

Oct 18, 2015



# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks  
Baptist Church  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**  
When Christians draw close to Christ, they draw closer to one another

**POEM FOR THE WEEK:**  
In Christ there is no East or West,  
In Him no South or North,  
But one great fellowship of love  
Throughout the whole wide earth.  
—Oxenham

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**  
*There is neither Jew nor Greek,  
there is neither slave nor free, there is  
neither male nor female; for you are  
all one in Christ Jesus.*  
(Gal 3:28 NKJV)

(From "Our Daily Bread", Oct 5, 2003)

**Series: THE CHRISTIAN  
COMMUNITY COMES ALIVE**

UNIT: Giving Bold Testimony

NEXT WEEK

**Trusting The Spirit**  
(Acts 11:1-18)

## Breaking Down Barriers Acts 10:24-38

**Aim and Application of the Lesson**

The lesson reviews how God desires His people to work toward **Breaking Down Barriers** between people so that all will come to the knowledge and acceptance of God through the work of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. The **study's aim** is to understand that God does not show favoritism to people who are a different ethnic or racial origin. The **study's application** is to grow in love for people regardless of their ethnic or racial origin and to have a goal of sharing God and Jesus Christ with all who asks.  
(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

**Lesson Introduction and Background**

In 1947, Jackie Robinson (1919-1972) became major-league baseball's very first rookie of the year. More significantly, he became the first African-American to play major league baseball in the modern era. Robinson was not alone in breaking baseball's color barrier. Branch Rickey, general manager and part owner of the Dodgers, had been looking for prospects within the "Negro League" for several years. His determination to eliminate segregation in baseball gave Robinson his opportunity.

Just before his ascension, Jesus declared that the apostles would be his witnesses "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The apostles didn't seem to comprehend this to mean extension of the gospel to Gentiles, given the surprise expressed in Acts 10:45; 11:18. As observant Jews, the apostles had been brought up to view Gentiles as unclean pagans, who might endanger the apostles' own religious and moral purity. As such, the apostles probably interpreted Christ's words in Matthew 28:19, 20 and Acts 1:8 geographically rather than ethnically: surely Jesus meant that they were to preach to Jews who lived in all nations. A divine correction to this misunderstanding was needed! That correction began with two visions that occurred about 21 hours apart: the first to a Roman centurion named Cornelius (Acts 10:1-6) and the second to the apostle Peter (10:9-16). Before his vision, Cornelius had developed a reputation of being "a righteous and God-fearing man, . . . respected by all the Jewish people" (10:22). There is no indication, however, that Cornelius had fully converted to Judaism. Luke (the author of Acts) refers to individuals like Cornelius as "God-fearing" or "who worship God" (Acts 10:2; 13:16, 26) and/or being "devout" (10:2), in contrast with those who had converted to Judaism fully (2:11; 6:5; 13:43). Even so, God, recognizing the sincerity of Cornelius's faith, chose this man to be the starting point for extending the gospel to Gentiles. God's initiative began when he sent an angel to Cornelius to tell him to send for Peter (10:3-8). At the time Peter received his own vision, he had "stayed in Joppa for some time" (Acts 9:43). Peter had been summoned there on behalf of a dead woman for whom he performed a resurrection (9:36-41). One day he became hungry while praying on a rooftop (10:9, 10), and that's when he experienced a strange vision of "a large sheet" being lowered from Heaven (10:11). The sheet was filled with all kinds of unclean creatures, whose meat was not to be eaten according to Leviticus 11. Three times a voice from Heaven told Peter to "kill and eat" (Acts 10:13, 16); Peter insisted each time that he could not do so, stressing that he had "never eaten anything impure or unclean" (10:14). The voice responded each time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean" (10:15). Although Jesus had declared "all foods clean" (Mark 7:19), nobody at the time seemed to realize the significance of this pronouncement in setting aside the dietary laws. What could it mean? The answer came quickly as the delegation from Cornelius arrived while Peter was still pondering (Acts 10:17). Prompted by the Holy Spirit, Peter agreed to accompany them back to their master's house (10:19-23).

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **BREAKING BARRIERS BY MEETING FACE TO FACE (ACTS 10:24-27)**

*Gathering family and friends (24)*

Gathering to involve all in the sphere of influence  
(Deut 16:11)

Gathering to get teaching (Mic 4:2)

Gathering to seek God (Zech 8:21)

Gathering to tell others about God and His  
blessings (Mark 5:18-20)

*Realizing all are equal (25-26)*

Equal but some can give interpretations for  
understanding (Dan 2:30)

Equal but some can bring good news (Acts 14:11-  
15)

Equal fellow servants (Rev 19:10)

*Be in unity of purpose (27)*

Unity of the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:3-6)

Unity through the Church (Eph 4:11-13)

Unity through love (Col 3:14)

Unity in Christ (Phil 2:1-4)

### **BREAKING BARRIERS BY APPLYING GOD'S TRUTHS (ACTS 10:28-29)**

*Accept God's truths (28)*

Accept God's truths as discerned from the Holy  
Spirit (1 Cor 2:12-14)

Accept God's truths and His works (Ps 77:12)

Accept God's truths and His ways (Ps 143:5)

Accept God's truths in worship (Ps 48:9)

Accept God's truths by thinking on them (Phil 4:8)

*Obey God's truths (29)*

Obey God's truths because God hates lying and  
dishonesty (Zech 8:16-17)

Obey God's truths because it's the only way to be in  
fellowship with God (Ps 15:1-2)

Obey God's truths because we are members of one  
body in Christ (Eph 4:25)

Obey God's truths because in truth there is  
freedom (John 8:32)

Obey God's truths because it brings peace with  
God (Phil 4:7-9)

### **BREAKING BARRIERS BY PRAYER AND GUIDANCE (ACTS 10:30-33)**

*Consistently pray (30-31)*

Pray about everything (Phil 4:6-7)

Pray without ceasing (1 Thess 5:17)

Pray while suffering (James 5:13)

Pray for others (Rom 12:9-13)

Pray in the Spirit (Eph 6:17-18)

*Listen and follow God's guidance (32-33)*

Guidance into obedience through imitation (Eph  
5:1-2)

Guidance into obedience through suffering (1 Peter  
2:21)

Guidance into truth (John 16:13-15)

Guidance by the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:18)

Guidance into insight (Ps 119:99-100)

### **BREAKING BARRIERS BY TEACHING THE GOSPEL (ACTS 10:34-38)**

*Facts about God and partiality (34-36)*

God shows no partiality (Deut 10:17)

God does not judge with partiality (2 Chron 19:7)

God's ways do not have partiality (Luke 20:21)

God show no favoritism (Rom 2:11)

*Facts about Jesus being Lord of all (37-38)*

Jesus is Lord because all things came through Him  
(1 Cor 8:6)

Jesus is Lord because the Holy Spirit testifies that  
He is (1 Cor 12:3)

The Church is built on the fact that Jesus is Lord  
(Matt 16:16-18)

The angels agree that Jesus is Lord (Rev 17:14)