



FRUITFUL

AND *overflowing*

- BE FAITHFUL -

2021 RESOURCE

the girls' brigade
girls' lives transformed
god's world enriched



Welcome,

TO THE FAITHFUL & OVERFLOWING: BE FAITHFUL RESOURCE 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE GBI INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

The International President's Committee, made up of representatives from the Five GBI Fellowships across the world, are delighted to launch the new 2021 publication 'FRUITFUL & OVERFLOWING...BE FAITHFUL'. As with past resources on the 'Fruitful and overflowing' theme, these are designed to equip you and your groups wherever you are.

Looking back over the last few years, in 2018 Girls' Brigade Worldwide celebrated its 125th Anniversary and many years of Mission & Ministry, seeking to transform the lives of girls and young women across the globe. You may recall, in the same year, we launched the theme 'FRUITFUL & OVERFLOWING' - based on John 15:1-7.

In 2019 we looked at the theme 'BEING FRUITFUL AND OVERFLOWING' - based on Galatians 5:22. Our aim was to prayerfully seek to be overflowing with the fruits of the Spirit, starting with **Being Joyful**.

In 2020 we ran with the theme, 'FRUITFUL AND OVERFLOWING...SHOW KINDNESS' and explored how we could show kindness and carry out acts of kindness throughout the year. (You will have read great stories about what the girls and groups have done, through our social media and website stories during the year).

In a year when the world was hit by the Covid19 pandemic, it proved to be very appropriate theme for the year 2020. #ShowKindness... We were called upon to do just that and show acts of kindness as we faced lockdowns and saw the virus cause havoc across the world and in our own communities.

Our theme for this year, 2021, is 'FRUITFUL AND OVERFLOWING... BE FAITHFUL.' As you will remember one of the fruits of the Spirit is FAITHFULNESS. As we look back into 2020, as GB we were challenged wherever we are, we were even then seeking to remain relevant and effective to our girls and groups. Who would have thought this time last year, we would not have been able to meet and play games with our girls!

The whole world went into lockdown and we all had to deal with some kind of loss due to COVID 19, throughout the year 2020. Sadly, some lost their loved ones, some lost their jobs, their homes, support systems through the negative effect of being isolated. But in this I am sure we all agree that GB rose to the challenge, especially with online resources and ways to connect.

We thank God for being able to speak to & connect with so many of our GB leaders and volunteers around the world, as we stepped up in God's strength and 'kept the fire burning for GB'. So as we enter 2021, with that backdrop of all the challenges of 2020 due to the COVID 19 pandemic, we look ahead knowing this still impacts our lives but ALWAYS knowing GOD IS IN CONTROL.

So how do we remain **Faithful to God** when the light at the end of the tunnel seems a little way off as we await vaccinations? Even with the injections, and vaccinations programmes now being launched, it is going to be a long time before we feel the relief and life 'gets back to normal'.

So, The Presidents Committee is delighted to launch this publication & programme '**FRUITFUL & OVERFLOWING...BE FAITHFUL RESOURCE**' and new material for 2021. The resource can be adapted and used for older or younger girls.

It is full of games, discussion starters, A Devotional Booklet and Bible Reflections, that can be shared online with the girls. We hope that in using this your girls will enjoy and engage with the resources in 2021.

Together across the GB family in our Fellowships, we are going to reflect on:

- How we can remain faithful in the middle of a crisis
- How to Build and maintain our relationships
- How to Manage our Emotions
- How to Deal with Loss
- How to Serve others
- How to take care of our Physical Health

May God bless you and protect you as you seek to serve and follow Him faithfully,

Priscilla

GB International President

P.S. Please feel free to use the Resource any way relevant to you! BE FAITHFUL!

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

i. What does it mean to build?

To build is to put materials or parts of something together (Dictionary Definition). There are a number of words that can be used in place of build.

Ask the girls if they know any words that could be used in place of build. They might say... construct, erect, put up, set up, assemble, raise, make.

ii. What are relationships?

This is a state of being connected. Where one or two people or things are connected (Dictionary Definition). There are a number of words that can be used in place of relationship

Ask the girls if they know any words that could be used in place of relationship. They might say... bond, link, connection, association, tie in.

iii. What does BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS mean?

Ask the girls if they can explain what their understanding is of building relationships. Building Relationships involves soft skills that will help you connect with others and eventually develop a bond with others. Building and having positive relations with people around you is important as it gives a peace of mind and also creates an environment for everyone to coexist.

Building relationships requires us to show love to others around us. In the bible we learn that God is love and anything done without love is but in vain (1 Corinthians 13 - 3:13). Girls' Brigade is a family that enables us to have and establish good relationships with the ones around us.

Bible Study

Building good relationships give us a piece of mind. These relationships help us to move forward and achieve greater things as relationships promote team work. Think about it, what would you consider to be the first relationship to have ever existed?

In the book of Acts chapter one and two we see how that Christ asked the apostles to stay together and united as they awaited the coming of the Holy Spirit which helped them to be his witness. We see this as possible because Christ had built a relationship with the apostles. In our life today we are encouraged to establish a good relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Day 1 - Romans 12:18

- i. Regarding building relationships, what is God's desire for Christians?
- ii. How do emotions relate to building positive relationships?
- iii. How important do you think it is to manage emotions in relationships? Explain.

PRAYER: GOD HELP ME HAVE THE GRACE TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS THAT ARE PLEASING TO YOU AND WILL HELP ME WIN MANY TO YOU, AMEN.

Day 3 - Amos 3:3

- i. How do you understand the passage in Amos 3:3?
- ii. What do you consider as a bad relationship?
- iii. It is impossible to have fellowship with God if we refuse to follow His word?
- iv. How would you assess your personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ?

PRAYER: GOD CONNECT ME TO THE RIGHT PEOPLE FOR YOUR KINGDOMS SAKE HERE ON EARTH IN JESUS' NAME, AMEN.

Day 2 - 1 Corinthians 15:33

- i. Why is it important for us to build good relationships with others?
- ii. What do you understand from the passage in 1 Corinthians 15:33?
- iii. How can we build good relationships within our Girls' Brigade family?
- iv. One would ask "how do I build a relationship with God"?

PRAYER: FATHER GOD, HELP ME TO BUILD A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU AND KEEP ME IN CHECK WITH THE PEOPLE AROUND ME THAT YOU HAVE BLESSED ME WITH, AMEN.

Day 4 - Ephesians 4:29, Colossians 4:5-6

- i. In light of Ephesians 4:29 and Colossians 4:5-6, explain three ways to apply the verses to build-ing relationships in the important relationships in your life.
- ii. What does it mean to you to have a seasoned conversation with someone?
- iii. Who qualifies for one to have a relationship with? Is it just family and friends? Give reasons.
- iv. When you build a relationship with someone, are you supposed to expect something in return for that act? Explain.

PRAYER: FATHER PUT A GUARD ON MY LIPS THAT I MAY HAVE A SEASONED CONVERSTION WITH THE RELATIONSHIPS I HAVE BUILT, IN JESUS NAME AMEN.

Day 5 - Act of Goodwill

- i. God created with us a relationship by sending his son to come and be sin himself so that you and I may be here today (John 3:16). This gift that was given to us cannot be measure or compared to anything. Therefore, to do an act of goodwill for someone who least expects it. Share the love that our Lord God shared with us – bless someone today!

PRAYER: FATHER DIRECT ME TO WHO YOU WANT ME TO SHOW LOVE TO TODAY, IN JESUS NAME AMEN.

Day 6 – 1 John 4: 7-16

- i. Read the bible passage as a group and apply it to our lives today chapter by chapter on how we can build relationships with one another.
- ii. Tell a moment in your life when you knew God was real
- iii. Who is one person you wish you were closer to?

PRAYER: FATHER GOD HELP ME TO HAVE LOVE FOR OTHERS JUST AS YOU HAD LOVE FOR ME, IN JESUS NAME.AMEN

Day 7 - Matthew 22:37

- i. Take a moment and look within you and ask yourself how many relationships you have built and sustained. Share this if you feel comfortable.
- i. What is your relationship like with your neighbour? Is it as God has commanded us? 'To love them as ourselves'.
- ii. What do you make of the passage in Matthew? Is it being applied and practiced today in our communities?
- iii. What in this whole Bible study stands out the most to you? Explain.

PRAYER: THANK YOU LORD FOR THE STUDY. HELP ME THAT YOUR WORD MAY FIND ROOT IN MY HEART TO HEAR ME BUILD AND MAINTAIN RELATIONSHIPS, IN JESUS NAME AMEN.

NOTE – if you have any other prayer points please feel free to add them.

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who was the oldest person in the bible to have ever lived?
Answer – Genesis 5:27
2. Did the Ten Commandments have writings on both sides?
Answer – Exodus 32:15
3. Who cut Samson's hair
Answer – Judges 16:19
4. Who was the youngest king in the bible
Answer – 2 Chronicles 24:1
5. Who shut the door to the ark?
Answer – Genesis 7:16
6. Who has been mentioned in the bible almost as many times as Jesus?
Answer – David mentioned 1139 times
7. Who in the bible had 6 fingers and 6 toes
Answer – 2 Samuel 21:20
8. Did Job have bad breath?
Answer – Job 19:17
9. What does Revelation 21:1 talk about?
Answer – there will be no sea on the new earth
10. Which king's message was written with just a hand and no body?
Answer - Daniel 5:5
11. Who buried Moses
Answer – Deuteronomy 34:6

GAMES

BISCUIT TO THE MOUTH

- Buy a packet of biscuits.
- You may have as many participants as you like.
- Close one eye and place the biscuit on your eye.
- Move the biscuit from your eye to your mouth without touching it. If it fails you will have to start all over.
- The one that manages to move the biscuit without touching it wins the game.

LOCK EYE CHALLENGE

- You may have as many teams as you want.
- Each opposing participant should maintain a straight eye contact at all times (lock eye)
- Then ask them to play any game or perform any task with eyes locked on the opposing team (straight eye contact at all times)
- The first team to complete the given task wins.

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Bible Puzzle																	
Find the name of Bible throughout this puzzle.																	
B	I	B	L	E	A	B	I	B	L	E	B	B	I	B	L	E	B
C	B	I	B	L	E	D	E	F	B	I	B	L	E	G	H	I	I
B	I	B	L	E	B	I	B	L	E	J	K	L	J	E	S	U	B
B	E	S	U	S	M	N	B	O	P	Q	B	I	B	L	E	R	L
I	S	B	I	B	L	E	I	T	U	B	I	B	L	E	Z	A	E
B	B	C	D	E	B	I	B	L	E	F	S	B	I	B	L	E	B
L	G	H	I	J	I	K	L	L	M	N	U	B	I	B	L	E	I
E	O	P	B	I	B	L	E	Q	R	S	S	B	I	B	L	E	B
U	V	B	I	B	L	E	B	I	B	L	E	B	I	B	L	E	L
W	B	I	B	L	E	X	Y	Z	B	I	B	L	E	A	B	C	E
B	I	B	L	E	D	E	F	G	B	I	B	L	E	H	I	J	K

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Bible Word Search:

NAMES AND TITLES OF JESUS

U Q O K A I S N S M T K R P M
V L F Z J T Y O A E E O A O R
O M G Y V O N T N Z I C B X K
Y D N Y M O E N U V A N B O A
D L O V F H T C A S I R I X R
E R I G W A R S P D S H E W E
N T O G B M A L I D O V Z N D
F D J L H Q Y V K R T T R Z E
I G Q R R T A E G T H V E P E
P B Y I H D S E K E U C T X M
T S W K F T Y A J I O Q S L E
L I I O N A M F O N O S A H R
V N N Q Z Y K V A D E J M V R
G O J E S U S E M M A N U E L
S V B G G W T Z T P B Q J F E

CHRIST

KING of the Jews

LORD

RABBI

SON OF DAVID

EMMANUEL

LAMB of God

MASTER

REDEEMER

SON OF GOD

JESUS

LIGHT of the World

NAZARENE

SAVIOR

SON OF MAN

SERVING OTHERS

EXPLORERS/CADETS/JUNIORS/SENIORS

DEVOTION - DORCAS SERVES OTHERS

Read the story of Dorcas. Acts 9
In this devotion girls learn how Dorcas served God by serving the poor and the widows in her town. Her acts of kindness spread throughout her city, and still influence Christians today.

SEW CLOTHES USING CRAFT FOAM AND PLASTIC NEEDLES

Craft foam is a great medium to use to learn to sew. Young girls can use plastic children's needles to sew shapes onto fun foam with a little help from Leaders or parents.

How to Make Puppet Clothes Using Fun Foam and Plastic Needles:

1. Cut a shirt shape from craft foam. Cut out circles for buttons, pocket shapes, or other decorative shapes.
2. Mark dots on the fun foam around the edge of the coat about a half an inch apart with a black marking pen. Punch tiny holes through the fun foam at the dots using a sharp needle or small hole punch. Turn the coat over and mark dots on the other side of the coat where you can see the holes. Mark the dots farther apart for younger girls.
3. Have the girls sew from dot to dot using plastic needles and embroidery floss/cotton or yarn. As you work with the girls ask them if they think they would enjoy making clothes for other people.

MAKE CLOTHES FOR STICK PUPPETS

What you will need:

Jumbo Craft Sticks and Regular-sized Craft Sticks, Hot Melt Glue, Scraps of Material, Scissors, Yarn, and Markers

How to Make Clothes for Stick Puppets:

1. Before you begin, glue a jumbo craft stick and regular-sized craft stick together to form a cross.
2. Cut pieces of fabric using patterns to make the coats, tunics, and head coverings.
3. Let your girls pick the pieces they would like to use on their stick puppets. Show them how to place the hole of the coat over the head and then tie it to the puppet with yarn. The tunic goes over the coat with the slit part in the front, and can be tied on with the coat with a piece of yarn.
4. To make the head covering glue it to the forehead of the stick puppet and then flip it over to the back of the head scrunching up the material around the face. Tie it in place with a piece of yarn.

ACT OUT THE STORY WITH A PUPPET SKIT

The girls will enjoy making their own puppet skits. Place them in groups of two or three and have the groups take turns acting out the story with their puppets. If you didn't make the puppets, you can have them act out the story without the puppets. Assign each girl a character from the story and help them write a skit.

If you have younger girls, you can prepare the puppet skit and just have them watch the skit, or they may like to act it out as you narrate the story.

SERVING PEOPLE, REACH OUT TO OTHERS

The girls can serve people, like Dorcas of the Bible did by reaching out to their communities. Older girls may not be able to sew clothes for the poor, but they can make things using fabric to serve others. Search for no-sew fabric projects for girls to work on from the web.

DORCAS BIBLE VERSE

REVIEW GAME

Acts 9:36 says that Dorcas "was always doing good and helping the poor."

Choose a Bible verse, and then print each word on cardboard and place each word on card stands or large plastic bottles filled with sand/dirt.

You will have to make more than one set of some of the game pieces depending on which Bible verse version you use.

Place the game pieces in front of the room on the floor with the words visible.

Have the girls stand about ten feet from the game pieces and throw a bean bag or ball at them to try to knock pieces backwards, so that the piece fall over backwards and the word is no longer visible. After a girl has thrown the beanbag and knocked over a word, she then should say the verse. Keep playing until all the pieces are knocked over and all the girls can say the complete verse without and words visible.

A LITTLE PRINCESS DVD

You'll need: The DVD/video of A Little Princess and the ability to show a clip.

Sara Crewe is brought to Miss Minchin's boarding school by her adoring father. She's the brightest girl in the school, with exquisite manners, but because she comes from a rich family and is a bit different to the others, the other girls don't like her much. After her father is reported missing in action, Miss Minchin takes everything from Sara and has her stay on at the school as a servant. Sara finds a way to keep her spirits up despite deprivation and abuse. Show the clip from Scene 16 – others in need. Here she is desperately hungry but gives almost all her food to a beggar child who is even hungrier. Identify this act of kindness and comment on how her kindness results in others showing her kindness in return. The baker who observes her act of kindness gives the beggar child a home.

DEVOTION IDEAS/VERSES

The Bible says:

"The greatest amongst you must become like the least, and the leader like the servant", Luke 2:26.

"Do not let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example in what you say, the way you live, your love, your faith and your purity." 1 Timothy 4:12.

Take opportunities you've been given to lead or follow, always follow Jesus.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Ask someone to read **Philippians 2:1- 4**

¹"Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ²then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."

Then ask another person to read

Philippians 2:5-11

⁵"In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: ⁶who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage. ⁷rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! ⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name ¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth ¹¹and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Now explore and reflected on the motivation for Servant Leadership in the verses 1-5. Then in the verses 5-11 we are given the example of the attitude of a Servant Leader (the ultimate servant leader). Write a list of the different qualities that are recorded in verses 5-11, and then write one sentence which you believe encapsulates the true meaning of Servant Leadership. Then share your sentence with the group.

Prayer – I thank God for the time that we have shared together, for these girls who choose to follow you and are willing to share their love for Christ with others. Amen.

GENEROSITY DEVOTION

Question 1: if you were a billionaire would you rather wipe out a terrible disease or give everyone \$10,000?

Question 2: Can you name someone you know who is generous?

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." Luke 6:38

"God promises: Help and give without expecting a return, live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously. Our Father is kind: we are to be kind too." Luke 6:35

"Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can". John Wesley.

Pray: May the Lord bless you and smile on you as you show generosity to others.

DEVOTION & GAMES:

THE PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL

Read: Luke 12:13-21 ¹³Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."
¹⁴Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?"
¹⁵Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."
¹⁶And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. ¹⁷He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'
¹⁸"Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. ¹⁹And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."
²⁰"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' ²¹"This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God."

Sometimes we just think about ourselves and what we have, but we can be God's stewards every day by thinking about what we have to offer other people.

TEST HOW RICH WE ARE COMPARED TO OTHER PEOPLE GAME:

Hunger Awareness – girls stand along one wall

In response to the following questions they move from one side of the room to the other.

- You have eaten dessert or a sweet treat this week (Hungry people in poor countries rarely get dessert).
- You have had to walk a mile to get to a drink of water (in many countries people do have to walk far for water).
- You have had a drink of water more than once today (some people have no water to drink)
- Your freezer at home has bags or boxes of food in it (people in many places do not have refrigerators or freezers to keep food).
- You ate meat or fish this week (many people eat only grains and never meat or fish as they do not have the money to buy these products).

Questions:

- What do you think was wrong with the rich man's attitude? What does 'greedy' mean?
- What if the man had shared his crops and money with others instead of keeping them?
- Is keeping things always the right thing to do? (look at the leader's ice blocks/ice creams)
- What does it mean to have a "rich relationship with God"?
- Where is the best place to store up riches? (in heaven by doing good here on earth)

- The man in the parable was not wrong to work hard to produce a good crop, so what made him a fool? (he is a fool because he thought the main purpose in life was getting possessions. He thought true riches were things that he owned.

Actually, God owns them, He owns everything. And we are only 'stewards' who look after them.

HOARD-IT RACE:

Blow up a packet of balloons (1/2 inflate) and divide group into pairs.

Give each pair a large T-shirt. Get 1 girl per pair to wear the T-shirt. Say Ready, set, go – the other girl in the pair runs to the far side of the room, collects a half-inflated balloon and runs back as many times as they can to their partner, who hoards as many balloons as she can inside her T-shirt. Play this twice swapping tasks.

Talk: When you think about it, it is pretty silly to try to hoard balloons. What are some better things to do with the balloons? Girls answer. Now read the story that Jesus told, about a man who didn't stop to think about how silly it was to hoard all his money and hide it away.

Give each girl an ice block/ice cream to eat while reading. Leaders say they will keep their ice block/ice cream to eat later & they let the ice block/ice cream drip and melt into a bowl.

ACTIVITY

Make a video/play act the parable of the rich fool.

GAME

Each girl has a pen and paper. Ask them to think of at least two of their favourite things and write them down. Then everyone is to look at their list and put a tick next to the things that will last forever. God has promised to look after us and we don't need to be greedy about trying to get everything for ourselves.

"Jesus said, "That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life – whether you have enough good to eat or enough clothes to wear. For life is more than food and your body more than clothes. Look at the ravens. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns for God feeds them. And you are far more valuable to God than birds!"

What extra things that we have that we could share? Encourage everyone to find something to give away to their local Opportunity Shop or another family who would appreciate them. As a group – think about what blessings God has given to us that we can share with others. How can we do this?

Pray – Dear God, please help me to develop a 'gratitude attitude' for all the wonderful blessings you have given me. Amen.

GAMES

CLEAN-UP CONTEST

Use this game to teach small children that many hands make light work. Place three rugs in the centre of the room. Cover the rugs with spare toys, books, and clothing. Assign each girl to one of the three rugs. Assign two girls to the first rug. Assign five girls to the second rug and assign the rest to the third rug. Tell the girls that when you say "go" they must run to their rug, grab one thing and put it away as quickly as they can. Ask the girls to predict which group will finish first. After the game, discuss why the group with more helpers finished first.

COLLECTION BOX

Start this activity by asking the girls to make several lists on a sheet of paper. Ask them to list five toys they don't play with anymore. Then have them list five books they don't read anymore and five clothing items they no longer wear. The girl who completes her list first wins a small prize. Explain how there are girls and boys who don't have toys and books and clothes. Tell the girls they can help these children by donating their unused possessions to a local homeless shelter or relief organisation. As a group, create a collection box that holds donations. Ask the girls to donate items from their list with a parent's **permission**.

KINDNESS COOK-OFF

Older girls will enjoy playing this food-related game. You will need access to a kitchen. Divide the girls into several groups. Give each group a simple recipe and the accompanying ingredients. Tell the girls that they have a certain amount of time to successfully make the recipe. They must finish before time runs out, but they must not rush and to ensure the meal is properly made. Encourage the girls to cooperate during the process. When each group is finished, donate the meal toward someone in need, such as a bereaved family, a new mum, or a local homeless shelter.

PIONEERS/ BRIGADERS

DEVOTION - DORCAS

Scripture Reference: Acts 9:36-42

³⁶ In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas[a]), who 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 the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive. ⁴² This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord.

First Impressions & Observations:

Dorcas was a Christian woman who lived in Joppa that had a heart for others. She spent her time seeing to the needs of poor, especially widows and she was very loved.

Outline of Her Work:

- I. Residence (Acts 9:36)
 - A. Lived in Joppa
- II. Work (Acts 9:36, 39)
 - A. Sewed clothes for widows.
- III. They Sent for Peter, hoping for a Miracle (38)
- IV. The Community of Believers were grieved. (39)
 - A. They show Peter the works of Dorcas
- V. Peter sends the people away and prays (40)
- VI. Peter raises Dorcas from the dead (41)
- VII. Peter in the believers to give Dorcas back to them.
- VIII. News of the miracle spreads across the region.

GENERAL INSIGHTS

In The Scripture record of Dorcas is limited to a few verses in the ninth chapter of Acts, but her name to this day stands for the benevolent use of the needle. Her example has been an inspiration to women throughout church history.

The Bible is silent concerning the genealogy of Dorcas. What is known is that her home was at Joppa and she was associated with a little band of Christians, most of whom were poor. She, however, apparently was a woman of means to serve humanity as freely as she did. The words of Jesus had no doubt been the moving power in her soul: "For I was hungered and you gave me meat, I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me....in as much as you have done it unto the least of my brothers, you have done it for me".

The Scriptures give us only glimpses of her witness and work for Christ in Acts chapter nine, yet she has influenced many by her good works. She is evidently a Christian, being called "a certain disciple. It was through the ministry of Phillip the evangelist that a Christian church was established in Joppa at an early date. From its very beginning, the church in Joppa was known as a center of fervent evangelism and a well-organized social service provider. Possibly Dorcas came to Christ in this church and there caught the vision of service.

Dorcas was well known for her good works and charitable deeds which she did. What is significant about the account of her life is that Dorcas not only thought up ways of relieving the needy, but she also carried out her plans! She knew what she could do, and she DID it. She was a true "doer" of the Word. Among her good works was that of making clothes for widows and the needy of her church and community with her own loving hands. The clothes that Dorcas cut out and sewed represented Christian faith in action. She was not only willing to give financially, but she was willing to invest herself in the work of charity.

When Dorcas died, she left the church at Joppa grief-stricken. The church called for the Apostle Peter, who was in a neighboring city, to come to them. They obviously had heard of Peter's supernatural power and doubtless hoped that he might return Dorcas to them. When he got there he found that the widows she had helped had laid her out and prepared an eloquent eulogy on the life and character of Dorcas by showing some of the many coats and garments which she made for them. Here no doubt were aged widows whose hands were too feeble to hold the needle and too poor to pay other for their work. They showed the warm garments Dorcas had made them to protect them from the cold winds which often swept in from the Mediterranean. Also, there were likely young widows for whom Dorcas had most likely made clothes for their children.

But Dorcas was given back to them by a great miracle. Apparently, this scene touched Peter's emotions. He sent them all out and knelt down and prayed. When he felt his request had been received by God, Peter spoke the word of power and authority and raised Dorcas from the dead, thus presenting her alive to the believers and widows at Joppa.

Word spread about the miracle throughout the city.

Character Qualities Identified:

- Ø *Compassionate – she was always helping the poor*
- Ø *Motivated – she was always doing good works*
- Ø *Faithful - she persevered in the work God had given her*
- Ø *Hard working – made clothes for many people*
- Ø *Productive - made many items of clothing*
- Ø *Available to God - she did what God called her to do.*
- Ø *Respected by others - which is seen by the way they laid her out and displayed the clothes she made them. Also, it is seen in the way they grieved her.*

BIBLE TRUTHS ILLUSTRATED IN HER LIFE

1. She helped the “least of these”.

Matthew 25: 35-40

³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ ³⁷ “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ ⁴⁰ “The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’

2. She was a doer of the word.

James 1:22 *“Do not merely listen to the word but do what it says!”*

3. She displayed true religion; she displayed to others what Christianity is all about.

James 1:27 *“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”*

SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE LIFE OF DORCAS:

While Dorcas was greatly loved and respected among the people of Joppa, it seems that she was not conscious of the magnificent work she was doing and of its far-reaching consequences. Dorcas did not strive to be a leader but was content to stay in her own home and try to do all she could to serve the Lord in her sphere of influence. But because of her faithful service, she indeed became a leader in an almost universal philanthropic cause.

Many women throughout history have sought to emulate the life of Dorcas by establishing “Dorcas Societies” that hold humanitarian ideals, engage in various relief activities, and whose sole purpose in existing is to do good. We can hold Dorcas as an example to all of us to look after the welfare of others. After all, remember what **James 1:27** tells us: “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.” We can find no finer model of this pure religion than Dorcas.

PERSONAL APPLICATION (MINE)

I will make a plan to help others and then will work that plan. For now, I will pick a project to complete by Christmas. Each year my kids and I pick a person or organization to help. I will begin planning for that and seeing it through. When that is done, I will make a plan for each month to help someone in need – either financial, physical, emotional, or spiritual.

Be sure to make your own personal application!

TRANSFERABLE CONCEPTS

1. We need to remember what true religion is. It is not studying just for knowledge, but for application. We need to become “doers” of the Word. How can you share this concept with others?
2. We need to help the “least of these”. It doesn’t just mean poor people. It can also mean those who cannot take care of themselves for a variety of reasons; those who the world doesn’t care about. How can you share this concept with others?

DEALING WITH LOSS

PLEASE NOTE:

Loss is a very emotional topic to discuss, particularly after the difficulties of 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic. Please approach this topic sensitively and with pastoral care in mind. If you're meeting face to face, please allocate a leader to be available to provide pastoral care or prayer support (bearing in mind, child protection regulations). If you're meeting online, please have a similar process in place to ensure every child is supported.

ACTIVITY #1: WHAT IS LOSS?

Draw an outline of a girl on a large piece of paper (if meeting online, get each girl to draw their own smaller outline). Explain that 2020 was an unsettling and life transforming year for many people around the world. We all had to deal with a lot of change. Create a name for the girl on the paper and invite the young people to reflect on the changes that she and other young people may have experienced in the last year. Ask them to list them on the outside of the outline of the girl.

Changes may include:

- Loss of routine
- Not going to school
- Some friendships may have ended
- Loss of independence (not able to do what they want)
- Loss of opportunities
- Bereavement
- Poor mental health
- Loss of contact with GB
- Family illness

(Please do encourage children and young people to discuss positive changes too – more quality time with family, increased exercise, more time for hobbies).

Explain that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in both good and bad effects. But the majority of us have experienced change. Wherever there is a change, there will be a loss of the thing that you have had taken or that you have left behind.

Even without COVID-19, we all experience loss as part of 'normal life': loss of childhood, leaving home, moving jobs etc. How we process that change is what is important. So even when we move onto new and good things we still leave behind something.

ACTIVITY #2: THE IMPACT OF LOSS

Reflect on the losses that are written on the outside of the outline of the girl and ask the group to write the different feelings that she maybe experiencing inside the outline of the body. For example, anxious, guilty, ashamed, fearful, inadequate, angry etc.

Explain that all these emotions are valid and should not be dismissed. Each of us is unique and we will react differently to situations. It is important that we and others feel able to express their emotions. After all, the Bible demonstrates that Jesus did.

Spend some time looking up the following pages and reflecting on what it teaches us about Jesus:

- He was angry - Matthew Ch.21:12
- He was greatly distressed - Mark Ch.14:33
- He was grieved - John Ch.11:1-44
- He wept - John Ch.11:35
- He was amazed - Mark Ch.6:6
- He rejoiced and was full of joy - Luke Ch.10:21

We are called to become more like Christ and part of this is to fully express our emotions.

Exploring the emotional response of the fictional character they have created, gives permission to the young people to talk openly without talking about their own situations. Bring the groups together again and allow them space to talk and share their thoughts together again highlighting similarities and differences. Engage the young people in conversation drawing out what, if anything, stands out to them as surprising to them.

ACTIVITY #3: CREATING AN EMOTIONAL FIRST AID KIT

Loss can be a difficult experience to deal with. As we've discussed, it can bring up a range of different emotions – anger, fear, isolation, anxiety, guilt and shame. These are all natural and valid emotions. But we can help to manage our emotions in both healthy and unhealthy ways. Ask the group to list healthy and unhealthy ways which we can manage the different emotions surrounding loss.

Here's some ideas:

Unhealthy: comfort eating, under eating, self-harm, bullying others, aggressive behaviour, alcohol and drug abuse, isolating ourselves for long periods of time, neglecting our personal hygiene.

Healthy: eating healthy and nourishing food, talking to a trusted adult, exercising, praying, reading the Bible, scheduling time with friends, taking a bath, doing something that gives us joy.

After having a discussion about these healthy and unhealthy coping mechanisms, encourage the group to create their own emotional first aid kit either by drawing the outline of a first aid kit or actually creating a box with different things in it.

When we feel sad or we're dealing with difficult emotions, it is important to have a strategy to deal with them well. If we cut our finger, we would go to a first aid box to get a plaster. Similarly when we feel sad or anxious, let's go to our emotional first aid box.

To help the group understand, you or other leaders could share the different items in your own emotional first-aid kit and how you deal with difficult emotions in a healthy way.

For example, go for a walk, talk to a friend, pray to God and/or remember to eat nutritious food.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

WHY IS OUR PHYSICAL WELLBEING IMPORTANT?

Answer: Physical appearance is important to God in that it reveals the glory of His creative abilities. So we should appreciate the beauty God has given us as His most complex and amazing creation. In ways we cannot understand, we reflect His own beauty. God places some value on appearances; if He did not, we would all look the same. It is not a wrong thing for us to notice and appreciate physical appearance as well.

Take time to discuss and let the girls say what they think.

A healthy body gives us the energy to do God's work. As Christians taking caring of our bodies is taking care of the place where the Holy Spirit dwells. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? 1 Corinthians 6:15a

Good Stewardship – God gave us the body to use and enjoy during our time in this life. It will not last forever, but as with anything else God entrusts to us as stewards, we should take good care of the body. Some people have disabling accidents or unavoidable medical conditions that limit the use of longevity of their bodies, but to recklessly damage or disable your body through either neglect or abuse is not an act of good steward. If we do not care for our health, we are neglecting God's temple.

Take time to Reflect on

1 Corinthians 6:19 – 20 with the older girls.

Healthy eating: Our bodies are of value to God. He cares not only about our souls, but also about our bodies. When God created man, He made him a physical being. He also gave man food and labor (Genesis 1:28-31). It is advisable to eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day as well as keeping our bodies hydrated by drinking at least 2 litres of water a day. Eating fruit and vegetables is normally not a problem for most of us but it is hard to drink water especially during the colder months.

Reflection: Spend some time Reflecting on the verses and see how they help us to understand how we align our physical fitness with our spiritual fitness.

- Psalm 139: 13- 14
- Matthew 4:23
- 1 Timothy 4: 7- 8
- Mark 12:30

ACTIVITY #1: SLEEP WELL

How do we ensure that we get enough rest every night? What do you find helps?

Let's Share! Some ideas below :

- We can have a bath to relax us, read a book or magazine.
- Stop watching screens or looking at your mobile phone 30 minutes before bedtime.
- Having a milky drink – hot chocolate, Ovaltine, Horlicks.
- Sit and really tense your whole body, then after a minute begin to release the tension from the top of your head to the tips of your toes. It's a great feeling.
- Ensure your bedroom is well-ventilated... Sweet dreams

ACTIVITY #2: DRINK WATER CHALLENGE

Let's have #DrinkWater for health. Share this with the girls and encourage them to drink 2 litres of water per day. Find creative ways to motivate the girls to drink water and eat healthy! Share the journey on our social media to encourage others.

ACTIVITY #3: EXERCISE

Finding time to exercise can be tough. How long do we need? 20-30 minutes?

Exercise does not require a fancy gym membership. What about a walk during our morning prayers, a short walk after dinner or maybe even a walk during our lunch break?

Our Europe IVP Dr. Claire Rush is an inspiration to us all. One year ago Claire began walking and then running and will gladly share with you how this has changed her life.

For those who live close to the beach walking along the beach with the soothing sounds of the waves across the beach can be therapy both physically and mentally. Searching for exercises on you tube will give you lots of ideas.

One idea is psalms & stretches – gentle and mindful exercise based on the bible.

You can encourage your girls to engage in star jumps, squats, running on the spot, walking up & down the stairs several times, jogging, cycling or gardening. Basically, anything that increases your heart rate is good for your physical health!

Download this app for 7 minute workouts.

Try one in the morning:-

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.popularapp.sevenmins&hl=en_IN&gl=US

ACTIVITY #4: BIBLE ACTIVITY

Have a go at this wordsearch to help us remember what the bible says about our bodies. Search for the bold words in the bible passage

J	F	T	M	F	N	O	B	O	O	R	P	A	W	I
I	V	H	K	B	O	U	G	H	T	W	T	Y	C	P
S	O	E	H	W	I	T	H	O	L	Y	M	Z	V	W
X	N	R	I	O	E	C	O	W	D	O	M	C	J	O
N	M	E	Y	F	I	H	S	N	B	I	Y	M	O	B
I	B	F	T	H	E	Y	T	K	P	A	T	W	G	A
K	N	O	W	I	A	G	I	E	L	G	N	T	G	F
M	K	R	D	F	M	V	G	H	M	P	P	O	Q	P
X	O	E	P	Y	I	N	E	Y	X	P	M	K	C	M
A	P	Y	H	F	N	T	F	F	B	Y	L	H	R	U
M	O	I	S	M	Y	I	I	E	E	U	I	E	R	M
L	L	I	R	U	R	T	A	T	P	Y	T	H	T	N
U	S	P	I	O	I	T	L	W	H	C	Y	C	T	Z
A	I	M	L	G	P	R	H	K	C	P	I	R	I	I
B	F	G	H	Y	N	L	H	P	R	I	C	E	U	O

“What? **KNOW** ye not that your **BODY** is the **TEMPLE** of the **HOLY GHOST** **WHICH** is in you, which ye **HAVE** of **GOD**, and ye are not your **OWN**? For ye are **BOUGHT WITH** a **PRICE**: **THEREFORE GLORIFY** God in your body, and in your **SPIRIT**, which are God’s”
1 Corinthians 6: 19-20 (KJV)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ALL DORCAS RESOURCES

<https://www.education.com/>

<https://kidscorner.reframemedia.com/bible-stories/the-story-of-dorcas> + <https://www.pinterest.com/>

<https://pin.it/3qW7Cli> - Dorcas colouring in.

<https://pin.it/2kVKA6r> - Dorcas craft,

<https://pin.it/7CclGqn> - sewing cloths,

<https://pin.it/wxFm3oK> - puppets

N:GAGE – KINDNESS (Australia programme) - A Little Princess DVD

Servant Leadership - Australian Leaders Training Intensive Course

Generosity Devotion - Faith 4 Families

Devotion & Games: The Parable of the Rich Fool

- https://sermons4kids.com/parable_of_the_rich_fool_group_activities.htm + <https://www.pinterest.com/>

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