



Faith and Love C.O.G.I.C  
Sunday School

Lesson 8 October 26, 2025  
TRUSTING THE SPIRIT

# SUNDAY SCHOOL CORE VALUES



## **SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING**

**Superintendent/Teacher:** Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. **Psalm 133:1**

**School/Class:** But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. **Hebrews 13:16**

**Superintendent/Teacher:** All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. **2 Timothy 3:16**

**School/Class:** Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. **Psalm 119:105**

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING**

**Superintendent/Teacher:** Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. **Philippians 2:4**

**School/Class:** He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor. **Proverbs 22:9**

**Superintendent/Teacher:** Therefore he says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.” **Ephesians 4:8**

**School/Class:** As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. **1 Peter 4:10**

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING**

**Superintendent/Teacher:** For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. **1 Corinthians 12:12**

**School/Class:** For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function. **Romans 12:4**

**Superintendent/Teacher:** By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. **John 13:35**

**School/Class:** For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. **Gal. 5:13**

## SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

ALL:

But grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen. **2 Peter 3:18**

## 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: VERSE: "Forasmuch then as God gave them the gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?" (Acts 11:17).
- Lesson Aim: By the end of the lesson, we will: LEARN that Peter's preaching to the Gentiles was affirmed by the believers in Jerusalem; FEEL comfortable with reaching out to different peoples; and IDENTIFY Christian Scriptures that include all in the Body of Christ.
- Background Scriptures: Acts 11:1-8 & [1 Thessalonians 1:1-7](#). Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.



**Acts 11:1-18 KJV**

- 1** And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.
- 2** And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him,
- 3** Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.
- 4** But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying,
- 5** I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:
- 6** Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.



**Acts 11:1-18 KJV**

**7** And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat.

**8** But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

**9** But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

**10** And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

**11** And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Caesarea unto me.

**12** And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house:

**Acts 11:1-18 KJV**

- 13** And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;
- 14** Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.
- 15** And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.
- 16** Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.
- 17** 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?
- 18** When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

## LIGHT ON THE WORD

Joppa. The ancient city of Joppa was situated south of Caesarea, on the Mediterranean Sea. History records that the city contained beautiful gardens and was known for being home to craftsmen who worked with wood, metal, and leather. The city dates back to 1650 B.C. and was originally located on a small rocky hill. Joppa contained a natural harbor with a rocky reef that runs along its coast. It served as the main port city to Jerusalem, which was approximately 30 miles inland, and to the south. Joppa is often remembered as the city that Jonah fled from just before his encounter with the large fish. The modern city of Jaffa exists in its location today.

## LIGHT ON THE WORD

Judea. Judea is the Roman name for the imperial province in the location of former Judah. Judea was a mountainous, desert region that included Joppa, Samaria, Jerusalem, and Caesarea. It wasn't as fertile as the region of Galilee to the north, but its inhabitants still raised sheep and grew olives and grapes. They also mined salt from the Dead Sea, located along the eastern border. The economy of the region relied heavily upon the city of Jerusalem. Taxes and payment for goods were collected from the travelers who frequented the city. During the first century, roughly half of all inhabitants in the region lived in or around Jerusalem.

## LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON:

AIM: Students will see how people who act outside of the norm are required to justify their actions.

# INTRODUCTION

## God Speaks to Peter

Jesus gave the early church a commission to expand beyond Jerusalem and Judea in preaching the Gospel (Acts 1:8). We do not know whether the disciples understood this as a commission to preach specifically to the Gentiles or only to the Jews of the Diaspora. Up until the time of the first persecution following the martyrdom of Stephen, the Gospel was restricted to the Jewish people.

# INTRODUCTION

## God Speaks to Peter

The persecution scattered the believers and many of the Greek-speaking Jews began to preach the Gospel everywhere they went ([Acts 8:4](#)). Philip began to preach in Samaria and this was the first significant advance of the Gospel into non-Jewish territory ([Acts 8:5-12](#)). After the conversion of Saul, the churches enjoyed a relative peace ([Acts 9:31](#)).



# BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: Students will explore how the church in Jerusalem supported Peter's preaching and conversions of the Gentiles.

## **I. PETER IS CHALLENGED**

Acts 11:1-3

Peter most likely knew that he would be expected to account for his actions in Caesarea. By the time he returns to Jerusalem, word has already spread of his encounter with Cornelius and his family. The believers referred to as "of the circumcision" in verse 2 are Christian Jews who strongly identified with their Jewish heritage. It was disturbing to them that Peter had seemingly set aside his Jewish piety. Peter had eaten with Gentiles, clearly violating Kosher law. From the perspective of first century Jews, this placed Peter in the company of idolaters and people considered unclean because they did not adhere to Jewish dietary restrictions. Furthermore, sharing a meal was a sign of intimate fellowship and acceptance in the Jewish culture. God calls us to accept people not just in our heads but to show our acceptance and connect with them on a personal level.

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Acts 11:1-3

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The news concerning the reception of the Gentiles into the Christian fellowship, marked by the conversion of Cornelius, has reached Jerusalem. The conversion of Cornelius was a landmark in the history of the Gospel's advance from its strictly Jewish beginnings to its saturation of the Roman Empire. It was a proof that the sovereign God was not confined to the traditional forms of Judaism and could bring a Gentile directly into relationship with Himself through Jesus Christ apart from any prior commitment to distinctive Jewish beliefs or lifestyle. However, Peter's actions were an affront to the traditions and prejudices of the Jewish Christians. The Jerusalem council summoned him to give an account of all that had transpired.

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He needed to provide answers to those who might have been unsettled by the episode, probably thinking that he had taken a liberal attitude toward the law. It says that those who were "of the circumcision" (Gk. peritome, peh-ree-toh-MAY), or circumcised Jews, contended (Gk. diakrino, dee-ah-KREE-no) or disputed with Peter. He was attacked not for preaching to the "uncircumcised" Gentiles or their being baptized, but for his social relations with them. Peter's eating with the Gentiles showed his acceptance of them as fellow Christians, and they were still uncircumcised (v.3). Peter defends his actions by narrating how God led him to Cornelius and how the Spirit fell on Cornelius and his household.

## **II. PETER SHARES HIS VISION**

Acts 11:4-10

Peter responds to his critics by first citing his experience in Joppa. While in a trance, he had received the unsettling directive that he should kill and eat animals that Jews are clearly forbidden to eat. The foods that Peter refers to as "common or unclean" (Acts 11:8) are described at length in [Leviticus 11](#). Among these restrictions are very specific rules related to these animals. Only certain animals that walked on all fours were allowed to be eaten. Specific birds and insects, like the locust, were allowed, while most others were off limits. Peter's response to the Lord indicates that he is very aware of these restrictions. He explains that he has never once violated them and refuses to do so. Peter's protest is met with the correction that he is to no longer consider something unclean if God has declared it otherwise. Upon waking, Peter must have been somewhat confused by what he saw and heard. But he would eventually understand it completely. We can only understand God fully if we continue obeying His revelation.

## **II. PETER SHARES HIS VISION**

**Acts 11:4-10**

4 But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying, 5 I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me: 6 Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air 7 And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat. 8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth. 9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. 10 And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

Peter relates his vision by quickly leading them to the main issue - God's acceptance of the Gentiles. Peter begins with his own vision in 11:5-10, which is a detailed retelling of [10:9-16](#). In fact, that is the most extensive repetition in his report to Jerusalem. For Peter, it was the heart of the matter-there are no unclean people, and God accepts the Gentiles.

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It all began with Peter on a rooftop in Joppa. This is where he experienced a vision (Gk. horama, HO-rah-mah), which is a sight divinely granted in a trance (Gk. ekstasis, EK-sta-sees) or ecstasy. A trance can be defined as a throwing of the mind out of its normal state. Although the person is awake, the mind is closed off from surrounding physical objects and fixed on the divine forms and things within a particular vision. When Peter was in the trance, he observed a sheet coming down out of Heaven filled with all kinds of animals forbidden for Jews to eat, because they were not kosher.



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As the sheet was let down from heaven, a voice said, "Arise, Peter; slay and eat." Peter's response was that he had never eaten anything common (Gk. koinos, koy-NOS) or unclean (Gk. akathartos, ah-KA-thar-tose). Koinos is the term the Jews of that day used for anything common or eaten by anybody, i.e., the Gentiles. The word for unclean is also a general word for uncleansed and specifically for things that are Levitically unclean. In using both words, we see Peter explicitly stating his case: He has never eaten these animals and never intended to.

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Next the voice says, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." In other words, what was considered unclean, God has now cleansed. This was done three times. In Scripture when something happens three times, it is usually an indication of the thing being established by God, as in the case of Jonah being three days in the belly of the whale or the angels crying out "Holy, Holy, Holy" to God on the throne. This was significant, as Peter was being asked to do something that was in violation of everything he knew as a Jew. His core identity was being challenged in this vision and would be again further in the narrative.

# LIGHT ON THE WORD

## Entering a Gentile Home

Peter receives a revelation from God concerning the Gentiles' inclusion into His people and the blessings of the Gospel. This results in his preaching to Cornelius the centurion and all of his household turning to Christ. After this, Peter returns to Jerusalem to give an account of his entering a Gentile home and preaching the Good News. As Peter tells this narrative, he highlights the theological and experiential evidence to convince the church leaders of the rightness of his actions.

### **III. PETER'S JOURNEY TO CAESAREA**

Acts 11:11-14

Peter immediately has the opportunity to begin acting on his new information. He obediently agrees to travel to Caesarea, but is still not fully aware of the significance of the Lord's message. His reservations about traveling with the Gentile men might have kept him in Joppa if it weren't for the Holy Spirit's reassurance (v. 12). Note that God's guidance factors heavily in Peter's retelling of the experience. His decision to travel to Caesarea wasn't based solely on his own desire; he was being obedient to God's direction.

### **III. PETER'S JOURNEY TO CAESAREA**

Acts 11:11-14

The story moves ahead to Cornelius' retelling of his own experience in Caesarea. Again, Peter gives God the credit for orchestrating all these events. As Peter retells it, Cornelius is promised that based on the message that Peter would share, he and his entire household would be saved.

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Acts 11:11-14

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### **III. PETER'S JOURNEY TO CAESAREA**

Acts 11:11-14

Verses 11-12 summarize the narrative of [10:17-25](#), relating the arrival of the three messengers from Cornelius and Peter's accompanying them to Caesarea. The most significant difference from the earlier account is Peter's mention of six brothers from Joppa who accompanied him to Caesarea (v. 12). "These six" whom Peter brought to Jerusalem served as witnesses to what transpired in Cornelius's home (cf. [10:45](#)). Verses 13-14 summarize Cornelius' vision, how the angel instructed him to send to Joppa for Peter. Verse 14 is more specific than any of the accounts of Cornelius' vision in [Acts 10](#). Peter was to bring a message to Cornelius "through which [he] and all [his] household [would] be saved." This expansion elucidates Cornelius' eager anticipation of Peter's message in [10:33](#). There is no need for Peter to summarize the sermon he gave Cornelius before the Jerusalem Christians, so he quickly moves to the coming of the Spirit on the Gentiles at the house (v. 15). Peter notes how the event interrupted his sermon and adds that the Spirit came upon them just "as on us at the beginning."



### **III. PETER'S JOURNEY TO CAESAREA**

Acts 11:11-14

This compares the episode at Cornelius' house to that on the day of Pentecost. Peter makes explicit here what was implicit in [10:46](#). He continues to draw the comparison in v. 16, which harkens back to [Acts 1:5](#) and Jesus' prediction of a baptism with the Holy Spirit. Jesus' prediction was fulfilled for the apostles at Pentecost; for Cornelius and his fellow Gentiles, it was fulfilled with the coming of the Spirit at Cornelius's house. Certainly for Peter, it was a Gentile Pentecost. He could hardly make more explicit comparisons!

### **III. PETER'S JOURNEY TO CAESAREA**

Acts 11:11-14

Peter concludes his report in Jerusalem (vv. 17-18) by reminding his hearers once again that God gave the gift of the Spirit to the Gentiles and added, "What was I, that I could withstand God," that is, "Who am I to think that I can oppose God?" Peter uses the same verb *koluo* (Gk. ko-LOO-oh) that he previously used in [10:47](#) to express the same idea of opposing God, to question whether it was appropriate for anyone to forbid or oppose the baptism of the Gentiles. For anyone to do so would be tantamount to opposing God, for His leading of Peter and Cornelius was beyond doubt. God intended to include the Gentiles in His people; He was clearly behind it.

### **III. PETER'S JOURNEY TO CAESAREA**

Acts 11:11-14

The Jerusalem leaders quietly listened as Peter told his story. There is no sign that they interrupted him or distrusted his words. As they listened, they realized that they had been wrong. They seemed to be more eager to grasp truth than to defend their own positions, a timely lesson for any Christian, particularly leaders today. When Peter clearly showed that God was bigger than their opinions, they let their prejudices go. After Peter finished, the conservative Jerusalem group had no further objections (v. 18). In the face of the evidence that Peter provided, his critics had nothing more to say. They accepted what had happened, concluding that God had granted even the Gentiles repentance, reaching out to those to whom they would not have reached out and in a manner they never would have approved. Silence quickly gave way to praise of God in His triumphant advance of the Gospel. God had granted "repentance unto life" to the Gentiles. They rejoiced in the results of Peter's action, which previously they had criticized.

## **IV. PETER'S CHALLENGERS ARE CONVINCED**

Acts 11:15-18

The circumcised believers that Peter is speaking to were about to hear something that would take them all by surprise. Peter shares the Gospel with Cornelius and his household, and at that point, the Holy Spirit fell on everyone there. Peter draws the connection between this event at Cornelius' home and the event they had all experienced on the Day of Pentecost ([Acts 2:1-13](#)). In pouring out the Holy Spirit on these Gentile believers just as He had on the apostles, God has shown that He views them in the same way. Despite their cultural differences, the gift of the Holy Spirit was an experience that they shared in common. Furthermore, Peter points out the words of Christ regarding baptism with the Holy Spirit: "John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 11:16). Along with circumcision, ritual cleansing was also used as an indication of conversion to Judaism. By referring to the Gentile experience as a baptism with the Holy Spirit, Peter indicates that God now sees them as converted.

## **IV. PETER'S CHALLENGERS ARE CONVINCED**

Acts 11:15-18

Peter completes his argument by once again explaining that God's will was at work in all of these events. To oppose the course of events that played out would have been to oppose God.

# **LIGHT ON THE WORD**

## **Salvation and the Gentiles**

Peter's challengers have heard enough to come to the same conclusion. God had chosen to extend salvation to the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, regardless of their non-Jewish heritage.

## BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: Students will learn that God desires that believers would communicate His love toward others regardless of their cultural or religious backgrounds.



## BIBLE APPLICATION

Peter and the Jewish Christians had to overcome biases that developed out of their initial desire to do what was right. What were initially legitimate convictions about how to please God had turned into shows of favoritism and bigotry. This same dynamic plays itself out in today's Christian church. Often, one group's differing religious views become a reason they are mistrusted or mistreated by other believers. Regardless of our differing views, we are all one body in Christ ([1 Corinthians 12:12-13](#)).

# STUDENT RESPONSES

AIM: Students will learn that they should trust the Holy Spirit to guide them as they witness to others about Christ.

## STUDENT RESPONSES

Do you see yourself as someone who is welcoming to others despite significant outward differences? If so, how might you be able to encourage your friends to see people the way God sees them?

# Prayer

Lord,

We adore You and worship You. The Holy Spirit comforts us and allows us to share the joy of Jesus with family, friends, and those we do not know. Your gentle care is refreshing and good news for us all.

In the Name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Next Sunday  
November 2, 2025  
Lesson 9  
Prayer First!  
Acts 12:1-11