Preschool–Grade 6

Peter and Cornelius

Sunday School Lesson for Preschool (Ages 3–5), 20–30 minutes

Main point: God loves every person the same.
Bible passage: Acts 10. Read the whole chapter yourself before class.
Memory verse: "God is no respecter of persons" *Acts 10:34 (KJV)*. That means God loves every person the same.
You need: a Bible, a bedsheet or large towel, a few stuffed animals or toy animals, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: put a bookmark in your Bible at Acts 10. Put the toy animals in the middle of the sheet.

1. Opening game: Sheet Down, Sheet Up (5 minutes)

You and three helpers (or older kids) each hold a corner of the sheet with the animals inside. Lift it high, then slowly let it down to the floor so the kids can see the animals. Lift it up again. Do it three times. Say: "Today we will hear a true story about a big sheet full of animals that came down from heaven!"

2. Bible story (5 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Acts 10. Say: "This story is true. It is in God's Word." Read each line slowly and do the motion. When you see **Say it with me**, the kids say the line back to you.

Cornelius loved God. He prayed to God all the time (Acts 10:2). *(Fold your hands.)*
An angel said, "Send for Peter" (10:3–5). *(Point far away.)*
Peter went up on the roof to pray (10:9). *(Climb with your hands.)*
Peter saw a big sheet come down from heaven (10:11). *(Bring both hands down slowly.)*
It was full of animals (10:12). *(Make your favorite animal sound.)*
It went up and down three times (10:16). *(Hold up three fingers.)*
God was teaching Peter: every person matters to God (10:28). **Say it with me: "God loves every person!"**
Peter went to the house of Cornelius (10:24). *(Walk in place.)*
Peter told them about Jesus (10:36–43). *(Hold up your Bible.)*
God gave them the Holy Ghost. They spoke with tongues and praised God (10:44–46). *(Lift your hands up.)*
Peter told them to be baptized in the name of the Lord (10:48). *(Go down and come up.)*
Say it with me: "God is no respecter of persons!"

3. Questions to ask (3 minutes)

1. What came down from heaven? *(A big sheet with animals, Acts 10:11–12)*
2. Where did Peter go? *(To the house of Cornelius, 10:24–25)*
3. Who does God love? *(Every person, 10:34)*

4. Memory verse (3 minutes)

Say: "Peter said, 'God is no respecter of persons.' That means God loves every person the same." Teach the motion: point to one child, then another, then sweep your arm around the whole room. Say the verse with the motion three times: in a normal voice, in a whisper, and in a happy loud voice. Then say "Acts 10:34" and clap three times.

5. What this means for us (3 minutes)

Say: "God loves you! Everyone has done wrong things. That is called sin (Romans 3:23). Jesus is God. He came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins. He was buried. Then He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us what to do (Acts 2:38). We repent: we tell God we are sorry, and we stop doing wrong. We are baptized in Jesus' name, down under the water, and our sins are washed away. And God gives us the Holy Ghost. That is God's own Spirit in us. When people are filled with the Holy Ghost, they speak in other tongues, words God gives them, just like Cornelius did (Acts 10:46; Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: Everybody Picture (5–10 minutes)

Give each child a take-home sheet. In the drawing box, help them draw lots of happy faces: people God loves. Let them add their own face too. While they color, ask: "Who does God love? Does God love you?" Kids who finish early can carry the toy animals around on the sheet with a friend.

7. Prayer

Say each line, and the kids say it after you:
"Thank You, God, for loving every person.
Help me be kind to everyone. In Jesus' name, amen."

Tips for little ones: let every child help hold a corner of the sheet once. If they get wiggly, do the sheet up and down again and count to three. Send the take-home sheet home so parents can tell the story again this week.

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