

SHINE Devotional

Week 32 – Lesson 1



How to Raise the Dead

Scripture reading Acts 9:36-37

“Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.”

In any other story that is historic and true, the statement, *“that she was sick, and died”* would be the end of the story. Without Jesus Christ, there is no hope for life after death. Yet, in our Scripture reading today, this is not the end, it is only the beginning. God is about to preform a miracle. Tabitha would be raised from the dead. We learn from this story that nothing is impossible with God. When we look at America today, we see that America needs a miracle. America seems to be dying from the inside out. Some people say that the only thing left is the funeral. Is there any hope? Today in our country, drugs are legal, criminals are allowed out of prison, abortion is promoted, homosexuality is celebrated as normal, rioting in the streets and destruction of private and public property is permitted. Meanwhile, Christians are threatened with legal action if they meet together in church. Is there hope? The answer is, *“Yes.”* Our God is the God of resurrection. Our God knows how to raise the dead. What can we do to help see resurrection in the life of America? You as a believer can determine to do the will of God.

Last week, we learned the story of Peter in a small town not far from Joppa, named Lydda. He was there doing what he knew God wanted him to do, reaching lost people and encouraging the saints. He was there in obedience to the Great Commission. *“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”* (Mark 16:15). Peter was simply doing what God wanted him to do. As a believer, you don’t need to know what is going on three months, six months, or six years from now. You, as a believer, just need to know what God wants you to do. Today God wants you to pray, read His Word, and be the best Christian you know how to be. Today, God wants you to tell somebody about Jesus Christ. God can and will do the miraculous. When you open the Word of God, choose to obey it, and determine to do His will, you, as a believer, will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 32 – Lesson 2



Let Compassion Motivate You

Scripture reading Acts 9:38-39

“And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.”

Peter was approximately ten miles away from the city of Joppa when Tabitha died. When the believers from the church in Joppa heard about Tabitha’s death, they went to ask Peter if he could come. In an act of compassion and love, Peter responded in grace to her hurting friends, left the ministry that had been very successful and went to Joppa to comfort these grieving saints. Peter displayed the compassion of Jesus Christ. Dorcas also displayed compassion. She obviously cared for widows. She gave financially to meet their needs. “[T]his woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did” (Acts 9:36). She showed compassion and in our story, she was reaping the compassion of others. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7). Peter was motivated by compassion. Dorcas was a woman of compassion.

It is so important in our world today as we see people filled with anger and bitterness rioting in the streets, and using vile methods to express their hatred toward God and those who represent Him, that you as a believer not allow the wrong behaviors of others to cause you to despise them. Instead, allow their behavior to burden your heart for their lost condition. People do ungodly things because they are untrained, and they need the compassion of Christ. This does not mean that we should not encourage our government officials to stand strong against corruption in our culture, but, as believers who represent Jesus Christ, we need to constantly ask God to motivate us with His compassion and understanding. I encourage you today to follow the example of Peter and Dorcas. Live in the compassion of Jesus Christ and you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 32 – Lesson 3

Humility Brings Victory



Scripture reading Acts 9:40

“But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.”

For the believer, the way up is down. Peter knew this. He walked into an impossible situation. Tabitha, a faithful servant of Jesus Christ, was dead. All around him were people mourning her loss. There was absolutely no hope except for the name of Jesus Christ. Peter asked everyone to leave the room, and then the very first thing he did was humble himself before God, kneeling down before Him. Kneeling is an act of worship. It expresses awe to the One before whom we kneel. It expresses servitude, and respect for the power and authority of the One before whom we kneel. Most of all, kneeling expresses total dependence on your Master and your Lord. God will not work in our lives if we have an attitude of pride. That is why He told the Israelites that if they wanted His forgiveness for their rebellion and deliverance from His judgement, the very first thing they had to do, was, *“humble themselves”* and seek His face. Peter says, *“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble”* (1 Peter 5:5). God can raise the dead. God can give you the miracle answer to prayer that you want. Before the dead can be raised, believers must be committed to do His will, allow themselves to be motivated by His compassion, and they must humble themselves before Him.

Today, I encourage you to humble yourself before God. Make a daily practice of kneeling before Him, asking Him to fill you with His Spirit. When you do that, you will experience His power in your life, the blessing of answered prayer, and you, as a believer, will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 32 – Lesson 4



Pray

Scripture reading Acts 9:40

“But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.”

Before Peter ever spoke to the dead body of Tabitha, he bowed before God in worship and then prayed. Prayer is asking. God wants you and I to ask Him to do the impossible.

There are several things that you should ask God for every day. You should ask God for what Jesus told you to ask Him for. Go to Him as your Father, ask Him for His holy Name to be manifested, and for His kingdom to come. Ask for His will to be done on planet earth just like it is done in heaven. Ask Him to give you everything you need to do His will. Ask Him to forgive you your daily sins and determine to forgive those who have sinned against you. Ask Him to keep you from temptation and deliver you from satanic attack (see Luke 11:1-13). Beyond these things ask God daily to protect and provide for you and your family. Ask God to protect and provide for your church. Ask God to protect, provide, and heal your nation. Pray for peace in our country and deliverance from evil. Ask God to save our national leaders. Ask God to save and protect our policemen, firemen, and civil workers. Ask God to miraculously raise our dead nation. Be specific in your prayer requests. That is what Peter did.

Peter was doing the will of God. He had compassion. He humbled himself before God and he prayed, and Tabitha was raised from the dead. When you began to pray, the way God wants you to pray, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 32 – Lesson 5



Pray Privately

Scripture reading Acts 9:40

“But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed...”

When do you spend private time alone with God? That time is the most important time of your day. Is it in the morning? Is it at noon? Is it in the evening? You need to have a time of private prayer if you are going to see the power of God work through your life. There is no more important time in your day than the time that you spend alone with God.

In this account, Peter had everyone leave the room. Why? Because he wanted to be alone with God. You may think, “Well, wait, Tabitha was there.” No, Tabitha’s body was there, but she was gone. She was in the presence of God. *“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord”* (2 Corinthians 5:8). Paul makes it abundantly clear that if I am a believer, when my spirit leaves my body, I will go immediately into the presence of God. Peter was alone in the upper room, with an empty shell that Tabitha had inhabited. He came before God privately asking God for a miracle that would expose the glory of God publicly. This public expression of God’s power would never have taken place without private prayer! Jesus said, *“But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly”* (Matthew 6:6).

Do you want to see God save this nation? Do you want to see God protect you and your family? Do you want to witness the miraculous power of God? Then I plead with you to be involved with God in private prayer. When you do, you, as a believer, will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 32 – Lesson 6



Live for the Glory of God

Scripture reading Acts 9:41-43

“And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive. And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord. And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.”

What a fantastic miracle! Peter reaches down to a woman who was dead, takes her by the hand, lifts her up, and presents her alive to her friends and loved ones. The Bible says the end result of this was that, *“many believed in the Lord”* (Acts 9:42). God does not answer prayer in our life for our benefit, He answers prayer to bring glory to the name of Jesus Christ. God wants lost people to be saved. God wants people to see His glory and be drawn to Him.

When Moses brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, they were constantly complaining and *“murmuring”* about their circumstances and lack of provision. They griped about Moses. They griped about Aaron. They complained about being in the desert. Yet, it was their disobedience that brought them to that place. The attitude of the children of Israel provoked God to anger. *“And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me?...”* (Numbers 14:11). God was so upset, He decided He was going to wipe them out and start over with Moses and his family. However, Moses pled with God. *“And Moses said unto the Lord, Then the Egyptians shall hear it... And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land...Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying, Because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which he sware unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness.”* (Numbers 14:13-16). What Moses basically said was, *“This is going to make you look bad. I am praying that your name will be glorified and asking you to not kill the children of Israel because you will look bad.”* When you come before God, it is not all about you, it is all about Him. You are here as His servant and when you beseech Him or ask Him to do the miraculous, you need to ask Him to do it for His great name sake, for His glory and honor.

If raising the dead will advance His cause, Jesus will raise the dead. When you live and pray for His glory and purpose you will see your prayers answered and you will SHINE.