# The Leading of the Spirit 11. Inspiration to rock the boat Acts 11:1-18

# The Holy Spirit inspires Christians to…

## Preach the good news, Bring healing, Explain the good news, Defend the good news, Change leadership structure, Deal truthfully, Stand up for the faith, Reject power games, Do the inexplicable, Take risks with an enemy, Change the church’s mindset

# Cornelius

## A religious man

### devout, God-fearer, who gave generously to those in need, righteous, prayerful

## He knew about Jesus (10:36)

### His good works, that God was with Him in healing & preaching

### His death

## It wasn’t enough to save him (11:14)

## God had pity on him and gave him Jesus

### When he accepted Jesus, the Holy Spirit came upon him

# God reveals the extent of His grace

### The revelation to Peter and the events following made Peter change his mind again

## God’s grace is not local but global

### When Peter brings this to the church he rocks the boat

## God lets even them in

### Through the door of repentance

### Through the grace of forgiveness

### Without baggage!

#### Cornelius didn’t come with His terms and conditions

#### Cornelius didn’t have to accept every change before he started

# God calls some of us to rock the boat

### To ask the penetrating questions

## This did NOT change Peter’s heart totally

### He was still uncomfortable with what God was doing

### But He marvelled at the capacity of God’s grace

## The boat needs rocking because the church gets comfortable

# Homegroup/Private study questions

# People

## Which person/people would you be really surprised to find had become Christians?

## Which group of people (type/age/mindset/etc) are not worth evangelising because they would never listen?

## Who (group or type of people) do you find it hardest to minister to or serve and why?

### How do you want God to save them?

### What route do you want for their salvation to make it easier for you?

## Read 2Ki 5:15-18

### As far as you are concerned what sins must be left at the door when a person becomes a Christian?

#### What if they don’t know the standards of the Bible?

#### To what extent should people be taught the standards before they commit to becoming a Christian?

# The leading of the Spirit

## Why do you think the leading of the Spirit was not done through the church meeting first?

### i.e. should they not have debated it first and got their theology of grace and redemption right and agreed before they embarked on a mission to gentiles?

## If Peter knew this new revelation (of the extent of God’s grace) why do you think he withdrew from the gentiles in Antioch (Gal 2:11ff)?

### What does this say to us today about the leading of the Spirit, Christian consistency, respecting leaders (in that case, James) and doing the right thing?

# The old way

## How can we be open to the leading of the Spirit in evangelism to those ‘beyond the pale’ and still respect traditional interpretations of the Bible?

### How rapid must their progress/education be in order to have these new converts accepted as part of the family of Christ?

### How much of the traditional views must they accept to become church members?

#### Would it be enough for you if they just accepted Christ and committed themselves to ‘following the Spirit’ in all things?