

Di121 Effective Communication

Lesson Di121-26 Demonstration: Power over Death

This lesson is the last of four dealing with modeling the truth you are teaching with the power of the Holy Spirit. Even followers of Christ today see people miraculously raised from the dead, in answer to prayer.

The final enemy that all will face is death. It is the result of our first parents' decision to sin. Because of disobedience, Adam and Eve had to leave the garden. They no longer had the close fellowship they had enjoyed with their Creator. Their physical death began at that moment. Unbelievers often fear death, but for the believer physical death is not fearsome. We know that absence from the body means we will be present with the Lord.

When Jesus ministered on earth, he showed the 12 disciples that he had power, even over death. The disciples and a large crowd followed as he came one day to a town called Nain. He saw a dead person being carried out of the town gate. The dead boy was the only son of his mother and she was a widow. A large crowd followed her too. Jesus asked her not to cry. Then he touched the coffin and said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" The dead boy sat up and began to talk. Jesus gave him back to his mother (Luke 7:11-15).

Another time, the 12-year-old daughter of a synagogue leader died. Her father Jairus asked Jesus for help. Jesus went to their home and took Peter, James, and John inside. All the people were wailing and mourning. Christ took her by the hand and said, "My child, get up!" Her spirit returned and at once she stood up (Luke 8:51-55).

Peter had also heard Jesus call Lazarus from his tomb. He had been dead four days, but was restored to life. So as Peter traveled about in ministry, he was not surprised to be called by the friends of a disciple of Jesus, who had died.

She had lived in Joppa. Her name was Tabitha, or Dorcas in Greek. She was always doing good and helping the poor. She had become sick and died. Her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. 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!" In those days the body was most often buried the same day the person had died. Was it because they needed him to do a funeral before the day ended? Or was it because they believed God could do anything, including raising this woman from the dead? They knew the stories of healings and raising people from the dead in Jesus' ministry.

Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying. They showed him the robes and other clothing that Tabitha had made while she was still with them. These demonstrated her ministry of giving to others. They missed her terribly. She was a woman who had so much more to give to God and his church.

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. 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.

As Peter had seen Jesus do in his ministry, so he did—following the Master’s example. He sent everyone out. Then he knelt and prayed. God answered the prayer of Peter and Tabitha was restored to life. Death was conquered that day by the power of Jesus. This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord (Acts 9:36-42). The result of this very visible miracle was that more people than ever turned to Christ and found the promise of eternal life could be theirs.

The best news of the gospel is that not even death can stop the work of God. Even today we hear reports that God is bringing the dead back to life. This happens when believers obey the voice of God and pray in faith without doubting. Most often these events happen when a large people group hears the gospel for the first time. Seeing or hearing of someone conquering death through God’s power, in the name of Jesus, brings many to faith.

This story is **important** because it teaches not only that Jesus conquered death, but that believers also have authority to conquer death through the power of God.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that Jesus’ power, in us through the Holy Spirit, can overcome even death. This is a powerful message for all to hear.

Let’s **review** this lesson—

1. Who are the people Jesus raised to life when he was on earth? [Pause]
 - A. If you said, “the widow’s son at Nain, the daughter of Jairus, and Lazarus,” you answered correctly.
2. What was the result in the city of Joppa when they heard that Tabitha was raised to life? [Pause]
 - A. If you said that when people heard about Tabitha being raised to life, many people believed in the Lord, you are right.
3. When someone is raised from the dead today, what is usually happening at the same time? [Pause]
 - A. If you answered that when someone is raised today, it usually happens when a large people group hears the gospel for the first time, you are correct.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to memorize the story and tell it to someone who has not heard it before. Then discuss with them why Jesus did not raise every dead person in his day? What’s the difference between being raised from the dead and being resurrected, like Jesus? Answer: Those who were raised from the dead had to die a physical death at some later date. When Jesus was resurrected, he had a glorified body and never has to die again. Use this scripture in your discussion: “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Heb 9:27, KJV).