

Peter Raises Tabitha

Acts 9:36-43

MEMORY VERSE

ACTS 9:41-42

Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A pitcher of unsweetened Kool-Aid, and a bowl of sugar.

Samples of sugar, salt, lemon, pepper, etc.

One large-mouthed gallon jar, a small bottle with a lid, 2 cups of table salt, measuring cups, and a large stirring spoon.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Available Servant

Before class make some unsweetened Kool-Aid. Pour a little for each child in your class to try. When they respond to the bitter drink ask them what it needs. They will probably say sugar. Point to the right amount of sugar needed for the Kool-Aid in another container and ask if it's enough just to have the sugar necessary. The answer is "no"; the sugar has to be mixed in the Kool-Aid.

Like the sugar, we should not just be near a problem; we should be immersed in it, seeking God on how we can meet needs. Explain that today we will see how the Apostle Peter served the Lord by meeting the needs of others.

LESSON TIME!

In today's lesson we are going to learn about a special woman named Tabitha. Tabitha was not special because she was raised from the dead, but because of the kind of life she had. The life she lived unto God before she died is just as important as God raising her from the dead. When we die what kinds of things will our family and friends have to say about us?

What is the main topic at a funeral? Usually it is about the life of the person who has died. The focus is on their life and not their death. Have any of you been to a funeral? What was it like? Let us look at the life of Tabitha and see what the Lord did in her life. **We can trust God for the miraculous.**

ACTS 9:36

At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did.

Tabitha lived in a city call Joppa. Joppa is famous for being the place where an Old Testament character set sail for the town of Tarshish. He was supposed to be going to Nineveh. Can you tell me who this man was? (Jonah).

Tabitha was a disciple. What is a disciple? A disciple is someone who follows the views and practices of a teacher. Someone who is dedicated to obeying the teacher's commands. Tabitha was a disciple of Jesus. Jesus was her teacher. She was careful to follow and obey what Jesus taught.

Are you a disciple of Jesus? Is Jesus your teacher? He should be! Jesus taught that people should love God with all their hearts and that we should love one another. This is how people will know we are disciples of Jesus (John 13:35).

Tabitha (whose name was also Dorcas) shows us that she was a disciple by the way she lived her life. She was “full of good works and charitable deeds.” This means she spent her time doing good things for people. She also helped the poor people and widows of her city. What a wonderful woman she was. Everyone loved her very much.

ACTS 9:37

But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room.

We are told that Tabitha became sick. Her sickness caused her to die. Even good people who love God get sick. The Bible gives us examples of other people who served God and got sick. David became ill in his old age. Joshua and even Elisha, great men of faith became sick in their old age. We know that God is our healer, yet eventually, we will all die of some kind of sickness. Tabitha became sick and died!

When someone dies today, we call the hospital or the funeral home to come and take the body away to be prepared for a funeral. In the days when Tabitha died, they would immediately wash the body and even put spices around the body so it would not smell. Instead of taking the body to a funeral home, they would place the body in a room in the house so family and friends can come and mourn.

ACTS 9:38-39

And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them.

Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the

tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them.

We have already been told that Tabitha was dead, so why would the disciples want Peter to come to Tabitha's home? It may be that they wanted him to pray and ask God to bring her back to life again. Peter did not delay but "arose and went with them." There are several important things to learn from these two verses.

First of all, the disciples had great faith in God. There is not a single recorded instance where any of the disciples had raised someone from the dead. Peter had been used of God to lay hands on the sick and have them be made whole, but never had he raised someone from the dead. They knew that Jesus could raise people from the dead. Perhaps he would use Peter in this way for Tabitha. **We can trust God for the miraculous.**

Can you tell the names of some of the people Jesus raised from the dead? Lazarus (John 11:43-44), the ruler's young girl (Matthew 9:25), and the widows son (Luke 7:14-15). The fact that the disciples of Joppa knew of all of these great miracles done by Jesus only partly explains their faith. They were also aware that Jesus himself conquered death. They knew that He was alive and on the throne with God. This should bring faith to all our hearts. Jesus has the power over death, hell and the grave! The disciples also knew that Jesus had given the twelve apostles power to "heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." So by faith they called on Peter who was living in Joppa. **We can trust God for the miraculous.**

Secondly, there was an available servant named Peter. Peter was an apostle. He could have said to the people that he was busy or tired and that he could not come over to Tabitha's house, but Peter was a servant of the Lord Jesus. He was available to serve. The disciples had faith in God. Peter was available to God. If we could have both

of these characteristics in our lives we could see God do great things in our cities.

Our Faithful Tongue

We have very faithful tongues. They taste things for us all day long. But what would happen if our tongues decided not to taste any more?

Have several volunteers dry off their tongues with a paper towel. Place several different tasting things on their tongues (sugar, salt, lemon, etc.) and ask them to shake their heads “yes” or “no” if they taste anything. They won’t be able to taste until their tongues are moist again.

Explain to your class that we need to be faithful to what God has created us for. If we are not, just like our dry tongues, we will not be able to be what we have been created for, servants of the living God.

It is obvious by the response of the people of the city of Joppa that Tabitha was not only loved, but she was greatly needed. All the widows who stood by her room weeping may have affected Peter’s heart when he arrived. God had compassion on the widows and disciples of the city of Joppa that day and raised Tabitha from the dead. **We can trust God for the miraculous.**

ACTS 9:40

But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up.

Peter prayed for Tabitha and she came back to life! Peter had compassion on the people she left behind. It was for the benefit of the people of Joppa and surrounding cities that Tabitha was

brought back to life on earth. **We can trust God for the miraculous.**

What happens to someone after they die? What's the difference between death for believers and unbelievers?

ACTS 9:41

Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

Peter gave his hand to Tabitha and lifted her up. When Peter called the disciples and widows into the room they were lifted up too. They were lifted up with joy and love for God who had given them this great miracle. The people were blessed to have Tabitha back. God blessed the people's faith to believe for a miracle. We should never stop believing God for miracles. We have good reason to have great faith in God. **We can trust God for the miraculous.**

ACTS 9:42

And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord.

When a miracle has been done there is only one who could have done it, and that is God. God can do the miracles. Men can only believe God for the miraculous. That is why miracles are a testimony to God. When Jesus did all the miracles, it was a testimony to His deity. A testimony that He in fact is God. This miracle in Joppa was no different; all the more reason to believe God for the miraculous. When God does the miraculous, we can give Him all the glory. **We can trust God for the miraculous.**

ACTS 9:43

So it was that he stayed many days in Joppa with Simon, a tanner.

Peter stayed a while longer in Joppa with Simon a tanner. Peter needed some time to disciple those who believed on the Lord. When God saves someone we need to welcome them into the family of God and feed and disciple them! **We can trust God for the miraculous.**

Important Lessons

Tabitha teaches us to be true disciples in word and deed. The disciples teach us to have faith in God for the miraculous. Peter teaches us to be an available servant. **We can trust God for the miraculous.**

God Can Do Anything

You will need one large mouthed gallon jar, a small bottle with a lid, two cups of table salt, measuring cups, and a large stirring spoon.

Fill the large jar three quarters full with water before class. Place the closed bottle in the jar (it should float). Remove the small bottle and fill it with just enough water to make it sink to the bottom of the jar. Pour in the salt and the bottle will float.

Explain that Tabitha, just like the bottle, will sink without the help of God, who is like the salt. **We can trust God for the miraculous.**

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to trust in the Lord for all things, even the miraculous. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.