



Faith Adventures for Children Together



Free to use – please acknowledge when using beyond local church children's and youth work so others can find and use the resource themselves.

*Committed to URC Children Together:
enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus
together in the home, church and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link: www.bit.ly/FACT-how-to-sheet

Title: Acts 9: 36–42

Theme: Peter does a Jesus thing

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Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning? Please use this section as a reference and information guide for leaders only – we don't expect it to be read out to the children.

Welcome to week three of some lesser-known stories in the Bible. This week, we'll be looking at the story of Peter resurrecting Dorcas.

We are much more familiar with the miracles of Jesus, and we tend to focus on them – maybe that's why this story is often overlooked. However, it gives us some insight into what we can gain from being a follower of Jesus. Your group might ask, "From where did Peter get the power to do what he did?" and "What did Dorcas do to deserve being resurrected?" If so, try and let the other members of the group provide answers from their understanding first.

Dorcas (who is also known as Tabitha) was a faithful early follower of Jesus. She was known for being kind and charitable, particularly in making clothes for widows (who would have had very little after their husbands died).

Trigger warning: please be aware of members of your group who might be suffering bereavement or have a close relationship with someone who is ill. The story, and any discussions, will need to be handled sensitively.

Together – prayer and games

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

Gathering prayer

Jesus, our friend,

(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

Be with us today

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

As we share together,

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

Pray together,

(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

Play together,

(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

And get to know you better

(point up with one hand)

As children together in your family.

(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

AMEN.

(two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.

Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.

**Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,
adventuring together with you wherever we may go.**

Amen

Active game – Stuck in the mud

Chose someone who will be the “tagger”. Everyone starts to run round, all trying to avoid the person designated as the tagger. When someone is tagged they become “stuck in the mud”. When someone is stuck in the mud they must stand still with their arms out to the sides. In order to free them from the mud, someone on their team must run under their arms. Then they are free to continue running from the people on the other team who are trying to get them stuck.

You can switch the teams up whenever you decide.

To make it more difficult, you could have more people who are on the team that tags others to get them “stuck in the mud”.

This game highlights the divine power Peter had that enabled him to raise Dorcus to life.

Quieter game – Dress up Beetle drive

This game simply plays with the images of getting up and getting dressed, like Dorcas, as well as linking to the idea that Dorcas made clothes.

You will need a pile of dressing up clothes for each person/group, a die per person/group and a list of instructions as below.

This is a race and can be played in small groups or as individuals, Roll the dice and dress yourself or a leader with each roll of the dice.

6 = Something on your head

5 = Something on your feet

4 = Something on your hands

3 = Something on your legs

2 = Something on your arms

1 = Something on your body

The winner is the one who is dressed first.

Experience – Bible story and songs

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

When planning the session, the team of writers read many different Bible versions to find the one that is most suitable for the age range. We also look at vocabulary and how God/Jesus is described. We are aware that a lot of churches stick with one Bible version. We appreciate it can be difficult to have many different Bible versions and that access to them online isn't always easy. Therefore, we have provided the passage in the recommended version for your convenience.

For this story we recommend using the Contemporary English Version

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS%209%3A%2036-42&version=CEV>

Peter Brings Dorcas Back to Life

³⁶ In Joppa there was a follower named Tabitha. Her Greek name was Dorcas, which means "deer." She was always doing good things for people and had given much to the poor. ³⁷ But she got sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. ³⁸ Joppa wasn't far from Lydda, and the followers heard that Peter was there. They sent two men to say to him, "Please come with us as quickly as you can!" ³⁹ At once, Peter went with them.

The men took Peter upstairs into the room. Many widows were there crying. They showed him the coats and clothes that Dorcas had made while she was still alive.

⁴⁰ After Peter had sent everyone out of the room, he knelt down and prayed. Then he turned to the body of Dorcas and said, "Tabitha, get up!" The woman opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet.

Peter called in the widows and the other followers and showed them that Dorcas had been raised from death. ⁴² Everyone in Joppa heard what had happened, and many of them put their faith in the Lord.

Copyright © 1995 by [American Bible Society](http://www.bibles.com) For more information about the Contemporary English Version of the Bible, visit www.bibles.com and www.cev.bible.

Where can I find the story online?

Under-fives: Peter raises Tabitha (Dorcas), by Saddleback Kids

<https://youtu.be/NxwLZCfQSq0?si=hB1UW-pgukav66vt>

Five-to-elevens: Peter performs a miracle for Tabitha – Dorcas, by Bible Tales Club

<https://youtu.be/wQEeU2JQP2s?si=nXOnuHtlFtnSIEJp>

Songs to support the story

Under-fives: Shine! (from the inside out), by Allstars Kids Club

<https://youtu.be/nPehjNB3MCM?si=YRuz-PR1cCxVZqjs>

Five-to-elevens: Wanna be like Jesus, by YancynotNancy

https://youtu.be/LPjkPKjQfmc?si=Ma0PfBNwIDTCOC_f

Explore – ways into the theme

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

A new way to explore the theme

Exploring the story and its emotions

There are a lot of different emotions in this story. Let's gather around the story to explore these emotions together. We will use a method called the Swedish Bible approach. Here's an example https://theresource.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Swedish_Bible_Study.pdf

Have the Bible passage as large as you can, so that it can be placed on a table in the middle of the children.

Give the children quality pens of different colours as well as stickers if you have any to hand.

Encourage the group to read the story together and pause to chat and write all over the passage. Encourage the group to consider what people were thinking at each stage, what emotions were there, what surprises them in the story, what questions the story raises, and so on.

When you heard the story, which emotion did you feel most?

This will lead you seamlessly into using some of the wondering questions in these resources.

Modern parables

Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may

think of others too. If you are to use the modern parable, consider buying a copy or borrowing it from the library so children see the actual book and can explore the illustrations more (and support the author).



Kindness is my Superpower by Alicia Ortego (2020: My Superpower Books) ISBN 13 979-8669081621

<https://youtu.be/t-e6ITpCiNM?si=U70liRxmEnPQ-BoZ>

This book tells the story of a boy who learns that being kind is like having a superpower that can change the lives of others for the better.

Dorcas was known for her kindness and goodness.

- What is your superpower?

Talking together: How might we talk about the Bible story together?

- Why does Peter send everybody out of the room?
- What was it about Dorcas that made them want to bring her back to life?
- Why did they show Peter the items that Dorcas has made?
- What things do you think Dorcas did to help the poor and do good?

Wondering: ways to reflect on the theme

- If you could do one thing that Jesus did, what would it be and why?
- How did Peter raise Dorcas from the dead?
- Can all Christians do everything that Jesus did?
- Have you ever seen a miracle?

What's in the box? (for under-fives)

Use the special box or bag and sing, "What's in the box/bag? What's in the box/bag? Let's see, let's see, what's in the box/bag" (to the tune of The Farmer's in the Dell). Pull out the things one by one and then let the children play with them, talking about the theme or the story in simple terms.

This week's box could include:

- Dress up clothes – Dorcas used to mend people's clothes. That was so kind of her. I wonder how we can be kind to others?
- Happy and sad face – talk about the different emotions felt by the friends of Dorcas and of Peter.
- Tissues – tears of joy and tears of sadness. I wonder when you cry?
- Pop-up toys e.g. Jack-in-a-box – it must have been strange when Dorcas was raised to life.
- Wash things – when Dorcas died her friends washed and cleaned her. I wonder why they did that? What sorts of things do you wash and clean?
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (a cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!).
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (e.g. stones, felt, twigs etc.).

Express – prayer and creative activities

Praying together: enabling your group to respond spiritually

Prayerful activity – Offering prayers

You will need:

- strips of fabric
- marker pens
- somewhere to hang the fabric

Write on your strip of fabric something you would like to pray for. This could be asking for help to deal with a difficult situation. This could be asking for guidance with something you are unsure of. This could be asking for protection in places of war.

Once you have written what you would like to pray for on your fabric you can hang it up somewhere, e.g. the edge of a table, or on a prayer tree if you have one.

The motion of moving the prayer upwards can be viewed as a metaphor for Peter raising Dorcas from the dead. Or it could also be seen as a metaphor for handing your prayers to God in heaven.

Spoken prayer

Under-fives

Dear Jesus,

Thank you that you are always with us.

Thank you for the wonderful things you can do when we trust in you.

Help us to believe in you,
to be brave,
to be kind,
and to help others.

Give us your strength today
to do good things in your name.

Amen.

Five-to-elevens

Dear Jesus,

Thank you that you are with us wherever we go.

Thank you that, when we believe in you, you give us strength and courage to do things we might think are impossible.

Help us to trust you when we are worried or afraid.
Give us courage to stand up for what is right,

kindness to help people who are struggling,
and strength to make a difference in the world around us.

Help us remember that we never have to do things alone,
because you are always with us.

Amen.

Responding together

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond.

With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage them to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

Pop-up

Have fun making a Dorcas pop-up.

You will need:

- paper cups
- skewers
- fabric
- tape
- paint, stickers
- glue (hot glue guns are best)
- thick cardboard
- wool

What you do:

Here is a link showing how to make this fabulous little puppet.

https://thepinterestedparent.com/2017/06/paper-cup-pop-up-puppet/?utm_source=Pinterest&utm_medium=organic

Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:

- Talk to someone older or younger than you and ask them to tell you about a time when someone was kind to you.
- What can you do this week to be kind and good like Dorcas?

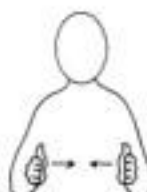
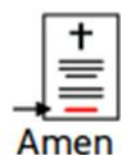
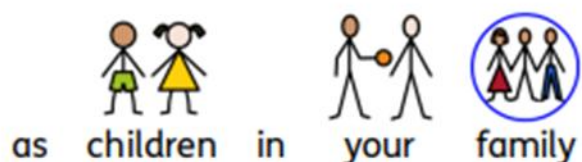
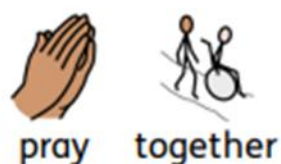
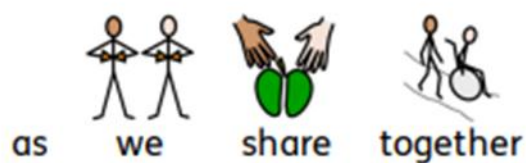
We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of **Dorcas** with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing **sharon.lloyd@urc.org.uk**

Please join the Faith Adventures Facebook Group **bit.ly/FACT_FB**

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **Onesimus**





The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

and forgive us our sins As we forgive those who sin against us

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory

For ever and ever . Amen



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