

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankston.rpca.org.au bit.ly/WTrpcaf

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. bit.ly/WkBbl or bit.ly/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on Acts by Simon Kistemaker, Kent Hughes, and John Stott

Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested a godly mother will lead her children

Reading Acts 10:1-8 Devout, God-fearing, and unsaved

Notes As Jesus had commanded (Matt. 28:18-20) and promised (Acts 1:8), the gospel would go to the nations. But I don't think we understand how divided Jews and Gentiles were religiously and culturally. Most Jews had no dealings with Gentiles. None.

Jesus was about to change the prejudices of Jewish Christians in a powerful way. Cornelius was a Roman God-fearer. Though not a full Jewish convert, he was sympathetic with the Jews' view of God and had come to some level of relationship with God. Yet, he still needed saving. God sent Cornelius a vision of an Angel – not to evangelise him, but rather to tell him to call for Simon Peter to tell him how to advance in his relationship with God.

This is significant: as the apostles Peter and John went to Samaria and welcomed the Samaritans as full members of the Christian church, so Peter travels to Caesarea and welcomes the Gentiles as full members in the church. (Kistemaker)

Yet before this could happen, Peter's own prejudices had to be broken down. *The primary subject of this chapter is not so much the conversation of Cornelius as the conversion of Peter. (Stott)*

- Questions**
1. Where had Jesus commanded and promised the gospel to go?
 2. What was Cornelius's relationship with God?
 3. Why did the Angel not evangelise Cornelius?

4.     

Praise Psalm 59b²

- Pray**
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to proclaim the gospel freely to all who will listen, by God's help
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord's Day you review the previous week's readings and/or the previous or current week's sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

Reading Acts 10:44-48 While Peter was still speaking...

Notes Peter was not far into his sermon when something happened that every preacher, every Christian who speaks the gospel to another, longs for. *Peter laid down the major points, mentioned some outstanding facts, and was interrupted by a special working of the Holy Spirit! Cornelius and his household heard that "everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins," and they responded in faith. No altar call! No invitation! They simply believed and were born again on the spot! (Hughes)*

Peter and his companions were amazed as the Holy Spirit was poured out with visible signs. *Suddenly God sends his Spirit as a sign that God accepts those Gentile believers as his people... Peter relates that the Spirit came on the Gentiles exactly as he did on the apostles at Pentecost (11:15) and that God gave the Gentiles the same gift he gave the Jews (11:17)... Luke seems to suggest that the Jews heard the Gentiles speak in tongues but that they did not need interpreters to understand the spoken words. (Kistemaker)*

Peter and his companions understand that these newly converted Gentiles are to be full members of the Christians church. No one, nothing, is to prevent them from water baptism to symbolise Jesus baptising them with the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 3:11) Those formerly viewed as beyond the reach of saving grace are now graciously and powerfully ushered into the church.

- Questions**
1. How was Peter's sermon interrupted?
 2. What was the response of the Gentile new believers?
 3. What was the response of Peter's companions?

4.     

Praise Psalm 59b

- Pray**
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to proclaim the gospel freely to all who will listen, by God's help
 2. Pray for your family
 3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
 4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God's word tomorrow

Reading Acts 10:34-43 God shows no partiality

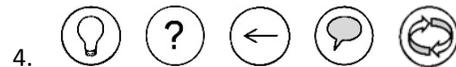
Notes So, Peter begins to preach. He *began his sermon with a solemn personal statement of what he had learned through his experiences of the pervious few days... Peter... means that God's attitude to people is not determined by any external criteria, such as their appearance, race, nationality or class.*" (Stott)

At the same time, Cornelius's devotion, even his "God-fearing-ness" is not sufficient. So, Peter begins to preach the gospel to Cornelius and his household. Salvation is found only by faith in Jesus, the only Saviour (v36, cf 4:12). Peter tells of his eyewitness of Jesus' life and ministry, of seeing His death on the cross, and then seeing Him raised from the dead. He followed those details with the certainty that Jesus would return to judge the world.

The sermon concluded with Peter's statement in verse 43: "All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." "Everyone"—not only Jews, but "everyone." (Hughes)

Think about the unbelievers around you. The "pretty good" ones and the "really bad" ones. Oh, that they would believe in Him and receive forgiveness of sins through His name.

- Questions**
1. How does Peter begin his sermon?
 2. How does he summarise the gospel?
 3. Who can be saved?



- Praise Pray**
- Psalm 59b
1. Pray with your family for the unbelievers you know to believe in Jesus and be saved.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

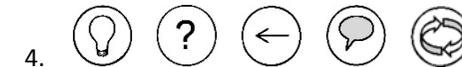
Reading Acts 10:9-16 What God has cleansed...

Notes As the messengers from Cornelius's house approach where Peter was, God sets about preparing Peter for their visit. *Peter is a Jew who since childhood has learned not to enter the home of a Gentile and not to have table fellowship with a non-Jew. He must now learn to overcome his prejudice and accept as brothers and sisters God-fearing Gentiles who believe in Jesus.* (Kistemaker)

Peter is hungry following his mid-day prayers. In this state of hunger, he fell into a trance and saw a vision from God – 3 times. All sorts of animals, clean and unclean, are lowered in a sheet from heaven. Peter is commanded to rise up, kill, and eat.

Peter's ingrained cultural objections are so strong that he forcefully refuses to obey God's command to kill and eat. Alluding to Scripture (Ezek. 4:14), he feels that he is on safe ground to object to the divine directive. Peter tells the Lord that he has never eaten anything impure and unclean and thus indicates that he observes the barrier between the Jew and the Gentile... A voice speaks from heaven and answers Peter's legitimate objection. The voice conveys the message that God, who formulated the dietary laws for his people Israel, can also revoke them according to his sovereign will... God himself removes the barrier, for he is the lawmaker. (Kistemaker)

- Questions**
1. What is Peter doing before the messengers arrive?
 2. Describe the vision he received from heaven?
 3. What was God's response to Peter's objection?



- Praise Pray**
- Psalm 59b
1. Commit your pastor in prayer to proclaim the gospel freely to all who will listen, by God's help
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Acts 10:17-23 Go with them

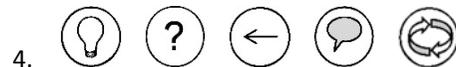
Notes The meaning of the vision is clearer to us now than it was to Peter then. Of course, now we know the rest of the story. Peter, however, is perplexed about what this means. As he wonders, Cornelius’s men arrive. As they arrive, the Holy Spirit tells Peter to go with them because He has sent them.

As they explain to Peter their mission, his heart and mind is changing. He doesn’t respond, “Not so, Lord!” Instead he invites them in for the night and the next day sets out with them and some other Jewish believers for Caesarea and Cornelius.

The barrier between the Jewish Christian and the Samaritan Christian had been removed when Peter and John went to Samaria to accept the Samaritan believers as full members of the church. Now the time has come to extend the same privilege to Gentile believers. Not man but God removes the barrier that separates the Jew from the Gentile. God instructs Peter to accept Gentile believers in the Christian church. God, not Peter, opens the gates of heaven to the Gentiles. God himself inaugurates a new phase of gospel ministry for Peter. (Kistemaker)

And, Peter is beginning to get it.

- Questions**
1. What does the Holy Spirit tell Peter to do about Cornelius’s men?
 2. And, what does Peter do?
 3. Who is removing the barrier between Jew and Gentile, and how?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 59b
1. Commit your fellow church members in prayer to proclaim the gospel freely to all who will listen, by God’s help
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

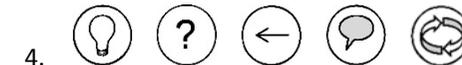
Reading Acts 10:24-33 We want to hear what God has commanded you

Notes Peter and the others travel to meet Cornelius. As soon as they do, Cornelius falls down to worship Peter. *This leader of the oppressive military occupation force fell at Peter’s feet! This was the perfect opportunity for Peter to put his old prejudices into high gear. “The Big Fisherman is here. You may kiss my ring.” (Hughes)*

But Peter is beginning to get it, remember. He pulls Cornelius to his feet telling him he too is just a man like him. He explains his previous cultural separation from Gentiles, but also explains how God had overruled that and he had come in obedience to God. So, he asks, “Why have you asked me to come?”

Cornelius then explains his own circumstances and his own vision. “In obedience to the Angel’s message I have asked you to come. We want to hear from God through you.” *The house was packed out with Cornelius’ family and close friends. Everyone was there—Mom, the children, the grandparents, his military associates and servants. They did not know it, but they were about to have the first-ever cross-cultural home Bible study. (Hughes)*

- Questions**
1. How does Cornelius greet Peter?
 2. How does Peter respond?
 3. What is Cornelius and his family’s expectation regarding what Peter will tell them?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 59b
1. Pray with your family that your pastor will tell you the things commanded by God
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member