laid hands on them and put them in jail until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

So they heal, they are ridiculed and then imprisoned; they speak boldly and the number of followers grew to 5,000!!!

As the Gospel grew, did Peter's relationship with the Jewish leaders grow as well?

Back to that side point one more time:



Where Peter wasn't, Apostle Peter Series Part 2, Was Peter ever in Rome?
www.youtube.com

- **Romans 15:20: (NASB)** And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, so that I would not build on another man's foundation;
- **If Peter had been in Rome nearly 20 years building up the local church of God, Paul would have been going to Rome and building upon somebody else's work. It's pretty clear cut. Paul was going to Rome because no one had laid the foundation.**



Observations: Peter had become...

- Bold in the spirit;
- A clear spokesman for the Gospel - but not the centerpiece of it;
- Powerful in wielding what the Spirit gave him - understanding, healing and insight;



- **Humble.** The edginess of his previously impetuous nature was much subdued.

(See the Bonus Material of this CQRewind.)

These next events take place after the drama with Ananias and Sapphira:

Acts 5:14-42: (NASB) ¹⁴And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number, ¹⁵to such an extent that they even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on any one of them...

Imagine the stir as the momentum of the Gospel looks overwhelming, like nothing can stop it!

¹⁷But the high priest rose up, along with all his associates (that is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy. ¹⁸They laid hands on the apostles and put them in a public jail. ¹⁹But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the gates of the prison, and taking them out he said, ²⁰Go, stand and speak to the people in the temple the whole message of this Life. ²¹Upon hearing this, they entered into the temple about daybreak and began to teach. Now when the high priest and his associates came, they called the Council together, even all the Senate of the sons of Israel, and sent orders to the prison house for them to be brought... ²⁵But someone came and reported to them, The men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!

The Apostles displayed principled obedience in serving the highest cause.

²⁶Then the captain went along with the officers and proceeded to bring them back without violence... ²⁷When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸saying, We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

Not only are the Pharisees flustered and put out, but they are accusatory as well:

²⁹But Peter and the apostles answered, We must obey God rather than men. ³⁰The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. ³¹He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins... ³³But when they heard this, they were cut to the quick and intended to kill them.

Here is Peter's wisdom: He acknowledges their guilt at the crucifixion, understanding their anger probably has some base in it. Then he reminds them that Jesus came to grant them repentance!

³⁴But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law, respected by all the people, stood up in the Council and gave orders to put the men outside for a short time. ³⁵And he said to them, Men of Israel, take care what you propose to do with these men... ³⁸So in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action is of men, it will be overthrown; ³⁹but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God.

Now here is perhaps the wisest Pharisaical counsel written in the entire Bible! If it is a plan from men, the movement will naturally die down. But if it IS from God, do you really want to be fighting God...?!

*A listener suggested
1 Peter 1:15,16; 2:17; and
4:10. Even daily tasks are
elevated for the Christian.
A life of action with Jesus
is also a life of
contemplation.*



⁴⁰They took his advice; and after calling the apostles in, they flogged them and ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and then released them.

...So much for wisdom?

⁴¹So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for his name. ⁴²And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

They rejoiced to have the experience of suffering for Christ! This became a theme for Christianity. This truly characterized what the Apostle Peter was becoming - a bold minister of Christ! He was not without fault and weakness as we shall see shortly, but he was a man with a vision and a faithfulness even until death.

How did Peter handle the potential profitability of the Gospel?

Acts 8:14-25: (NRSV) ¹⁴Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. ¹⁵The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit...

Notice the continual working together. They build one another up, protect one another, check one another's attitude and have a back-up!

¹⁷Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, ¹⁹saying, Give me also this power so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.



Another defining moment in the development of Christianity - it could have become a money making machine, (and what could be wrong with them taking a little bit here and there?) but what was Peter's response?

²⁰But Peter said to him, May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain God's gift with money! ²¹You have no part or share in this, for your heart is not right before God. ²²Repent therefore of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and the chains of wickedness.

There is no wavering in Peter's answer. He emphatically states that greed has no part in the Gospel and labels its desire as sin and wickedness! It is not wrong for us to contribute to a worthy cause, but it is not right if wealth is the focal point. Peter's life is a great template.

A listener suggested "The school of Experience charges a high tuition and there are no scholarships." Peter exemplified that and we are blessed by his mistakes.

²⁴Simon answered, Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may happen to me. ²⁵Now after Peter and John had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, proclaiming the good news to many villages of the Samaritans.

Again, repentance and humility are encouraged by those who co-labor in the work of the Gospel.

Peter visits Lydda and Joppa, heals converts, and now raises Dorcas from the dead:

Acts 9:36-43: (NRSV) ³⁶Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. ³⁷At that time she



Modern Day Joppa,
near Tel Aviv



became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. ³⁸Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, Please come to us without delay.

You wonder why they called for him. Was it to provide comfort and guidance for such a great loss? It is very unlikely they had any thoughts of her being raised from the dead because Peter had never done that before.

³⁹So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. ⁴⁰Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, Tabitha, get up. Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. ⁴²This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

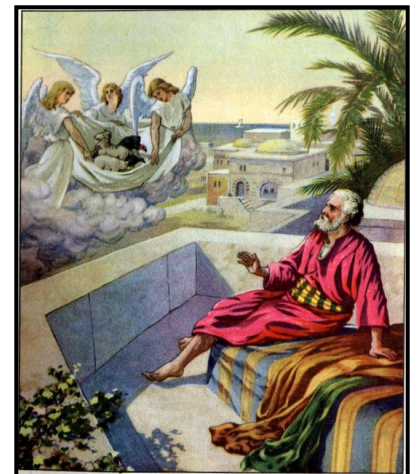
It sounds like she tirelessly supported the Gospel in whatever service she could perform.

Interestingly, miracles of healing of the sick were performed on unbelievers. Believers, like Lazarus, were raised from the dead. Perhaps there is a symbol of being raised in Christ to live a new life.

So, how do the Gentiles become part of this picture?

We fast forward to about 3 1/2 years after Pentecost. Peter is in Simon the Tanner's home.

Acts 10:9-16: (NRSV) ⁹About noon the next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. ¹⁰He became hungry and wanted something to eat; and while it was being prepared, he fell into a trance. ¹¹He saw the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four corners. ¹²In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air. ¹³Then he heard a voice saying, Get up, Peter; kill and eat. ¹⁴But Peter said, By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean. ¹⁵The voice said to him again, a second time, What God has made clean, you must not call profane. ¹⁶This happened three times, and the thing was suddenly taken up to heaven.



(Jesus drew Peter to him three times; Peter both denied Jesus and was forgiven for it three times. See the Bonus Materials at the end of this Rewind for more "threes" in the life of Peter, representing the completeness of an experience.)

A heavenly voice calls Peter by name and gives a three-part command.

- Rise - indicating his humble posture, possibly kneeling in prayer;
- Kill - an aggressive and unmistakable command;
- Eat - a command completely contrary to what Peter had ever done.



Peter's instinctive reaction was one of great integrity. He wanted to protect the sacred commands of the Law, because up to that time there had never been a reason to disregard it. So the command was repeated and he finally began to understand.

The application of Peter's vision through the baptism of Cornelius:

Acts 10:17-34: (NRSV) (selected verses) ¹⁷Now while Peter was greatly puzzled about what to make of the vision that he had seen, suddenly the men sent by Cornelius appeared. They were asking for Simon's house and were standing by the gate. ¹⁸They called out to ask whether Simon, who was called Peter, was staying there. ¹⁹While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, Look, three men (note that number three again!) are searching for you. ²⁰Now get up, go down, and go with them without hesitation; for I have sent them. ²¹So Peter went down to the men and said, I am the one you are looking for; what is the reason for your coming? ²²They answered, Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say.

Remember, for the 3 1/2 years after Pentecost, the call of Christianity - without exception - was to the Jewish nation only. God's spiritual children were to come from Israel. This vision was to prepare Peter for this new concept of the call going out to the Gentiles. Christianity will never be the same after this next experience! So Peter complies, takes some believers with him and goes...

²⁵On Peter's arrival Cornelius met him, and falling at his feet, worshiped him. ²⁶But Peter made him get up, saying, Stand up; I am only a mortal. ²⁷And as he talked with him, he went in and found that many had assembled; ²⁸and he said to them, You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean.

This was of such great importance to the Gospel. A door was opened for Gentiles to be called to Christ. Why was Peter the one asked? Jesus told him he would be given keys to heaven - here is the fulfillment of that. The call would be unlocked in a way they wouldn't understand at the time Jesus was alive.

Peter's reaction demonstrated that there is no caste system in Christianity. It is a mutual brotherhood where we are all the same in Christ. Peter understood the message of his vision.

Here was the event from Cornelius' perspective:

Acts 10:1-4: ¹There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, ²A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. ³He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. ⁴And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

Essentially, Cornelius' prayers were not handled in the same way of His chosen people, but instead they went up as a memorial, a sacrifice before Him and it was now time to "open the gift" of those prayers. They were saved for the right time and the Apostle Peter showed up at his door.



³³Therefore I sent for you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. So now all of us are here in the presence of God to listen to all that the Lord has commanded you to say.

³⁴Then Peter began to speak to them: I truly understand that God shows no partiality...

The result is not only begetting of the Spirit and baptism, it is the changing of the whole call of Christianity! Cornelius' whole family was converted. Of course, this sets up lots and lots of conflict to come.

Food? Peter and Paul, Conflict in Early Christianity, PBS

- ...a classic showdown in the history of early Christianity. Paul tells the story this way: He says in Antioch he encountered Peter who was having a meal with non-Israelite Jesus people. Peter thought this was all right until a contingent for Jerusalem came.
- He tapped Peter on the shoulder and Peter stops attending these banquets. He yells at Peter for not being true to the Gospel and not being true to Christ and this vision of things, and what he is really yelling at Peter about is food.

We disagree. This was not an argument about food. The argument was about the equal treatment of all who call themselves Christians. The call was now open to Gentiles who had no exposure to the rituals, the circumcision, traditions, etc. Of course there would be conflict when the two sides met. How could they work together coming from such diverse backgrounds?

With all of this success, did Peter have failures as well?

Peter publicly corrected by Paul: 14 years or so after Pentecost:

Galatians 2:11-16: (NRSV) ¹¹But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood self-condemned; ¹²for until certain people came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But after they came, he drew back and kept himself separate for fear of the circumcision faction. ¹³And the other Jews joined him in this hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴But when I saw that they were not acting consistently with the truth of the gospel, (that God does not show partiality) I said to Cephas before them all, If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews? ¹⁵We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; ¹⁶yet we know that a person is justified not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law.

This issue of Jewish vs. Gentile Christian would dominate the early church. The argument was: Should the Gentile Christians adopt the Law or not?

Peter got off track, just like we do sometimes. He was very fallible.

Who is who, Peter and Paul, Conflict in Early Christianity, PBS

- Paul says explicitly that he went down to Jerusalem to meet with the leaders of the church there. He calls them "the pillars." ...Names like Peter, James. This James is not the Apostle, he is the brother of the Lord.

Peter speaking at the conference at Jerusalem: 20 years after Pentecost - what do we do with Gentile Christians vs. Jewish Christians?

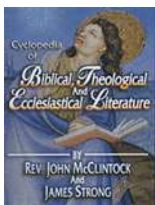
Acts 15:6-12: (NASB) ⁶The apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter. ⁷After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe. ⁸And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving



them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us; ⁹and he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. ¹⁰Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? ¹¹But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are. ¹²All the people kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.

So, Peter and Paul were arguing on the same side of the issue. They understood the Gospel belonged with the Gentiles and the Law was not part of the Gospel. They were leading Christianity together to the same end.

When we have troubles amongst us, we should do what they did. Acts 15 provides the formula.



(Source McClintock & Strongs Cyclopaedia:)

The First Epistle of Peter - written about AD 60-63? *Design, Contents, and Characteristics.* – The objects of the epistle, as deduced from its contents:

1. To comfort and strengthen the Christians in a season of severe trial.
2. To enforce the practical and spiritual duties involved in their calling.
3. To warn them against special temptations attached to their position.
4. To remove all doubt as to the soundness and completeness of the religious system which they had already received.

Remember how Simon could only answer Jesus' *lovest thou me* question with the love that signifies a brotherly affection? He was immature and broken after he denied Christ.

Now at the end of his life, Peter is finally able to give this admonition:

1 Peter 1:22: *Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye **love <agape 25>** one another with a pure heart fervently:*

He learned of the pure love Jesus was trying to teach him. He finally mastered the approach of loving selflessly for the good of the other. Peter was a living and dying example of what Christianity is supposed to be.

He became an example and leader of how we should live our lives.

*What can we learn from Peter?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about...
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*





Another example of Peter taking a bold stand was with Ananias and Sapphira.

Notice the soundness of Peter's reasoning:

Acts 5:1-11: (NRSV) ¹But a man named Ananias, with the consent of his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property; ²with his wife's knowledge, he kept back some of the proceeds, and brought only a part and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³Ananias, Peter asked, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land? ⁴While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, were not the proceeds at your disposal? How is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You did not lie to us but to God!

This was dramatic - obviously there was a pre-meditated wickedness on the part of these two and the message was, such greed and self promotion has no place in this Christian Church!

⁵Now when Ananias heard these words, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard of it. ⁶The young men came and wrapped up his body, then carried him out and buried him. ⁷After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸Peter said to her, Tell me whether you and your husband sold the land for such and such a price. And she said, Yes, that was the price. ⁹Then Peter said to her, How is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out. ¹⁰Immediately she fell down at his feet and died. When the young men came in they found her dead, so they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹And great fear seized the whole church and all who heard of these things.

Back to the vision that Peter had of the unclean animals:

Acts 10:16: (NRSV) *This happened three times, and the thing was suddenly taken up to heaven.*

A number of things come into play here. Because the command was given three times, it would have been of particular significance to Peter, since his Christian life was a series of experiences in threes:

- His calling to follow Jesus was in three parts.
John 1:40-42, Mark 1:14-20, Luke 5:1-11
- He fell asleep three times while Jesus prayed in Gethsemane.
Mark 14:37-42
- His denial of Jesus was in three parts.
Matthew 26:69-75
- His responsibility to the flock was given to him in three parts.
John 21:15-17
- And now, a three-part command given three times was used to open the Gospel to Gentiles!



Acts 10:19-21: (NRSV) ¹⁹While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, Look, three men are searching for you. ²⁰Now get up, go down, and go with them without hesitation; for I have sent them. ²¹So Peter went down to the men and said, I am the one you are looking for; what is the reason for your coming?



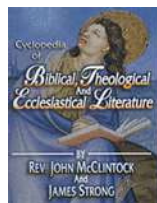
Yet another set of reassurances - God's Spirit communicates with Peter:

- THREE MEN are here to see you
- A THREE part command - Arise, get off the roof and go with them, doubt nothing!



Here we have so of the most profound lessons of these remarkable events, for both Cornelius and Peter. They have not yet met, nor has the main purpose of their visions come to pass, yet both were given profound insight into God's care, His foresight, His timing and His plan!

(Source McClintock & Strongs Cyclopedia:)



Some background on 2 Peter: The contents of the epistle seem quite in accordance with its asserted origin. The customary opening salutation is followed by an enumeration of Christian blessings and exhortation to Christian duties, with special reference to the maintenance of the truth which had already been communicated to the Church (<610101>2 Peter 1:1-13). Referring then to his approaching death, the apostle assigns as grounds of assurance for believers his own personal testimony as an eye-witness of the transfiguration, and the sure word of prophecy, that is the testimony of the Holy Ghost (14-21). The danger of being misled by false prophets is dwelt upon with great earnestness throughout the second chapter; their covetousness and gross sensuality, combined with pretences to spiritualism, in short all the permanent and fundamental characteristics of Antinomianism, are described; while the overthrow of all opponents of Christian truth is predicted (<610201>2 Peter 2:1-29) in connection with prophecies touching the second advent of Christ, the destruction of the world by fire, and the promise of new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. After an exhortation to attend to Paul's teaching, in accordance with the less explicit admonition in the previous epistle, and an emphatic warning, the epistle closes with the customary ascription of glory to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.