

Study 3: Acts 9:36–43

INTRODUCTION (11:00–11:20 a.m.)

GATHERING (8 min)

Allow your group to gather. Begin as close to 11 a.m. as possible, but as you wait, make conversation around your table. Here are some fun “get to know you” questions if you need suggestions:

- What has been most meaningful or most difficult for you about Urbana?
- What has daily prayer been like for you here at Urbana? How has God met you and those around you?
- What is your hidden talent?
- If you could play any character in a movie or book, who would it be and why?

WELCOME (1 min)

Welcome to your group:

Yay! We’re together again! Today is our last Bible study, and I’m eager to be in Scripture one more time with you all. We’ll do an icebreaker next, but it will be a little shorter than before so that we can save extra time for later as we close.

ICEBREAKER (10 min)

Lead your group in an icebreaker:

- We have seen God do a lot already at the conference, and we want to celebrate with any of you who made a decision last night! Does anyone want to share about how God met them yesterday and led them towards a decision?
- Allow some silence for anyone who wants to respond and then move to the next question if time remains. Your group may decide to pray for those who shared.
- **If time allows:** Now let’s go around and share. What are two words that describe what you are hoping for during this last day of Urbana?

PRAYER (1 min)

Pray and ask God to help you as you study today’s passage.

SCRIPTURE (11:20–11:50 a.m.)

Open to today’s passage on page 37 in your handbook.

BACKGROUND (7 min)

Invite your group to discuss the background for this passage:

- Today we will be studying a passage about grief, death and resurrection. I know this is a complicated topic. We’ve just been through a pandemic and many of us have experienced more death and loss in our communities than we could have imagined. As we begin this passage today, there is space and permission for all of us to honestly share our thoughts and tensions. So my first question before we read the passage, is an acknowledgment of the past:
- What have our experiences with death been during, but not limited to, the pandemic?
- Thank you for sharing and feel free to continue to process these things throughout the study and our discussion. Turning to last night, Bishop Claude spoke about Paul and Ananias. What from his exposition stood out to you?

THE TEXT (3 min)

Read today's Bible study passage out loud. Then invite your group to re-read the passage quietly on their own

ACTS 9:36–43 (NIV)

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.

OBSERVATION (5 min)

Let's discuss a couple things that will help us see the text.

1. Who are the characters in this passage? How are they connected to one another?
2. There are many instances in this text where one thing causes another. Where do you see this?
3. What has been this community's experience of Tabitha's death? Highlight what you see in the text.

INTERPRETATION (15 min)

Now let's discuss a few questions that will help us discover and understand the text.

1. Sending for Peter in a town about 10 miles away would have taken 7–8 hours of travel round trip. Why do you think the disciples went to such trouble to bring Peter?
2. Tabitha is referred to as a disciple in verse 36. In what ways do you see her extending the work of Jesus?
3. What might it have been like to be one of the widows mourning the death of Tabitha? What can we infer about what Tabitha meant to this community?



RESPOND (11:50–12:30 p.m.)

SUMMARY (12 min)

Invite your group to summarize the text together:

We're going to mix it up a little for this last study and instead of me summarizing, I want to give us as a small group the opportunity to collaborate with each other. What do we think the main message of the passage is? What is God saying to us, to Urbana, and to our generation through this passage we just studied? Let's share our thoughts out loud with the group.

As the group shares, listen and make notes of any key words and themes that are emerging. Before moving to application, share a brief summary of what you heard from the group.

APPLICATION (3 min)

Select one application question from below, whichever seems most relevant to your group's discussion of the passage:

Let's take a moment to reflect on a question that will help us respond to the text in our lives. I will read the question, give us a couple minutes in silence, and then open up a time to share with each other.

1. Who on campus does God want you to see and love the way God sees and loves the man who couldn't walk, the Ethiopian, and Tabitha?
2. Many of us have people like Tabitha in our communities/lives. Some may no longer be with us. How have you received God's love through them? How does this passage help you see and honor their lives? What of their character and commitment to God's mission do you aspire to?
3. How can your community here at Urbana or back home take steps toward bringing the resurrection life of Jesus into reality? Where do we see the need for new life around us? What action can we take?
4. Tabitha was a core part of God's mission just as Peter and the other disciples were. Tabitha's story highlights how God's kingdom expands when we learn how to rightly partner with one another. What are some places on campus that you are interested in partnering with?

SHARING AND PRAYER (15 min)

Share a brief story from your own life to answer the application question and then lead the group to share and pray for one another. Stay all together or split into groups of 2–3 to allow more time for each person.

CLOSING (10 min)

Close your time together as a community:

As we close, let's go around and share. How did God meet you specifically during our Bible study times together?

Close in prayer.

Take a group photo and tag it #Urbana22 on IG!



SCAN THIS CODE AND FILL OUT THE SHORT SURVEY BEFORE THE WCC SESSION.

