August 16, 2026

Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Class Leader:
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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
We can sometimes view ourselves only as we have been, with all of our failures and shortcomings. But God sees us as new creations, not who we were but who we are in Jesus.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK:
Heavenly Father, help me to find my full identity in You. Allow me to humbly see others through Your eyes of grace.

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear my name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.

(Acts 9:15 NKJV)

(From "Our Daily Bread", July 31, 2019)

Summer Series: The Testimony of Faithful Witnesses

NEXT WEEK

UNIT 2: Faithful Witnesses Spread the Good News

Timothy, a Leader with a Legacy

2 Timothy 1:1-6, 3:14-16

Saul of Tarsus, the Unlikely Apostle
Acts 22:3-15

Lesson Background and Introduction

In about AD 58, at the end of his third missionary journey, Paul returned to Jerusalem for the final time (Acts 21:17). The centerpiece of that third missionary trip was his lengthy ministry in Ephesus (19:1, 8-10; 20:31), a stay marked by no little controversy. His forebodings and those of others did not indicate that his visit to Jerusalem would be any less controversial—quite the opposite, in fact (20:17-38; 21:4, 10-14). But **Paul made the trip anyway**.

Upon his arrival, Paul met with leaders of the Jerusalem church and reported on his ministry (Acts 21:17-19). Those leaders also warned Paul of the danger his presence posed (21:20-24). When that danger materialized, Paul was arrested on a false charge of defiling the temple (21:27). Had it not been for the presence of Roman troops to restore order, Paul probably would have been killed right then and there (21:30-36). After being rescued, Paul then surprisingly asked to address the mob that had just tried to kill him. The Roman commander gave permission (21:40-22:2), and that's where our lesson text opens.

Key Verses: Acts 22:14-15

> *14 Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. 15 For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.*

(*Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary*)



NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Unlikely Because of Past Actions (Acts 22:3-5)

Past training (3)

Trained as a Pharisee (Acts 23:6)
Trained in Judaism (Gal 1:14)
Trained as a legalistic Jew (Phil 3:4-6)
Trained as part of the tribe of Benjamin (Rom 11:1)

Past persecution (4)

Persecutions of imprisonment and hardships (Acts 20:23-24)
Persecutions that put him on display and made him a spectacle (1 Cor 4:9-11)
Persecutions of great pressure that made him fear for his life (2 Cor 1:8-11)
Persecutions of insults (Heb 10:33-34)

Past objectives (5)

Objective to imprisoning those belonging to the Way (Acts 9:1-2)
Objective to harm the saints (Acts 9:13-14)
Objective to oppose the name of Jesus (Acts 26:9)
Objective to destroy the church (Gal 1:13)

Changed Because of Meeting Jesus (Acts 22:6-11)

Meeting Jesus through questioning (6-7)

Questions about Jesus being the Son of God (Matt 4:3)
Questions about Jesus' human origin (Mark 6:3)
Questions about Jesus being the King of the Jews (Matt 27:11)
Questions about Jesus being the Messiah (Matt 11:2-3)

Meeting Jesus by obtaining His Name (8-9)

A name where one is blessed who brings the gospel (Matt 21:9)
A name that cancels condemnation (John 3:18)
A name that has power present when believers are gathered (1 Cor 5:4)
A name that provides justification (1 Cor 6:11)

Meeting Jesus and getting new directions (10-11)

Directions that comes through the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:14)
Directions that are provided through the understanding that Jesus gives (1 John 5:20)
Directions through knowledge and wisdom (Col 1:9)

Chosen With A New Commission (Acts 22:12-15)

Commissioned with new sight (12-13)

A new sight through the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17)
A new sight that must have faith (2 Cor 5:7)
A new sight to bring the gospel (Luke 4:18)

Commissioned by being chosen (14)

Chosen to bear fruit (John 15:15-16)
Chosen by grace (Rom 11:5)
Chosen to receive an inheritance (Eph 1:11)
Chosen to be a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God (1 Peter 2:9-10)

Commissioned to be a witness (15)

Witness because Jesus commanded it (Matt 28:18-20)
Witness through the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8)
Witness through teaching (2 Tim 2:2)
Witness about what God has done for us (Ps 66:16)