

SESSION 1: TABITHA

Watch the video or read the script together as a group; then discuss the following questions. Keep in mind the questions are meant to prompt conversation, so don't feel the need to use or discuss every question.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Acts 9:36-42; Mark 5:22-23; John 11:25-26

QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to be a credible witness of Christ?
2. How can our actions demonstrate that we have hope in Christ? How does being a credible witness encourage others' hope in Christ?
3. How does looking to Jesus during the most desperate moments in life give people hope?
4. Is there a story in the Bible that you look to for hope and to remind yourself of the power of God? If so, please share the story and why it gives you hope.
5. When Jesus told Martha that He is the "Resurrection and the life," He asked her, "Do you believe this?" How do we demonstrate to others that we believe what Jesus said?
6. Did you know there were female disciples in the Bible? What does this story tell you about who Jesus calls as His disciples?
7. Where do we turn when the miracle doesn't happen? Where can we draw strength to continue?
8. **From the video/script:** ... *His power is revealed to us in new ways. He rescues us from our sin, breathes life into our souls, restores our broken relationships, and replaces our worry with confidence...* Where have you seen the miraculous power of Jesus in ***your*** life?

[illegible]

SCRIPT & ADDITIONAL CONTEXT

SESSION 1: TABITHA

Jesus Christ is the source of all our hope. Because of our faith in Him, we never have a reason to doubt or become hopeless. For this session, we'll take a look at the experience of a disciple named Tabitha in the Book of Acts. We'll learn that we can have hope in Christ during the most difficult moments of our life, even in the face of death!

We can read about Tabitha in the ninth chapter of Acts:

At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha.... This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. 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 [Tabitha] had made while she was with them. 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. 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 (Acts 9:36-42).

Tabitha was a disciple of Jesus, and because of her good works, she was a credible witness of Christ and her death greatly affected her fellow disciples. Yet in their moment of despair, they still had hope and sent for Peter. Why? God had worked so powerfully through Peter and the other apostles, that even in *this* moment they did not give up hope. As followers of Jesus, they could recall His miracles and how, even in the most desperate of times, the end of the story changed. Where do you turn in moments of despair?

Upon his arrival, Peter connected himself with God through prayer and then echoed the words of his Master as he commanded Tabitha to get up. The hope of the disciples who sought out Peter was fulfilled, and through the sharing of this experience, many more came to believe in Jesus Christ. Are we willing to share our experiences with Jesus in order to help others believe?

The sharing of this encounter could certainly have reminded Jesus' followers of the experiences that they had with Him during His time on earth, when various people placed their hope in Him during difficult moments of their lives. Peter witnessed the power demonstrated by Jesus during those

times, and then, because of the presence of the Holy Spirit through the fulfillment of Jesus' promise on Pentecost, he was able to call on that same power to help those who believed.

One experience that Peter witnessed was when Jesus was sought out by Jairus, a synagogue leader, to help his daughter, who was sick and would soon die. When Jairus found Jesus, he fell at His feet and begged Him to *"come and lay your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live"* (Mark 5:22-23). This request showed that Jairus was aware of what Jesus had done in the past and that he was willing to place his hope in Him during that anxious time. When Jesus arrived at the home, He comforted the grieving by assuring them that the girl was just sleeping. Then, along with Peter, James, John, and her parents, Jesus approached the little girl. He took her hand and said, *"Little girl, I say to you, arise,"* and immediately she woke up and arose.

A similar experience took place when Lazarus died and Mary and Martha reached out to Jesus for help. The sisters knew who Jesus was, believed in Him, and were confident that if He had been with them, their brother would not have died. Jesus once again demonstrated His power when He called out to Lazarus to arise, and restored his life. However, before He even approached the tomb, Jesus said to Martha *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"* (John 11:25-26). The same question that Jesus asked Martha can be asked of us. His words and actions are our source of hope. But do we believe, even if we don't experience a natural miracle? Do our actions during our most difficult moments demonstrate the hope we have in Jesus? How do the experiences of Jesus, which we read in Scripture, affect our faith and our hope?

The effect of the Holy Spirit's work through Peter inspired many believers because, through the revival of Tabitha, Jesus was seen, heard, and lifted up. And that's what we do when we share Jesus, our hope, our joy, our Savior, with those around us. Even though we don't look for Jesus to perform the miracle of physical resurrection today, when we seek Him and always trust Him, His power is revealed to us in new ways. He rescues us from our sin, breathes life into our souls, restores our broken relationships, and replaces our worry with confidence, to name just a few. Each of us will go through difficult days, but because of Jesus Christ, we all can go through those moments with peace in our hearts and with a secure hope because He is the resurrection and the life, and all who believe in Him will live!