

The Behind-the-Scenes Women: Dorcas and Rahab

By Gretchen Willis

Intro: *There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work* (1 Corinthians 12:4–6 TNIV).

Our Heavenly Father, in His infinite knowledge, gives each of His children gifts that are as unique as the people He created. We are called to use those gifts to serve Him and do His will. Dorcas and Rahab are examples of women who used their gifts to serve the Lord behind the scenes.

Opening Prayer: Gracious and Heavenly Father, guide our study of Your Word so that we may find comfort in knowing You. We give our sins to You — our greed, covetousness, all our shortcomings — and ask for your forgiveness. Please give us hearts to serve You by helping others. Keep us focused on pleasing You, not on empty recognition of our own deeds. We ask all this in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Warm-Up: Distribute pens and slips of paper. Write the answer to this question: What is one way you serve the Lord without others knowing what you do? Put the slips of paper into bowl or basket and take turns reading the anonymous responses. How does this inspire you?

Dorcas

Read **Acts 9:36–43**.

After Jesus' death and resurrection, His disciples carried on His ministry: preaching, teaching, and healing. As Peter traveled throughout the area of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, he came to Lydda. While visiting with the followers there, he was summoned to Joppa, a town near the Mediterranean Sea, to attend to Dorcas, who had lived there but had now died. Dorcas was referred to as a disciple, which means learner or a pupil, and is the only woman in Scripture to be given that title.

Dorcas' name was Greek. What was her other (Aramaic) name? How did her life reflect her faith in Jesus (v. 36)? How does this parallel with what Paul writes in **1 Timothy 2:9–10**?

What happened all over Joppa as a result of Dorcas' resurrection from death? (see v. 42)

Scripture records three accounts of people Jesus raised from death. Who were they? (See **Mark 5:35–43**; **Luke 7:11–15**; **John 11:43–44**.)

For sharing and personal reflection: Have you ever responded to God's invitation to minister to the poor and needy through your time, talents, or treasures? If so, share it with the group.

Rahab

Read **Joshua 2:1–21** and **6:17–25**.

Rahab and her family lived in a house built into the side of the wall of Jericho. She had an excellent vantage point for her job as a prostitute: she was able to see the men coming and going through the city gates. It was this vantage point that gave her a bird's-eye view of the Israelite army preparing to invade Jericho. So when the time arrived for Joshua to cross the Jordan River on dry land, bringing the Ark of the Covenant and the Israelite people to the Promised Land, Rahab had a front row seat for everything that was about to unfold.

1. When the attack took place at Jericho, what happened to Rahab and her family and why?

3. Rahab is listed among the "Faith All-Stars" in **Hebrews 11:1–40** (specifically v. 31). Considering Rahab's occupation, what does this tell you about who God chooses to accomplish His will?

What does **James 2:20–26** tell you about Rahab's faith?

For sharing or personal reflection: What is your primary motivation for doing good deeds? What should be your primary motivation for doing good deeds? If your good deeds go unrecognized, does it affect how you'll act in the future?

Prayer: All powerful God and Father, we thank You for the examples of Dorcas and Rahab. May the lives we live in response to the forgiveness we have received through faith in Jesus be filled with good deeds as well. We pray in the Name of the One who came to save us from sin, Your Son, our Lord Jesus. Amen.

Closing: Sing or say together: "Take My Life and Let It Be" [*LSB* 783, *LW* 404, or *TLH* 400]

Women of the Bible