

My Witnesses - A Study of Acts Discussion Guide: Week 26 - Acts 9:32-43

Summary of this week's teaching: This week's passage in Acts highlights the Lord (through Peter) healing a man who was paralyzed for 8 years, as well as raising a well-loved disciple from the dead. We discussed these miracles and how they led to the spread of the gospel, along with some of the purposes of miracles more broadly. We also heard some stories of miracles that the Lord has done among people we know, as well as discussed some of the common false beliefs that people have about miracles.

Connect: Relational questions to get conversations started.

1. When you hear someone say that something is a miracle, what is your first reaction?

Seed: The Bible, God's inspired Word, is very much like a seed - it contains everything we need to experience life. Please read the following passage of scripture as a group: (perhaps in two different translations) Isaiah 58:6-7.

1. What does this passage reveal about God's heart and his priorities? We read this passage in Isaiah during the sermon because, as a disciple of Jesus, Dorcas seemed to embody them well. Who in your life lives out these verses well? What might you learn from them?

Roots: Like subterranean tree roots which extend in all directions searching out water, each believer needs to grow and develop spiritual roots that allow us to make personal connections with our God.

1. Peter kneels and prays before asking Tabitha (Dorcas) to arise, and when healing Aeneas he heals in the name of Christ. He was in frequent communication with the Lord and working out of the power of Christ. When do you miss rooting yourself in the Lord in either of these ways?

Trunk: Without trunks, plants may be large, useful, and beautiful, but they are not trees. The same is true for our faith - without it we are not saved and cannot please God. These questions will help us grow our faith in Him.

1. Has God done a miracle in your life or in the life of someone you know? If so, how did it change your faith?
2. When God doesn't or hasn't yet answered your prayers for a miracle, what does it mean to respond in faith?

Crown: Crowns are the glory of a tree; the culmination of the roots and trunk working in harmony and can be seen for miles around. The crown of a tree represents the visible portion of our faithlife. These questions will encourage us to apply these principles into our everyday lives.

The false beliefs we discussed during the sermon (if there was time) were that:

1. If you aren't healed or God doesn't answer your prayers, He doesn't care.
2. Miracles have ceased.
3. If you (or whoever is sick) had enough faith, they'd be healed.
4. God is at work in miracles but not in the created order.
5. Physical health is the main point rather than the heavenly realities that miracles point to.

Which of these (or other) false beliefs are you most tempted to believe? How can you ask God and your friends for help to fight these beliefs and see the truth? Spend some time discussing and encouraging one another.

