

CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER

Journaling: In Acts 9:32-43, we encounter people in hopeless circumstances. But we also witness tenderness, healing, and the unexpected way of God. Spend 3-5 minutes journaling about the images, words, or feelings that come up for you as you read and reflect on this passage. Use the following questions to guide your time:

- Where have I experienced God abiding with me through others?
- Where has healing happened in my life as others entered into my pain, grief, or sorrow?
- How is God calling me to enter in and abide with others in their painful circumstances?

Share together: After five minutes, share with each other some of these images, words, or feelings that you experienced during your time of journaling.

CONNECT WITH SCRIPTURE (Read the passages and review the sermon outline. Then select the best questions or customize the questions for your group)

- Read Acts 9:32-43.
- Read the main points from the sermon outline.
- Pay attention to the similarities and differences between the healing of Aeneas and the raising of Tabitha. What do these differences reveal to us about God?
- How would you describe the relationship between Tabitha and the widows?
- Imagine for a moment that you are living in the time of the early church. What impact would the witness to the words, "Jesus Christ heals you," (v. 34), have on your life and the way you see the world? What impact does that bold statement have on you today?

CONNECT WITH GOD'S MISSION IN THE WORLD (select one question for discussion)

- How does Peter follow the pattern of Jesus in his interactions with those who are 'unclean' or 'on the margins'?
- How does Peter respond to the widows and how might his response point to a new way in Jesus Christ that was unfolding through the Holy Spirit?
- How does Tabitha's story change how we enter into the suffering of the world?
- How does this scripture passage demonstrate how God is continually restoring a broken world?

PRAYER

Pray specifically for God to meet each one of you where you are. Pray for one another and spend time lingering in the healing presence of God. Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you a deepening understanding of how you are called to participate in the life of Christ in the world.

MESSAGE OUTLINE

May 8, 2022

*Empowering the Church
Greater Works*

Pastor Mike McClenahan



Acts 9:31 (NIV)

Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

Acts 9:32-43 (NIV)

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.

(Message Outline continued on the next page)

MESSAGE OUTLINE CONTINUED

The Holy Spirit empowers the church to...

1. continue the work of Jesus...

"Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and roll up your mat"... "Tabitha, get up."

Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. "If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. **John 14:12–16 (NIV)**

"I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." **Luke 5:24 (NIV)**

2. through community...

...they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!" All the widows stood around him crying and showing him the robes that Dorcas had made...

3. to restore a broken world.

All those who... saw him and turned to the Lord. ...and many people believed in the Lord.

"These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here... **Acts 17:6 (NIV)**

But Jonah ran away from the Lord ... went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. **Jonah 1:3**

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS—May 8, 2022

Mosaic: Empowering the Church—Greater Works

CONNECT WITH GOD

Lectio Divina: Spend at least 7 minutes on the spiritual practice of listening this week. Please spend time listening to God through the ancient Christian practice of Lectio Divina. This can be done individually or even as a group. If another practice would better suit your small group, please choose a practice from a previous week.

Prepare

Begin by choosing from one of the following scripture passages that you would like to read, and begin to ready your heart to enter into a time of extended quiet and listening.

Acts 9:32-43, John 14:12-16 or Luke 5:17-26

Now, quiet yourself and find a physical or emotional posture that prepares you to listen—to really listen—for God. Do whatever it is you need to do to be still and ready yourself to receive God's presence.

Read and Listen

When you are ready, begin by slowly reading the scripture you chose. Read slowly, patiently, and expectantly. There's no expectation that you will finish the passage. You might and you might not—let listening be your only goal. Pay attention to any words, images, or phrases that draw you in or catch your attention.

Meditate

Next, choose one phrase (or image, idea, or word) that most captures your attention. Hold that word or phrase, meditating on it, and repeating it over and over again. What thoughts, feelings, or memories come to mind? How does it connect to your life? Give pause and attention to that word. As your mind wanders, don't be too hard on yourself. Give it to God and begin again.

Pray

Turn towards God in prayer and tell God about that word or phrase. Be honest while remaining open to what God is saying as you pray. How is God using this word or phrase to draw you nearer to God and transform you?

Contemplate

Now focus yourself on the presence of God with you in this very moment. At this time, contemplate and listen for God by journaling your reactions, re-reading the scripture, drawing, or simply remaining in conversation with God in prayer.

(Small Group Questions continued on the back panel)