

From Pentecost Onwards

Jesus gave Peter the important job of leading the Church on earth. Here are some examples of how he led the Church.

- He organised the believers to choose a replacement for Judas (Acts 1:16).
- He led the preaching on Pentecost day (Acts 2:14).
- He said that the Church must also welcome Gentiles (people who are not Jews) since they, too, can receive the Spirit (Acts 10:34).
- When others in the Church began to argue about this, Peter spoke up and gave a clear answer to them (Acts 15:6)

Peter's dream (adapted from Acts 10:9-33)

One day, Peter was praying on the roof of a house. After a while he became hungry. He then had a vision of animals, all kinds of animals. These animals were the kind Jews would never eat. In Jewish religion many animals are unclean. A voice told him to kill and eat these animals. Peter was born a Jew and had never eaten unclean animals. He refused to do what the voice said. But the voice said back, 'You should not think anything unclean that God has said is clean.' This happened three times. Then the vision left him. Peter wondered what it all meant.

Meanwhile, a man called Cornelius had sent messengers to see Peter. Cornelius wanted to be baptised by Peter. Cornelius was not a Jew; he was a Gentile. Jews would never normally mix with Gentiles. Peter understood what God was trying to tell him in the vision. Just as there were no longer clean and unclean animals, there are no longer clean and unclean peoples. Peter told the whole Church that Jews and Gentiles should all be baptised into the one Church.

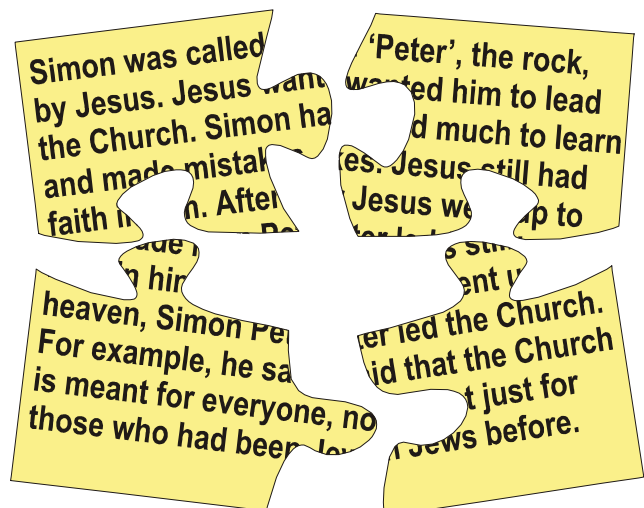


To do

- 1 Put the jigsaw together and write down what it says.
- 2 Read again the story of Peter and Cornelius.

Peter was born a Jew. What two things above went against the faith of the Jews?

- ii) How did the vision from heaven make Peter change his mind?
- iii) What do you think would have happened to the early Church without Peter's leadership?



GENTILES - people who are not Jews