

Feb 18, 2018



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Faithful Disciples Acts 9:36-43

Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson examines how God rewards **Faithful Disciples**. The **study's aim** is to appreciate the position of Dorcas, the mourners, and Peter as the story unfolds. The **study's application** is to show that God desires that we serve as faithful disciples, using the abilities He has given us.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Lesson Introduction and Background

When you think about humanitarians, what qualities come to mind? We usually think of those who are dedicated to a cause other than their own narrow self-interest.

Humanitarians have devoted themselves to improving the lives of others. Their ideals shine through their devotion to the less fortunate. There were humanitarians in the early church. These were people whose faith was demonstrated by their actions. Their works were the outward sign of an overflowing faith. Dorcas was one such woman. Although we know little about her, we do know that she was respected. She was industrious. She made clothing, which she gave to people who were in need. She seems to have held some position in the community, and she had access to the resources she needed. Many people would be tempted to leave such work to someone else. It is easy to overlook suffering when it does not directly have to do with us. However, this woman did not do that. Her faith translated into a determination to serve those less fortunate. Because of this, numerous lives were affected. That is why her death was such a blow to this community. This one woman had made a great impact on many, and she had several mourners. Standing near her lifeless body, they were stricken by the loss of this faithful disciple. This would be a tragic text if it had ended on that note, but it does not. The story is changed because of the actions of other faithful disciples. Instead of resigning themselves to her death, her fellow believers did not give up. They put out an immediate call for Peter. Do we know why they did this? Scripture does not explicitly tell us, but it does seem to support the idea that these believers sent for Peter in the hope that he would perform a miracle. Peter responded by coming. I can only imagine the breathless anticipation when he arrived. Everyone was wondering what would happen next. Here was this empowered apostle—one known for his miraculous works. When Peter walked in and prayed, he had to have absolute certainty that Christ's power would flow through him. That conviction carried over into an amazing act of restoration, leaving a community rejoicing in amazement about this miracle. The faithful service of one woman had caused believers to call for an act of restoration, and it had occurred. The point I am making is that our faithful actions do make a difference. When we put faith behind what we do, we may, by God's grace, achieve astounding results. We not only become faithful but also faith-filled and overflowing in His Spirit. Jesus said that His followers could move mountains with even the smallest faith (Matt. 17:20-21). Whatever we are called to do in our communities, we need to be purposeful about doing His work, trusting in Him to equip us for it. As we grow in faith, we will grow in confidence that God can do all things. We will rely on Christ for all results. When we act on that level of faith, we glorify Him. Are you trusting in the Lord today?

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
God's love does not keep us from trials, but sees us through them.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:
Dear Father, help me to be faithful in my service to You. Thank You for the strength You provide to help me persevere through suffering

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ
(2 Tim 2:3 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", July 20, 2015)

Series: Faith in Action

UNIT: Self-Controlled, Upright, and Godly Faith

NEXT WEEK

The Good Fight of Faith
(1 Tim 6:11-21)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Faithful Dorcas (Acts 9:36-37)

Faithful by living a Good life (36-37)

God created us to live a good life (Eph 2:10)

A good life is obvious (1 Tim 5:25)

A good life includes being generous and willing to share (1 Tim 6:18)

We should encourage each other to live a good life (Heb 10:24)

A good life results in the glorification of God (1 Peter 2:12)

A good life so that others will praise God (Matt 5:16)

A good life so that we are a good example to others (Titus 2:7-8)

A good life is doing things done out of a pure and loving attitude and spirit (Luke 6:45)

A good life begins by practicing and using the truth of God's word (John 3:21)

A good life is always helping others (Heb 6:10)

Faithful Friends (Acts 9:38-39)

Faithful in hope of the resurrection (38-39)

Hope of the resurrection because Jesus' resurrection was witnessed by many (Acts 2:32)

Hope of the resurrection because through it saints will be united (Rom 6:5)

Hope of the resurrection because of the power of God (Acts 2:23-24)

Hope of the resurrection because of the promise to the saints to meet Jesus in the air (1 Thess 4:17)

Hope of the resurrection because of the promise that it will result in change (1 Cor 15:52)

Hope of the resurrection because it is based on Scripture (1 Cor 15:3-4)

Hope of the resurrection because of being united with Jesus (Rom 6:5)

Hope of the resurrection through preaching (1 Cor 15:12-14)

Hope of the resurrection through a new birth and living hope (1 Peter 1:3-4)

Hope of the resurrection through baptism (1 Peter 3:17-21)

Faithful Peter (Acts 9:40-43)

Faithful reality of the resurrection (40-43)

A reality because Jesus was the firstfruit of the resurrected (1 Cor 15:20-23)

A reality because it is a goal (Phil 3:10-11)

A reality because the resurrected body will be imperishable (1 Cor 15:42)

A reality because it is an elementary doctrine (Heb 6:1-3)

A reality because it is a trustworthy truth (2 Tim 2:11)