

Restore Small Group Questions - Acts (Week 16) — “Prepare Your Nets” — 5/18/2025**Scripture (NIV) -**

Acts 9:32-43 - As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit the Lord's people who lived in Lydda. 33 There he found a man named Aeneas, who was paralyzed and had been bedridden for eight years. 34 "Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and roll up your mat." Immediately Aeneas got up. 35 All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord. 36 In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor. 37 About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. 38 Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!" 39 Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them. 40 Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. 41 He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the believers, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive. 42 This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. 43 Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon.

2 Corinthians 5:17 - "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

Luke 5:24 - But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home."

Galatians 5:22-23 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Mark 1:35-39 - Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. 36 Simon and his companions went to look for him, 37 and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!" 38 Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come." 39 So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

KEY POINTS -

It is a poignant (moving) moment in the 'Chosen' Video when Jesus asks Peter to 'cast your nets' to catch fish. Especially significant is the fact that Peter and his crew had been fishing all night with zero results. The massive catch that occurs after he agreed to cast his nets one more time at Jesus request leaves Peter overwhelmed and he exclaimed to Jesus - "Depart from me, I am a sinful man." Jesus responded - "Follow me"! What followed was Jesus preparing Peter, over the next 3 years, to catch people, not fish!

- I. **Peter is not who he was** - After 3 years Jesus changed, trained, and released Peter. He was a fisherman with no healing experience. He often put his foot in his mouth. But, after Jesus departed, Peter was changed - he was healing and raising

people from the dead. He was bold, brave, confident and proactive. He was a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). Jesus can also transform us into new creations....something completely new and, once you have been changed and walked with God awhile, you will better understand the call Jesus has upon your life.

- II. **Peter is where he needs to be** - Peter fully understood his calling and was actively doing it. Sometimes we don't know our mission and purpose in life and are not living it out. It took Peter 3+ years with Jesus to reach the place where he needed to be. He did this by simply imitating Jesus! He did what Jesus did and how he did it (Luke 5:24 and Acts 9:40). A few areas that enable us to imitate Jesus include (1) Prayer; (2) Service ["not to be served, but serve"]; (3) loving the least [children]; (4) Compassion for others; (5) Forgiveness; (6) Tell stories with a spiritual point; (7) sleeping through the storms of life; (8) Walk on Water [run with scissors]; Pick some fruit [Galatians 5:22-23 ...the fruit of the Spirit].
- III. **Peter is not where he will be** - Unfortunately, success can lead to complacency. Peter traveled to Lydda but stopped and spent some time in Joppa. He appeared to have settled down and became complacent. God had other plans to open Peter up to a greater world view and a larger mission. Jesus set the example by pursuing his mission and staying on task by continuing his travel and preaching - Peter imitated Jesus and followed Him.
- IV. **CONCLUSION** - Peter was preparing his nets....even if he didn't know what he was doing for something next, something greater. Ask God to identify your next preparation; to identify how you can imitate Jesus and to identify the aspect of Jesus spirituality that you desire to have. Pray and wait for what God has for you next!!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS -

1. Peter said to Aeneas "'Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you"! What does this tell us about depending on God's power to do what only God can do? What role does humility play in the healing process?
2. Should we study how Jesus dealt with sinners? How did Peter imitate Jesus? What were the results? Jesse provided a list of ways that we too can imitate Jesus life and guidance [See list in key points above]. Discuss their benefits and challenges.
3. How do we know that we are in the place God wants us? Is it only when we sense our complete inability and total dependence on God that we can be in His will?
4. It appeared that there was no human hope for either the healing or the resurrection yet God did it. Sometimes we put limitations on God when we view difficult situations and people from our human perspective, forgetting that with God, nothing is impossible...why do we do that? What can we do to eliminate that mentality?.
5. Many people came to believe in the Lord as a result of the healing and resurrection miracles. Do you think the evidence of our changed lives should attract many to our Savior? How does our Fruit of the Spirit help in the salvation of others?
6. Whether God uses us to perform a miracle or to bring a soul to salvation, can we rely on our own ability or take any credit for ourselves? Are we but a tool in God's hand?
7. We see and accept that miracles were being performed in the early church, but what is the first thing that comes to your mind about the occurrence of miracles today? What is God's purpose for miracles? Should our focus be on Jesus or the miracles?
8. Do you have a burden to see God work in our lives and church? What would it look like for you?