



The Rooftop

*A fresh vision of God's
heart for the lost.*

Mississippi

Guidelines for a Rooftop Experience in your Community

Objective: To help leaders consider “a new reality” that captures a fresh vision of God’s heart for the lost by experiencing *The Rooftop*, a resource to engage the lost in your community.

REFERENCE

The Rooftop began as part of the evangelism initiative **More to Life** written by Dennis Pethers. **More to Life** is a recognition that we live in a new day when churches need to connect with people who are likely never to have attended church and are not at all familiar with our customs and traditions. (Background to *The Rooftop* Acts 10-11:18. Have participants read scripture passage.)

RESOUNDING HIS PRAISE

Song: (optional)

RECOGNITION

Share a brief narrative of Peter’s vision of God’s love for all people as told in the story of Peter and Cornelius:

Peter’s Rooftop Experience

Peter’s Action

Kingdom Expansion

REFLECTION

Lead participants to respond to questions (see [page 7](#)) related to how they feel God views the people in their city followed by a time of prayer/reflection and feedback.

REVERANCE

Lead participants in a time of prayer

RESOUNDING HIS PRAISE

Song: (optional)

RESPONSE

What does that mean for your church and community? Respond to [page 8](#) in *The Rooftop* booklet.

Places & Ideas for a Rooftop Experience in your Community

Places for your people to gather:

- High-rise building that overlooks your city
- A hillside around your church that overlooks the community
- Parking garage that overlooks a part of your community
- County courthouse or city hall complex downtown to view the people groups that surround those areas
- Community schools (elementary to high school) to pray for the students and teachers in those facilities
- Firehouses or police stations
- College or university campuses, go into football stadium to view the campus
- Helicopter pad on rooftop of a hospital where you can view a lot of the area
- Building or hillside where you can see factory workers
- Place to oversee a jail or prison facility
- Military bases in which your church could pray over those complexes
- Google map your church and surrounding community to show on screen in a worship service
- Take digital pictures of your community, insert them in a computer and loop them for Sunday School classes to pray over

MissionSite Digest

Order a MissionSite Digest from the Church Planting Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board to discover more information about the primary people groups in your community who are not actively involved in evangelical church life, and ways you can reach out to them.

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THE ROOFTOP EXPERIENCE

Acts 10:1-11:18 NKJV

Cornelius' Vision

¹ There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, ² a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. ³ About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!" ⁴ And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, Lord?" So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.

⁵ Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. ⁶ He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do." ⁷ And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. ⁸ So when he had explained all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa.

Peter's Vision

⁹ The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. ¹⁰ Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance ¹¹ and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. ¹² In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. ¹³ And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." ¹⁴ But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean." ¹⁵ And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." ¹⁶ This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

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Peter Visits Cornelius

¹⁷ Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate. ¹⁸ And they called and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, was lodging there. ¹⁹ While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are seeking you. ²⁰ Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them." ²¹ Then Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius, and said, "Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?" ²² And they said, "Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you." ²³ Then he invited them in and lodged them. On the next day Peter went away with them, and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him. ²⁴ And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. ²⁵ As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him.

²⁶ But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man." ²⁷ And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together. ²⁸ Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. ²⁹ Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?" ³⁰ So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, ³¹ and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God. ³² Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea. When he comes, he will speak to you.' ³³ So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God."

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Good News for Gentiles

³⁴ Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. ³⁵ But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him. ³⁶ The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ — He is Lord of all — ³⁷ that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. ³⁹ And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. ⁴⁰ Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, ⁴¹ not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. ⁴² And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins."

Gentile Conversion and Baptism

⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. ⁴⁵ And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, ⁴⁷ "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" ⁴⁸ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Acts 11:1-18 NKJV

Gentile Salvation Defended

¹ Now the apostles and brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. ² And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those of the circumcision contended with him, ³ saying, "You went in to uncircumcised men and ate with them!" ⁴ But Peter explained it to them in order from the beginning, saying: ⁵ "I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, an object descending like a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came to me. ⁶ When I observed it intently and considered, I saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air.

⁷ And I heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Peter; kill and eat.' ⁸ But I said, 'Not so, Lord! For nothing common or unclean has at any time entered my mouth.' ⁹ But the voice answered me again from heaven, 'What God has cleansed you must not call common.' ¹⁰ Now this was done three times, and all were drawn up again into heaven.

¹¹ At that very moment, three men stood before the house where I was, having been sent to me from Caesarea. ¹² Then the Spirit told me to go with them, doubting nothing. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. ¹³ And he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house, who said to him, 'Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter, ¹⁴ who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.' ¹⁵ And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶ Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' ¹⁷ If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?" ¹⁸ When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."

Actions and questions for discussion:

1. Look at the city and say what you see.
2. What kinds of people do you think live in different parts of the city?
3. Which parts of the city are God's favorite?
4. Who are the "also granted" (11:18) of your city?
5. What does it mean for your church?

Space for Reflection

At the Rooftop

1 Kings 19:9-18 God speaking in a whisper

Space for Reflection

Alone in the Room

Matthew 6:6

Sharing with each other

What have you sensed that God wants to change in you as you seek to lead others into reaching lost people in your community?