



LIFE GROUP NOTES
For Week commencing: 07/03/2021

Strengthening Your Soul, Pursuing Your Call

24/01/21	Moses - 1. What is beneath the surface?
31/01/21	Moses - 2. Too busy to turn aside and see?
07/02/21	Moses - 3. Confirming the Call
14/02/21	Moses - 4. God equips for the task
21/02/21	Moses - 5. Your spiritual journey will have challenges
28/02/21	Guest Speaker
07/03/21	Moses - 6. Don't wear yourself out
14/03/21	Mothers Day - Dorcas
21/03/21	Moses - 7. Prepare for transition

Introduction

Dorcas -

This week we break with the teaching on Moses to consider the life, death and restoration of Dorcas, a believer in the early church.

Objective - To learn lessons from the story of Dorcas that can be used to apply to our lives.

Our Text – Acts 9: 36 - 42

Sermon Outline

The bible is full of great women and great teaching that celebrates women

Starting at Genesis 1:26,, men and women were:

- Created equally in God's image.
- Given the mandate to be fruitful and multiply
- Equally given the mandate to take authority over the earth

Jesus was a champion of women

Paul's teaching about women was radical for his time

The teaching about husbands and wives is the best advice a married couple will get

The stories about women in the bible are for our encouragement and the encouragement of women
Today story about one of those women, Dorcas (Tabitha) from Acts 9:36-42

1. Dorcas was a disciple

- Dorcas was a Jewish follower of Jesus
- An ordinary disciple living in the coastal town of Joppa (modern day Tel Aviv).
- It would now be 3 - 4 years or so since the birth of the church at Pentecost, and faith in Jesus as Messiah and King had spread rapidly throughout Israel due to the persecution of the believers and their scattering across the land, sharing the good news.
- Disciple of Jesus - GOSPEL Message

First and foremost, let us be known as a disciple of Jesus
Women - first and foremost you are a disciple of Jesus

Romans 16 – many women mentioned at the end of Paul's letter, read it through.
1. Be known for being a disciple of Jesus

As disciples we all have a role to play

2. Dorcas was always doing good

- Dorcas was known as someone always doing good.
 - She had given her life to serving others, to making their lives better in whatever ways she could.
 - Doing good and helping the poor.
 - From this brief story about her death, we may determine that she was a seamstress, a skilled woman of some means, she must have bought fabric to make the garments. She was a woman of means, but her thoughts were for others.
 - She cared for widows
- It isn't stated here, but it is believed that Dorcas was a widow herself, or possibly had not married. In the account we read, when she died and was in the upstairs room, there were no family members mourning for her, just the widows. It is therefore reasonable to assume that she had no relatives of her own.
- Jesus cared for widows
 - Jesus had compassion on the widow of Nain whose only son had died, by raising him from the dead and restoring him to his mother.
 - Jesus told a parable about a widow who had no one to speak for her, and she was having to pester a judge for justice against her adversary. (Luke 18).
 - James 1: 27 says this: 'Religion (observance of the rituals of faith) that God our Father accepts as pure and

faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.'

- Just like her master Jesus, who was always doing good when he walked the earth, she followed in His footsteps.
- It is the Father's heart that we should care for the widows and orphans
- Dorcas had the Father's heart

1. Be known for being a disciple of Jesus
2. Be known for doing good

3. Dorcas left a legacy of love

- She was dearly loved by the women she was helping and caring for. She cared for them, saw their grief, poverty and distress. They were showing Peter her legacy, they had clothes to wear
- She was also dearly loved by all the local disciples in that town. They had heard about Peter and the miracle that had occurred there. Lydda was actually around 4 – 6 hours walk away, but that was close enough for them, and they sent men to fetch him. They realised that they needed this man of faith to come and pray for the dead Dorcas! They believed absolutely that it was possible, and in faith sent men to bring Peter to Joppa.

1. Be known for being a disciple of Jesus
2. Be known for doing good
3. Leave a legacy of love

4. Jesus turns things around

- Peter arrived to scenes of great sorrow at the loss of their dear friend and helper.
- Peter sent them from the room, got down on his knees and prayed.
- He was seeking guidance from the Lord
- Jesus performs a miracle
- Peter tells Dorcas to get up! And she did!
- Peter calls everyone back into the room as presents her. Here she is, alive again! We can only imagine the rejoicing that went on!

1. Be known for being a disciple of Jesus
2. Be known for doing good
3. Leave a legacy of love
4. Let Jesus turn things around for you

5. The result of our life (and death) is new disciples

- This miracle became known all over the town, AND MANY BELIEVED IN THE LORD.
- When we face Jesus he will ask us to give an account of our life
- Paul, in 1 Cor 3 says that the product of our labours for the Lord will be tested by fire, and some will burn and some will remain
- 1 Thess 2:19-20 He seems to suggest that new believers are our crown and glory
- What is the fruit of our lives, fruit that will last
- Not everyone is a preacher or evangelist.
- We can all care for the poor and do good works. - this is the gospel
- Jesus said - they will see our good works and praise our father Matt 5:16

Dorcas:

- Was a disciple who loved Jesus
- Was always doing good and who
- Was dearly loved
- Was resurrected from the dead
- Was used to bring many new believers to Jesus

As a follower of Jesus, she was a part of the family of believers there in Joppa, her life had meaning and purpose. She became a mother to the poor and needy around her.

Deb

When preparing for the message, I sensed that the Lord God wants to speak to those people, most specifically single women, those who have not had children of their own, widows and those having been through marriage breakdown, who feel that their lives have been damaged by loss and disappointment. He wants you to know that He sees you, He loves you and you are precious to Him. He wants to bring you NEW LIFE and hope for the future. YOU ARE SEEN! You are precious, and not discarded.

Just like Dorcas, you have tremendous value, dignity and purpose, no matter what has happened in your life.

A Challenge to us all -

1. Will we be known for being a disciple of Jesus?
2. Will we be known for doing good - the poor are still marginalised, widows and orphans still have many things to contend with. There are many injustices in our world. What are we doing about it?
3. Will you leave a legacy of love?
4. Will you let Jesus turn things around for you?
5. Will the fruit of your life be that you had at least a part to play in new disciples coming to know Jesus?

Life Group Activities

Use the Three Thirds structure for your gathering together. A reminder is below.

Looking Back

- Mutual Care
- Worship & Prayer – **Take a few minutes to be silent. Invite God to come to meet with you**
- Loving Accountability – How did you follow, how did you fish?
- Vision Cast – Why are we meeting like this?

Looking up

- Read **Exodus 18**
- Try to re-tell the story
- Using the notes above consider
 - 1. What does this teach us about God?**
 - 2. What does this teach us about people?**
 - 3. Is there a command to obey, a promise to stand on, or an example to follow?**
 - 4. How does this apply to my life? [e.g. how will I be obedient?]**

Looking Forward

- Practice – Re-telling the story, sharing the gospel (three circles), or people map
- Set Goals:
 - Connect – How am I going to connect with God this week?
 - Obey – How am I going to be obedient this week?
 - Share – Who am I going to share the gospel with this week?
 - Teach – Who can I teach this message to this week?
- Pray together and share communion together

Don't forget

- Talk about your Mother's Day outreach, how did it go?.
- Who are you praying for salvation for this year?
- Who can you invite to your Life Group?

The 3Thirds Discipleship Model		
Look back	Look up	Look forward
<p>1. Mutual care: How are you doing?</p> <p>2. Worship: Praising God in a simple, relevant way.</p> <p>3. Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Follow:</i> How did you obey the lesson from last time? • <i>Fish:</i> Did you pray with anyone who was in need? • Did you share your story and/or Jesus' story? • Did you find a person of peace? <p>4. Casting vision for reaching lost people and making disciples.</p>	<p>5. New lesson: Enough Biblical content to obey and pass it on.</p> <p>Use the Discovery Bible Study Method:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Read the Bible Story b. Ask them to re-tell the story in their own words c. Ask four questions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. What does this story tell us about God? ii. What does this story tell us about people? iii. Is there a command to obey or an example to follow or a promise to live by? iv. How does this apply to my life? 	<p>6. Practice the lesson until everyone is confident and competent to apply the learning. e.g. Retell your story, Jesus' story, or this week's story.</p> <p>7. Set goals</p> <p>Goals for personal growth, sharing the gospel, and training others.</p> <p>C.O.S.T. Connect Obey Share Teach</p> <p>8. Pray and Share Communion</p>
1/3 of your time (e.g. 30 mins)	1/3 of your time (e.g. 30 mins)	1/3 of your time (e.g. 30 mins)