

Oct 25, 2015



# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks  
Baptist Church  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**  
God's Spirit lives inside us, and also walks beside us

**POEM FOR THE WEEK:**  
The long, long night is past, the morning breaks at last, And hushed the dreadful wail and fury of the blast, As o'er the golden hills the day advances fast! The Comforter has come! —Bottome

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**  
*And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever*  
(John 14:16 NKJV)

*(From "Our Daily Bread", Jul 18, 1998)*

**Series: THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY COMES ALIVE**

UNIT: Giving Bold Testimony

NEXT WEEK

**The Power of Prayer**  
(Acts 12:1-11)

## Trusting the Spirit Acts 11:1-18

**Aim and Application of the Lesson**

The lesson examines how to recognize that Christians can live godly lives by **Trusting the Spirit**. The **study's aim** is to teach us to be more sensitive to the Holy Spirit's direction in our lives. The **study's application** is to trust the Holy Spirit fully when He makes His will known to us.

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

**Lesson Introduction and Background**

As we saw in last week's lesson, the earliest Christians were Jews, who had been taught to remain separate from pagan Gentiles (Acts 10:28). Gentiles might be welcome to observe and learn at synagogue meetings, but they could not be accepted fully until they had rejected their ancestral gods and (for men) received circumcision, the sign of Abraham's covenant (Genesis 17:9-14; compare Exodus 12:48; Ezekiel 44:9). The first followers of Jesus, being Jews, seemed to have assumed that the same would be true in their new religious movement. They expected Jesus, the promised Messiah of the Old Testament, to return one day to judge the world and destroy the powers of evil (that is, the Gentiles). As a result, the earliest Christians did not attempt to evangelize Gentiles at first (Acts 11:19). God, however, had a different idea. As was often the case, He set His plan in motion in an unexpected way. Acts 2:1-6:7 shows the church growing exponentially in Jerusalem and Judea as the gospel was proclaimed, being verified by miraculous signs. All this brought the church into conflict with the Jerusalem authorities, eventually leading to the first Christian martyrdom (6:8-7:60). A widespread persecution, led by Saul of Tarsus, immediately followed. Many Christians fled Jerusalem for safety (8:1-3; 11:19). As they traveled, they continued to spread the good news about Jesus. The result was that Samaritans (lesson 5) and Gentiles began to learn about Christ—a classic instance of God's bringing good from tragedy. The leaders of the first-century church needed new thinking—God's thinking—to see the inclusiveness that he intended for the gospel.

When children are young, they often resist instructions or try to avoid doing what has been told to them to do. After realizing that resistance was futile, they would sometimes give in with an angry, "I'll do it, but I won't like it!" Talking with other parents, we've learned that our children weren't particularly original here—most do the same. And it's been even more interesting to realize, through many experiences at work and at church, that adults often adopt the same kind of attitude: give in only when you have to, but don't change your viewpoint even then. Unfortunately, this attitude can spread to a point where it becomes crippling for an organization. Today's passage reminds us that such a posture has no place in the church. As we've seen, Acts 11 tells the story of a highly controversial event that touched on significant doctrinal concerns, provoking strong emotions in the process. Yet the story doesn't end with one group holding a grudge and stomping off mad, or another group gloating over winning a close vote. Rather, the text shows the church carefully considering the evidence and, in the end, conceding to what God Himself had done. If this is not the typical outcome of church disputes in our own experience, we can perhaps understand why the church in its very earliest days expanded rapidly, both in numbers and geographically, while divided churches today dwindle and die.

*(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)*

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **TRUST DURING QUESTIONING (ACTS 11:1-3)**

*Questions about receiving God's Word (1)*

Receiving God's word as the actual Word of God (1 Thess 2:13)

Receiving God's word as truth and believing it (Eph 1:13)

Receiving God's word through the Gospel (Col 1:4-7)

Receiving God's word through correctly handling God's word (2 Tim 2:15)

*Questions about association with Gentiles (2-3)*

Questions about association because it previously was against the law (Acts 10:28)

Questions about association because unbelief that Gentiles could receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:45)

Questions about association because Gentiles were not circumcised (Rom 2:26)

Questions about association because of fear from the Jews (Gal 2:12)

### **TRUST FOR PROVIDING RESPONSES (ACTS 11:4-11)**

*Responding about revelations (4-6)*

Revelations through Jesus (John 14:9-10)

Revelations of God's will (Eph 1:9)

Revelations through the prophets (Rom 16:25-26)

Revelations through the Church (Eph 3:10)

*Responding about misunderstandings (7-8)*

Misunderstandings because of hidden things (Luke 9:42-45)

Misunderstanding of Jesus (John 13:6-9)

Misunderstanding of spiritual things (1 Cor 2:14)

Misunderstanding because of human ideas (Acts 17:16-21)

*Responding about God's corrections (9-11)*

Corrections through discipline (Prov 6:23)

Corrections through God's Word (2 Tim 3:16-17)

Corrections through preaching the Word (2 Tim 4:2)

Corrections through teaching (Titus 2:15)

### **TRUST AND OBEY THE SPIRIT'S LEADERSHIP (ACTS 11:11-17)**

*Leadership through guidance (12-14)*

Guidance into insight (Ps 119:99-100)

Guidance as a light for our path (Ps 119:105)

Guidance into understanding (Ps 119:130)

Guidance through counsel (Ps 73:24-26)

*Leadership through providing gifts (15-17)*

Gifts that are different (Rom 12:6-8)

Gifts that are from the same Spirit (1 Cor 12:4)

Gifts that are for the common good (1 Cor 12:7)

Gifts that are to serve others (1 Pet 4:10)

### **TRUST THE SPIRIT'S IMPACT ON OTHERS (ACTS 11:18)**

*Impact of glorifying God (18)*

Glorifying God is part of praise and worship (Ps 34:3)

All Christians should glorify God (1 Peter 2:12)

Sometimes sickness is used so that God might be glorified (John 11:4)

Glorifying God through Jesus glorifying Himself in His Church (2 Thess 1:10)

*Impact of submission to God (18)*

Submission to God is feeling chastised and burdened by sin (Ps 51:17)

Submission pleases God (1 Sam 15:22)

Submissiveness comes for God (James 3:17)

Submission to those in authority (1 Peter 5:5)

Christians are to be submissive (Col 3:12)