

Helping Each Other



Worship

The Bible, and the Psalms in particular, are full of rich imagery through which the writers express their love for God. Sometimes, though, that imagery is quite foreign to our 21st century western lifestyle. Today we are going to take the very familiar 23rd Psalm and rewrite it in terms and pictures drawn from our own lives. (“The Lord is my Systems Analyst...”) The original is printed on the reverse of this sheet, take some time to look at it and each try to rephrase some or all of it using concepts which are drawn from your own every day experience. Then share together what you have written as an act of praise.



Bible Study

Joppa was a seaport about 34 miles northwest of Jerusalem. Many of the locals would have been dependent upon the sea for their living. The waters could be treacherous and history books speak of dead bodies frequently being washed up on the shores of Joppa following accidents at sea. The town would have had more than its share of widows. Read Acts 9:36-41.

- What can you deduce from the passage about the reputation that Dorcas had gained?
- What does it suggest that her attitude was towards: Her gifts? Her possessions? Other people’s needs?
- The widows of the town formed a living epitaph as they showed off the garments that Dorcas had made and given them. Can you think of people in the church who, were they to leave us tomorrow, would leave a similar crowd saying “Look how much they did for me”?



Reflection

Read James 2:14-18. James leaves us in no doubt that a mark of true faith is a willingness to roll our sleeves up and help out those who are in any kind of need – “I will show you my faith by what I do.”

- Is it the practice of your group to offer practical help to each other, or to those outside the group?
- Do you think that unwillingness to ask for help is ever a barrier to this? If so, how can we overcome our reticence?
- As a group, are there any situations that you are aware of where you could offer practical help?



Prayer

How do you want to respond to God in prayer? Do you want to ask Him to bring situations across your path that will allow you to serve others? Do you need to ask Him for grace and energy to continue with all the practical help you are already offering? Do you need to ask His forgiveness for pride which has prevented you sharing needs and asking for help?

Spend a few minutes talking to the Father together.

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.