Peter Helps Dorcas

Bible Story
Acts 9:36-43

Teacher Challenge
While we don’t know much about Dorcas and how she came to join God’s family, we do know that she was a generous provider of clothing to those who needed it—no small matter, for in those days, any piece of clothing was a valuable item! We do know that when she became ill and died, her friends knew where to go for help: They had heard that Peter was staying nearby and they immediately went to fetch him. When he arrived, he saw the proof of God’s kind provision through Dorcas. Through prayer, he understood that God was ready to bring her back to life—and He did!

What is a place in your life right now where you need God’s provision?

In what unexpected way might God bring that provision? Imagine!

God showed His absolute love and ability to provide for a dire need in a dramatic way. Our needs might not be as overwhelming as those of Dorcas’s friends, but God’s provision and His power are unchanged! His help is always available to us. Whether our need is small or huge, He is able to provide in both everyday and unexpected ways.

Teacher’s Planning
1. Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them. For tips on schedule planning, see page 9.

2. Plan who will lead each center, making sure to have one adult for approximately every six children. For staffing tips and ideas, see page 12.
Play to Learn

Active Game Center:
Feeling Faces

Collect
Bible, paper plates, markers; optional—several mirrors.

Prepare
Draw paper-plate faces as shown in sketch. Hide paper plates in classroom.

Do
2. One at a time, hold up paper-plate faces. Ask children to describe how the person might be feeling. Children imitate the expression. (Optional: Children look at their faces in mirrors while imitating expressions.)

Talk About
- The Bible story today is about a woman named Dorcas. Dorcas died, and her friends were very sad. But God answered Peter’s prayer and made Dorcas live again. Dorcas’ friends were very happy! Let’s find faces that show feelings.
- Michael, what do you think someone making this face is feeling? I smile when I’m happy, too. What makes you happy? Let’s all smile and see what our faces look like.
- Krystal, why do you think this person is sad? What makes you sad? The Bible says, “God will help you.” I’m glad God loves and helps me!
- Pray briefly, Thank You, God, for loving us and helping us. We love You!

For Younger Children
Simplify the activity by only using happy and sad faces.

For Older Children
After imitating each expression, lead children to say the words of the Bible verse, “God will help you.”
Play to Learn

Art Center: Sewing Cards

Collect
Bible, lightweight poster board, markers, scissors, hole punch, yarn, transparent tape; optional—Lesson 37 Robe Pattern from Discovering God’s Love CD-ROM.

Prepare
On poster board, draw robe as shown in sketch. (Optional: Print Robe Pattern from CD-ROM.) Cut out and use as a pattern to trace one robe on poster board for each child. Cut out robes. Punch holes around edges of robes.

For each robe, cut a length of yarn twice the circumference of the robe. Wrap tape around one end of each length of yarn to use as a needle. Knot the untaped end of the yarn to a hole in the robe.

Do
1. Children color the robe with markers.
2. Each child sews the yarn through the holes in the robe, sewing up and down through the holes or around the outside edges of the poster board.

Talk About
➤ In our Bible story today, Dorcas helped poor people by sewing clothes for them. In Bible times people wore robes. Let’s color and sew robes.

➤ Pam, where do you get your clothes? (Buy in store. Grandmother gives them.)

➤ In the Bible we read, “God will help you.” Pray briefly, Thank You, God, for giving me the people in my family who give me clothes and everything else I need.

For Younger Children
Do not punch holes or use yarn. Instead of sewing cards, children use markers to decorate robes.

For Older Children
Children cut out robes and use hole punch to punch holes along the robes’ edges.

© 2011 Gospel Light. Permission to photocopy granted to original purchaser only. Discovering God’s Love Leader’s Guide • 323
Block Center: Our Town

Collect
Bible, blocks, toy people, toy cars; optional—photographs of familiar buildings and places in your community (including your church), tape.

Do
1. Children use blocks to build familiar places in your town. (Optional: Children attach photos to blocks with tape. Children add these blocks to block play.)
2. Children play with toy people and cars in town.

Talk About
- In our Bible story today, Dorcas is a woman who helped a lot of people. Let’s build our town with our blocks. We can show people helping others in our town.
- Jackson, you have strong arms to lift that long block! I’m glad God made your arms so that they can lift heavy blocks. God loves you.
- Eliana, what did you have for breakfast? God helps us have good food. Food helps us grow strong and healthy. God helps us because He loves us!
- The Bible says, “God will help you.” Let’s thank God that He loves us and helps us. Volunteers repeat the following prayer: Thank You, God, for loving us. Thank You, God, for helping us.

For Younger Children
Young children struggle to build representational objects. Allow children to play freely with blocks. Use conversation suggestions to connect Bible truth with their play.

For Older Children
Provide construction paper for children to cut and place as sidewalks around buildings.
Play to Learn

Science Center: Fabric to Feel

Collect
Bible, articles of clothing or fabric scraps in a variety of textures (scarf, bathing suit, undershirt, cotton dress or shirt, fleece gloves, earmuffs, wool scarf, corduroy pants, socks, burlap, terry cloth robe or washcloth, denim jeans, lace collar or tablecloth, etc.), scissors, construction paper, scissors, glue.

Prepare
If you collected fabric scraps, cut them into 1-inch (2.5-cm) squares.

Do
1. Children explore textures by touching the articles of clothing or fabric scraps. Ask a volunteer to find an item in a texture category you request. **Aaron, find something that feels smooth.**
2. Repeat with different volunteers and a variety of textures (silky, fluffy, bumpy, rough, etc.). Encourage volunteers to name other things that feel smooth, silky, fluffy, bumpy, rough, etc. Repeat as time allows.
3. Children trace their hands onto construction paper and glue small fabric squares onto each finger of their handprint.

Talk About
- **In our Bible story Dorcas died and her friends were very, very sad. They even showed Peter many clothes she had made for them. Let’s look at some clothes people wear today.**
- **God helps us have clothes to wear. I’m glad God loves and helps us! We can show God’s love and help others, too. How can we help people who need clothes?** (Give away clothes and shoes when we grow out of them, buy clothes to give to homeless shelters, etc.)
- **The Bible says, “God will help you.” We can help others because God always helps us! Pray briefly, Dear God, please help me to help others.**

For Younger Children
Simplify activity by using only two or three articles of clothing or fabric scraps.

For Older Children
Put articles of clothing or fabric scraps in a large paper bag. A volunteer feels an item, describes its texture and guesses what it is. Child removes item from bag to see if he or she guessed correctly. Repeat with other volunteers.
Lesson 37
God’s Word
“God will help you.” 1 Chronicles 12:18
God’s Word and Me
I’m glad God loves and helps me.

Listen to Learn
Acts 9:32-43

Collect
Bible, Bible Story 50 pictures from God’s Story for Me Poster Pack #1, Preschool Music #1 CD and player, toy clock or pictures of different times of day; optional—Lesson 37 Time of Day Patterns 1-2 from Discovering God’s Love CD-ROM.

Greet Each Other
Say this verse poem together, emphasizing the words in italics:

God will help you. God will help who?

God will help (Tiff-an), (clap) that’s who.

Repeat the verse poem several times, inserting a different child’s name each time, until every child is named. Older children clap and say the poem along with you.

Tell the Story
Open your Bible to Acts 9. Tell the story using the pictured motions (keywords in bold) or show Bible Story 50 pictures.

What is your favorite thing to wear? Listen to hear how a woman helped others by making clothes for them.

Dorcas was a very kind woman. Dorcas loved Jesus. She worked hard to help people. One way she helped was by sewing clothes for people who needed them. Dorcas didn’t just help people once in a while or whenever she felt like it. Dorcas helped people all the time. And the people Dorcas helped loved her very much.

But one day Dorcas became very sick. She got so sick that she died. Dorcas’ friends were very sad. “Maybe Peter can help us,” one of them said. Peter was one of Jesus’ friends.

“You’re right,” another may have said. “Let’s ask Peter to come here!”

So right away, two men went to get Peter. They hurried to where Peter was. “Peter! Come quickly!” they said. Peter hurried to Dorcas’ house with them. The men told Peter what had happened.

Peter went to the room where Dorcas’ body had been placed. There were many friends in the room. They were crying! They were sad because their kind friend was dead. The friends showed Peter the clothes Dorcas had made for them. Peter saw how much the friends loved Dorcas. Peter kindly said, “Please leave the room now.”

Peter prayed to God. After he prayed, he said, “Dorcas, get up!” And Dorcas opened her eyes and got up! God answered Peter’s prayer by making Dorcas alive again! Then Peter called to her friends, and they came and saw Dorcas.

Dorcas was ALIVE! She’d been dead, but now, there she was—standing and smiling at them! Dorcas’ friends were so happy that God had made kind Dorcas live again!
Talk About the Story
When Dorcas died, how did Peter help her? Peter prayed and God made Dorcas live again! Dorcas’ friends were glad that God loved her and made her live again. I’m glad that God loves and helps me, too. Thank You, God, for loving us and helping us!

Sing to God
Let’s sing about how great God’s love is for us. Lead children in singing “In a Very Big Way” (track 10 on CD). God loves us and everyone else in the world! And God always helps us and does what is best for us. That is what it means when we say God loves us in a very big way!

Hear and Say God’s Word
Holding your Bible open to 1 Chronicles 12:18, say verse aloud. This verse promises that God will help you. God always does what He promises. We know that God will always help us! Point to and say the name of one of the children in your class. Children repeat the verse with you, saying that child’s name instead of the word “you.” The named child stands up as his or her name is said and remains standing. Repeat verse until you have used all children’s names and all children are standing. (Note: If you have a large class, point to two or three children at a time.)

Pray to God
Thank You, God, that You are never too busy to watch over and help each one of us. Thank You for loving us in a very big way. We love You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Praise to God
Children sit in circle. Move hands of toy clock to 7 o’clock, or show picture of morning. (Optional: Show pictures from Times of Day Pattern from CD-ROM.) How does God show His love and help you in the morning? Repeat with other times of day. I’m glad God loves and helps me all through the day!

Option: With parents’ permission, video children as they sing the song. Play video at the end of the session as parents come to pick up their children.

Option: If you take a weekly offering during this worship time, explain to children that the money is used to help people learn about God. Giving money is one way to thank God for helping for us.
Talk to Learn

Bible Story Activity Pages Center

Collect
A copy of Activity 50 from The Big Book of Bible Story Activity Pages #1 for yourself and each child, crayons or markers; optional—fabric scraps, glue.

Do
Lead children to complete pages following the instructions. (Optional: Children glue fabric scraps to clothing on page.) Use the conversation suggestions as children complete their pages and retell the story.

Preschool Puzzle Center

Collect
Copies of Puzzles 73 and 74 (p. 153 and p. 155 from The Big Book of Kindergarten Puzzles) for each child; pencils, crayons or markers.

Do
Children complete the puzzles and color pages. Use the conversation suggestions on the pages.

Read-Aloud Story Center

Collect
A copy of Story Picture 37 from The Big Book of Read-Aloud Stories #1 for yourself and each child, crayons or markers.

Do
Read the story and distribute pictures. Use the conversation suggestions as children complete their pages.