

Sunday School Recap - Evang. Lisa L. Dalton
“Let’s Grow Together”

 Lesson 8 * October 26, 2025 “Trusting The Spirit”

Bible Basis: Acts 11:1–18

BIBLE TRUTH: Peter’s testimony to the power of the Holy spirit converting Gentiles increased the Jerusalem’s church support of Peter.

MEMORY VERSE: “Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us , who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? (Acts 11:17)

TRUSTING THE SPIRIT:

 Background

-  **Jewish purity laws:** Eating with Gentiles was seen as defiling.
- **Cornelius:** A Roman centurion, symbolizing Gentile inclusion.
- **Pentecost parallel:** The Spirit’s outpouring on Gentiles mirrors Acts 2.
- Peter has just returned from Caesarea, where he witnessed the Holy Spirit fall on Gentile believers (Acts 10).
- Jewish believers in Jerusalem are concerned that Peter ate with uncircumcised Gentiles, violating traditional purity laws.

 Lesson Aim

- Understand Peter’s vision and its implications for the early church.
- Recognize the role of the Holy Spirit in guiding believers beyond cultural boundaries.
- Reflect on how they can embrace God’s inclusive love in their own lives.

What is Circumcision?

In the Bible, circumcision is a physical sign of the covenant between God and His people, symbolizing obedience, identity, and spiritual commitment.

Origin in Genesis 17: Circumcision was first commanded by God to Abraham as a sign of the covenant. Every male was to be circumcised on the eighth day after birth (Genesis 17:10–12).

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 THE TEXT (NKJV)

1. 🧑 Peter is Challenged (vv. 1–3)

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!”

WHAT’S HAPPENING HERE?

- Jewish believers criticize Peter for eating with Gentiles.
- Reflects tension between tradition and the Spirit’s new work.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. Why were the Jewish believers upset with Peter?
2. What does Peter’s vision teach us about God’s view of people?
3. How can we make sure we’re not standing in God’s way today?

 PETER SHARES HIS VISION (v.4-10)

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.

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WHAT’S HAPPENING HERE?

- Peter Recounts his vision of the sheet and unclean animals.
- Emphasizes God’s command: “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.”
- Describes Cornelius’ vision and the Spirit’s instruction to go without hesitation.
- God promised throughout scripture that He would reach the nations. This began with His promise to Abraham in (Gen. 12:3, 18) and became very specific in Malachi 1:11 – “My name shall be great among the Gentiles.
- The promises of God are Yea and Amen. (2 Cor. 1:20)

Peter Journey to Caesarea (vs 11-14)

¹¹At that very moment, three men stood before the house where I was, having been sent to me from Caesarea.

¹²Then the Spirit told me to go with them, doubting nothing. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house.

¹³And 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,

¹⁴who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.

What’s Happening Here?

- Peter continues to recount what took place at Cornelius’ house.
- This portion of Acts 11:11–14 is Peter recounting the divine orchestration that led him to Cornelius, a Gentile centurion.

 Witnesses and Accountability

- Peter brings six Jewish believers with him. This detail highlights transparency and communal discernment and witnesses.

 The Power of the Word

- “*Words by which you and all your household will be saved.*” — Salvation comes through the message of Christ, not through ritual or heritage.
- This sets the stage for Peter’s sermon and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Gentiles.

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REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. How important is it to have witnesses of God’s greatness where there is doubt?
2. What does the power of the Holy Spirit say about the power that lies within us?

PETER’S CHALLENGERS ARE CONVINCED (VS. 15-18)

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.

WHAT’S HAPPENING HERE?

- The Holy Spirit fall on Gentiles just as it did on Jews at Pentecost in Acts 2.
- Peter recalls Jesus’ promise: “*You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.*”
- Peter declares: “Who was I to think that I could stand in God’s way?”
- The Jewish believers fall silent, then glorify God: “So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life”.
- **Unity through revelation:** The church moves from criticism to worship when they recognize God’s hand.
- This closing section of **Acts 11:15–18** is the climax of Peter’s defense and a turning point in the early church’s understanding of God’s plan for salvation.
- This marks a theological breakthrough: salvation is for all who believe, not just Jews.

Key Takeaways

 **Inclusivity of the Gospel:** Salvation is for all people, not just Jews.

- **Divine Initiative:** God orchestrates the events through visions and the Spirit.
- **Breaking Barriers:** Cultural and religious boundaries are redefined by God’s grace.
- **Unity in the Spirit:** The same Spirit confirms the legitimacy of Gentile believers.

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 Fill-in-the-Blank Handout

- “The Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the _____ of Pentecost.”
 - “John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the _____ _____.”
 - “God has granted to the Gentiles _____ that leads to life.”
 - “Peter said, ‘Who was I to think that I could _____ in God’s way?’”
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