

Nov 08, 2015



# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks  
Baptist Church  
Grand Prairie, Texas

Lesson Leaders:

James Haymon  
Jose Cisneros

Class Leaders:

Inreach: Pat Hester  
Outreach: Joyce Kirkland  
Secretary: Mary Clark  
Deacon: C M Hester

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**  
Lives rooted in God's unchanging grace can never be uprooted

**HYMN FOR THE WEEK:**  
Amazing grace—how sweet the sound—  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind but now I see.  
—Newton

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**  
*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God*  
(Eph 2:8 NKJV)

*(From "Our Daily Bread", Sep 29, 2014)*

**Series: THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY COMES ALIVE**

UNIT: Spreading the Gospel

NEXT WEEK

**Spreading the Word**  
(Acts 16:1-5,8-15)

## Saved by Grace Acts 15:1-12

**Aim and Application of the Lesson**

The lesson examines the blessing of Christians to be **Saved by Grace**. The **study's aim** is to understand why keeping the Law of Moses is unnecessary for salvation because of God's grace. The **study's application** is to participate in the furtherance of the gospel using lessons learned out of the lesson.

*(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)*

**Lesson Introduction and Background**

The early Jewish followers of Christ struggled with how their faith in Jesus related to their Jewish heritage. We find the early church meeting and worshipping in the temple (Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:42) and Peter and others carefully seeking to keep the dietary regulations of the Mosaic Law (10:14). All this seemed natural to these Jewish men and women, who were following the Jewish Messiah. However, new and complicated questions arose when Gentiles began to come to faith in Christ. In taking the gospel to Cornelius's household, Peter was accused of eating with Gentiles—that is, he entered a place of uncleanness and ate unclean, or non-kosher, food. As the number of Gentile believers grew, there also grew within the Jewish church a group we call Judaizers. They insisted that Gentile converts to Christ keep the Mosaic Law. Some came to Antioch, where Paul and Barnabas were ministering, and even insisted that unless Gentiles submitted to circumcision, they could not be saved (Acts 15:1). This challenge could not go unanswered, for it compromised the very gospel of grace that Paul and Barnabas were preaching. The issue was brought to Jerusalem for consideration by the "apostles and elders" (Acts 15:6). Peter was the first to speak. Peter's words were based on his own experience at Cornelius's house (Acts 15:7). There, Peter saw that God Himself bore witness to the fact that the Gentiles were saved by faith alone. They were given the Holy Spirit, just as the Jewish believers had been. Thus, "salvation is a gift of God... Because man is unable to provide salvation, the stipulation 'unless you are circumcised . . . you cannot be saved' (v, 1) is hollow. Only God saves His people" (Kistemaker, Acts, Baker). By the giving of the Spirit to Gentile believers, the distinction between Jews and Gentiles was removed. Peter declared that God "put no difference between us [Jews] and them [Gentiles]." Furthermore, the giving of the Spirit to Gentiles proved that God purified "their hearts by faith." They had simply believed in Christ, and God had graciously poured out His Spirit upon them. They had done no work. They had not adopted Jewish practices. They had simply accepted by faith God's gracious gift of salvation (cf. Acts 15:11). Peter's argument was unanswerable. Paul and Barnabas and James also spoke out in support of the truth Peter annunciated, and the issue was officially settled—essentially because God Himself had settled it by the gospel He established and by His own actions. The gospel is succinctly stated in Ephesians 2:8-9: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Nothing is to be added to the offer, and it is to be withheld from no one. As such, the wall of separation between Jews and Gentiles has been broken down (Eph. 2:14). In Christ, there are no distinctions (Gal. 3:28).

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### GRACE TO OVERCOME THE LAW (ACTS 15:1-3)

#### *Grace to fulfill the Law (1)*

Grace over law because God's promises come by grace (Rom 4:16)

Grace over law because grace reigns over the law (Rom 5:20-21)

Grace over law because we are under grace not the law (Rom 6:13-18)

Grace over law because God has chosen His remnant by grace (Rom 11:5-6)

Grace over law because God makes grace abound in us (2 Cor 9:8)

Grace over law because God's grace is sufficient in all things (2 Cor 12:9)

Grace over law because we are saved by grace (Eph 2:8-9)

#### *Grace to overcome disputes (2)*

Grace in disputes by providing fellowship (Gal 2:9)

Grace in disputes because nothing is ever too large for God (Judg 7:4-7)

Grace in disputes because reliance on God will always bring deliverance (2 Cor 1:8-10)

#### *The joy of grace (3)*

Joy and praise because of God's grace (Acts 11:18)

Joy of grace through serving (1 Peter 4:10-11)

Joy of grace through receiving the crown of joy (Isa 35:10)

Joy of grace through the refreshing of God (Acts 3:19)

Joy of grace through liberation (Rom 8:19-21)

Joy of grace through reconciliation (2 Cor 5:17-20)

### GRACE CONSIDERED (ACTS 15:4-6)

#### *Grace considered in accepting one another (4)*

Accept one another through agreement and unity (1 Cor 1:10)

Accept one another through living in peace (2 Cor 13:11)

Accept one another by being considerate of the interests of others (Phil 2:2-4)

Accept one another in love (1 Peter 3:8-10)

#### *Grace considered in making decisions (5-6)*

Grace in decisions through guidance by the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:18)

Grace in decisions through guidance into insight (Ps 119:99-100)

Grace in decisions through guidance into understanding (Ps 119:130)

Grace in decisions through guidance into wisdom (Prov 2:6)

### GRACE THE MOTIVATION OF SALVATION (ACTS 15:7-12)

#### *God's motivation to choose (7)*

God chose His people out of the world (John 15:19)

God chose His people as a people for Himself (Acts 15:14)

God chose His people and He also will justify and glorify them (Rom 8:30)

God chose His people to be holy and blameless (Eph 1:4)

God chose His people through His grace and for His purpose (2 Tim 1:9)

#### *God's motivation to not make distinction (8-9)*

All Christians are one in Jesus (Gal 3:27-28)

All Christians are members of one body (1 Cor 12:12)

God has no distinction between Christians (Rom 10:12)

There is no partiality with God (Rom 2:11)

#### *God's motivation to save (10-12)*

Salvation because God wants everyone to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9)

Salvation because God wants all men to be saved (1 Tim 2:1-4)

Salvation because Jesus came to save the lost (Luke 19:10) Salvation because God's grace brings salvation before all men (Titus 2:11)