



August's B.I.G. Idea

We believe that God wants us to help others.

August's Bible Verse

Children, you show love for others by truly helping them, and not merely by talking about it. 1 John 3:18, CEV

August's B.I.G. Theme

We Can Help Others

Lesson 12 ★ Dorcas

Today's Bible Story

Acts 9:36-42

Objectives

- ★ Children will connect with the biblical story of Dorcas.
- ★ Children will discover that one way we can help others is by sharing clothes.

Dorcas's story provides a model of Christian charity to society's marginalized and outcast people. At the time of our Bible story, orphans and widows were often the most economically vulnerable to the devastation of poverty. There existed no government safety net, no feeding program, and no shelter to help them when hunger and homelessness fell upon them. In two thousand-years' time, the problems that existed then still exist in today's world as we find hunger, disease, and poverty still causing pain and separation for those on the margins of life. Christians today, as much as in Dorcas's day, must bring as much peace, help, and hope as possible to those who live on the margins.

Think about the women and men in your church who are there, quietly helping in every possible way, by sewing or knitting, by serving meals to the hungry, by driving the elderly to appointments, and by doing the countless acts of caring and mercy day after day. This was Dorcas. As Peter arrived in the house where Dorcas lay after her death, people were overcome by grief, and yet they were able to share her story with Peter. They lovingly showed him clothes she had made. They spoke of her servant's heart. They gave testimony to her life.

Peter sat alone with her body and prayed. After a time, he knew her ministry was not yet finished. He said to her, "Dorcas, get up." And she did. Today's story stands as a memorial to her and as testimony to the presence of the Holy Spirit in the early church. The resurrection of Dorcas strengthened the faith of those first-century Christians. Many who heard about the resurrection of Dorcas came to believe in Jesus Christ. However miraculous the account of Dorcas's healing and resurrection, it is the example that she provided in her daily life that becomes most powerful.

As you prepare your lesson, think about examples of Dorcas-like women and men in your own congregation. Perhaps one of them might visit your class and help the children discover ways that we can all help others. Help empower your children to become like Dorcas in their own lives.

Invite them in . . . (15 minutes)

Fashion Show

We Can Help Others



A Kindly Helper



Prayer-Journal Covers

. . . Into the Bible (30 minutes)

Dorcas the Disciple



Dorcas's Closet

Bible Story Password



Dorcas Relay



. . . Into Life (15 minutes)

Memory-Verse Hop

The B.I.G. Sound



Helping Reminder Cards



Closing Worship



TimeSaver

Activities that require little or no planning and only basic supplies.



EcoFriendly

Activities that encourage responsible earth stewardship by providing options to use recycled or repurposed materials.

DVD Summary: On the Road

This week's On the Road takes your students to Austin, Texas, to the Church Under the Bridge, where a group of people who want to help those who are homeless are bringing the church to where it's needed most. They provide music and a message, along with donated clothes and whatever services might be needed. Church Under the Bridge represents the love that Jesus Christ has for those who don't have houses, those who are poor and have been left out or pushed out.



The B.i.G. Idea

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Choose one or more activities to introduce your children to the Bible story.

Fashion Show



Supplies: pretzel rods, dried fruit leather in a variety of colors (flavors), prepared icing, raisins, cinnamon dots, chocolate sprinkles, licorice laces, small bowls, paper towels

Prepare

- ★ Arrange ingredients in small bowls in the work area.

Do

- ★ Have the children wash their hands.
- ★ **Say:** Dorcas made beautiful robes and clothes for those who needed them. We will make some clothes, like Dorcas did.
- ★ Give each child a pretzel rod and a paper towel on which to work. The pretzel will become their “person.” Have them use the icing as glue for this project.
- ★ Have the children spread a small bit of icing on the top of the pretzel and sprinkle chocolate sprinkles on the icing to become hair.
- ★ Have them use icing to attach raisin eyes and a cinnamon-dot mouth.
- ★ Allow the children to choose a color of dried fruit leather for clothing.
- ★ Have them spread a small amount of icing on the body of the pretzel where the clothing will adhere.
- ★ Have the children wrap the fruit leather around the pretzel and squeeze slightly to adhere the clothing. Tell them not to squeeze too tightly or the pretzel body will break.
- ★ Have them use licorice laces and other small decorations to decorate the clothing.
- ★ Unroll a length of paper towels on which to display the pretzel people. Have the children lay their people in a row.
- ★ Allow the children to introduce their creations and name their people.
- ★ The children may then eat their creations.

Live B.i.G. We can create something beautiful to share with others.

Invite them in . . .

We Can Help Others



Supplies: Leader—page 155, crayons

Prepare

- ★ Photocopy “We Can Help Others” (Leader—page 155) for each child.

Do ★ Give each child a copy of “We Can Help Others” (Leader—page 155).

- ★ **Say:** Helping others is one way we can share God’s love. Look at the pictures on this page. On one side, you will see people or animals who need help. On the other side, you will see people who give help. Match the one who needs help to the one who gives the help needed.
- ★ Allow the children time to finish the activity.

Live B.i.G. We can help others in many ways.

A Kindly Helper



Supplies: Bibles, Leader—page 154, pencils

Prepare

- ★ Photocopy “A Kindly Helper” (Leader—page 154) for each child.

Answers to Leader—page 154:
1. Dorcas; 2. believed; 3. sick;
4. clothes; 5. (across) Peter;
5. (down) prayed; 6. Joppa;
7. lived; 8. devoted

Do ★ Give each child a copy of “A Kindly Helper” (Leader—page 154) to complete.

- ★ Show the children how to find Acts 9:36-42 in their Bibles.

Live B.i.G. The Bible holds stories that help us believe.

Prayer-Journal Covers



Supplies: various colors of heavy paper, markers, stickers, stick-on scrapbook letters and shapes, glue

Do ★ **Say:** We have been working on our prayer journals all month. Next week we will bind all of the pages together into a book that we can take home and read from cover to cover. The journals will help us remember many of the things we learned this summer in Sunday school.

- ★ Have the children design a cover for their prayer journal.
- ★ The cover may include wording, a title, or simply artwork.
- ★ Save the covers for the children to complete their prayer journals next week.

Live B.i.G. Prayer is how we communicate with God.



The B.i.G. Idea

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Choose one or more activities to immerse your children in the Bible story.

Dorcas the Disciple



Supplies: Bibles, DVD, Leader—page 152, DVD player, television

Prepare

- ★ Photocopy “Dorcas the Disciple” (Leader—page 152) for each child.
- ★ Preview On the Road (DVD).

- Do** ★ **Say:** Dorcas was a kind and caring person who was a disciple, or student, of Jesus Christ. Let’s hear the story of Dorcas.
- ★ Show the children how to find Acts 9:36-42 in the Bible.
 - ★ Pass out “Dorcas the Disciple” (Leader—page 152) to each child.
 - ★ Read the story to the children.
 - ★ **Ask:** Why did people miss Dorcas when she died? (*Dorcas loved people; Dorcas was a giving person.*) Why did they send for Peter? (*Peter could pray for Dorcas; Peter could heal Dorcas.*) Let’s hear about a church whose members are giving and pray for one another.
 - ★ Play On the Road (DVD).

Live B.i.G. We are like Jesus when we give to others.

Dorcas’s Closet



Supplies: various colors of fun foam, buttons, rickrack, ribbon, glue, scissors, yarn or embroidery floss, children’s plastic sewing needles, black marker, darning needle, paper punch

- Do** ★ **Say:** When Peter arrived at Dorcas’s house, the people showed him all of the robes and clothing she had made for others. Let’s make some clothing to help us remember the story of Dorcas.
- ★ Cut out shirt shapes from the fun foam.
 - ★ Cut additional shapes to be used for decoration.
 - ★ Mark dots about two inches apart around the perimeter of the shirt. Mark the dots further apart for the younger children.
 - ★ The teacher or an older child will punch holes in each of the dots to allow for sewing.
 - ★ Have them sew from dot to dot using the plastic needles and yarn or floss.
 - ★ Have the children decorate the shirts by gluing shapes, buttons, or ribbons and rickrack to the foam.
 - ★ The children may take the project home or they may trade with a friend.

Live B.i.G. We can create something beautiful to share with others.

Bible Story Password



Supplies: five slips of paper, each with one of the following words written on them: Sew, Sick, Poor, Clothes, Pray

- Do** ★ **Say:** The Dorcas story has a number of words that are associated with the story, and I have written them down on these slips of paper.
- ★ Divide the children into five groups or pairs.
 - ★ Groups will think of clue words that do not contain any part of the answer word. The clue word must be a single word. Examples of clue words are:
 - Sew—needle, thread, fabric, stitch
 - Sick—fever, ill, rash, hurt
 - Poor—hungry, nothing, naked, need
 - Clothes—shirt, pants, dress, shoes
 - Pray—God, talk, ask, quiet
 - ★ Once the groups have had time to think of their clue words, bring them back together.
 - ★ Invite the groups or pairs to come forward, one group at a time, and present their clue words. The audience cannot guess what the answer word is until all of the clue words have been offered.
 - ★ The audience tries to guess the answer word.
 - ★ Allow several tries. Clue words may be repeated, if desired.
 - ★ Once the answer word has been guessed (or told, if no one guesses it), the group sits down and another group presents their words.

Live B.i.G. God will show us where we are needed.

Dorcas Relay



Supplies: two complete outfits, including shirt, pants, hat, shoes, and other items desired; two shopping bags

- Do** ★ **Say:** Dorcas helped others by providing clothing for the poor. Let's play a clothing race.
- ★ Divide the children into two teams.
 - ★ Each team will stand side by side, with half of each team on one side of the room and the other half of each team on the opposite end.
 - ★ Give the first person in each team a bag of clothing and ask them to put on everything in the bag.
 - ★ **Say:** When I say "Go," run to the other side where your team is standing and take off the costume. You must then dress the person at the other end of the room. Once that person is completely dressed, she or he run backs to her or his teammates on this end. Continue to dress and run until everyone on your team has had a chance to dress and run. You are finished when the clothing is folded and back in the shopping bag.
 - ★ Play the game.

Live B.i.G. God provides all we need when we need it.



The B.i.G. Idea

We believe that God wants us
to help others.

Choose one or more activities to connect your children's lives to the Bible story.

Memory-Verse Hop



Supplies: masking tape, 3-by-5 cards, marker, open space to play

Prepare

- ★ Tape a hopscotch grid on the floor.
- ★ Make a card, each with one of these words printed, including the reference: "Children, you show love for others by truly helping them, and not merely by talking about it" (1 John 3:18, CEV).
- ★ Tape the cards onto the hopscotch grid in order, one in each square.

Do ★ **Say:** We can remember our memory verse while having fun. Jump through the hopscotch board, saying each word as you land on the square.

- ★ Have the children jump through the hopscotch board.
- ★ Repeat as time permits. Invite the children to try jumping and saying the verse without looking at the words.

Live B.i.G. We can remember God's Word.

The B.i.G. Sound



Supplies: DVD, DVD player, television

Prepare

- ★ Preview The B.I.G. Sound (DVD).

Do ★ **Say:** God loves everyone, and we can be the hands of God's love by helping those who need it.

- ★ Play The B.I.G. Sound (DVD). Sing and dance along with the cast.

Live B.i.G. We are thankful to God that we can help others.

Into Life

Helping Reminder Cards



Supplies: Leader—page 153, heavy paper or card stock, crayons, colored pencils, scissors

Prepare

- ★ Photocopy “Helping Reminder Cards” (**Leader—page 153**) for each child onto heavy paper or card stock.

Do ★ **Ask:** Is it easy to remember to help others? Do we sometimes need to remind ourselves to be helpful?

- ★ Pass out copies of “Helping Reminder Cards” (**Leader—page 153**).
- ★ Have the children cut out the cards.
- ★ Have each child think of people he or she can help this week and write those people’s names, one on each card, on the back. Have them continue until all cards have a name.
- ★ For each name that a child has written, have him or her think of what he or she can do that might be helpful to that person. Have them write that idea on the back of the card.
- ★ Invite the children to use crayons or colored pencils to decorate their cards.
- ★ **Say:** Take these cards home and, each day, pick one and try to do what’s on the card to help the person whose name is on the card.

Live B.i.G. We can help others.

Closing Worship



Supplies: construction paper, crayons, colored pencils, markers, scissors, glue, small stickers

Prepare

- ★ After this lesson, collect all journal pages for each child.
- ★ Read through the binding instructions in next week’s lesson (page 162) so the children will be able to bind their journals and take them home next week.

- Do** ★ Invite each child to choose one piece of construction paper.
- ★ **Say:** Today we learned about a woman named Dorcas. She used her skills to help others. Because of this, everyone loved her. What can you do to be helpful to others? On today’s journal page, you might write a prayer to God giving thanks for your ability to help others, or you may want to draw a picture of someone you choose to help. You may also write or draw about a time when you chose to follow God.
 - ★ Provide the students with the supplies listed above and allow them to interpret today’s lesson.
 - ★ Save the journal pages until next week when you will bind them together to take home. (Visitors may wish to take their pages home today.)

Live B.i.G. God is always with us.

Dorcas the Disciple

(Based on Acts 9:36-42.)

In a town named Joppa, there was a disciple named Dorcas, who was always doing good and helping the poor. About that time, she became sick and died. The other disciples sent two men to Peter and begged him, "Please, come at once!"

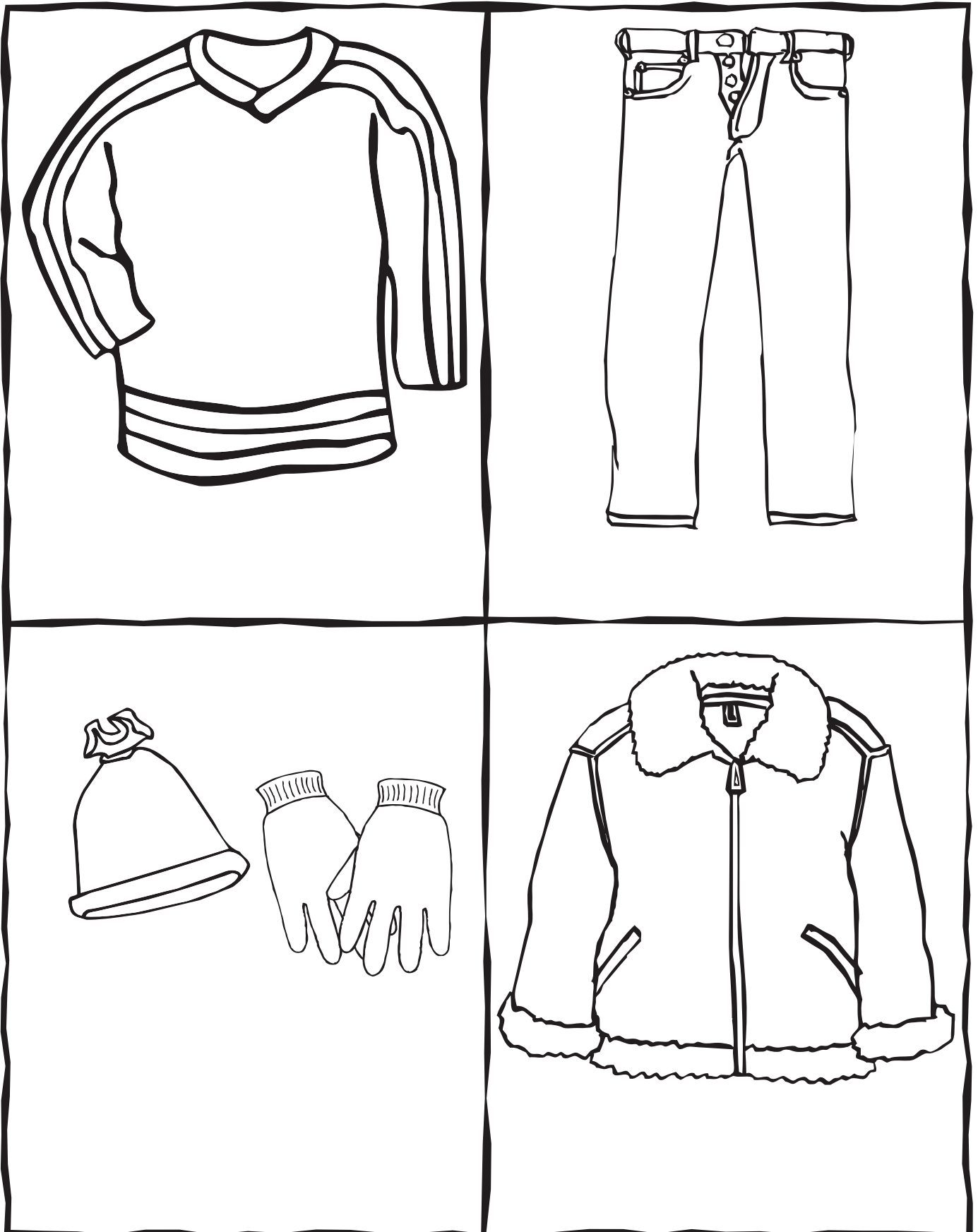
Peter came straight away, and they took him upstairs to the room where Dorcas was. All the widows stood around him crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still alive.

Peter sent them all out of the room. He got down on his knees and prayed. Then Peter said, "Dorcas, get up." At the sound of his voice, she opened her eyes and sat up. He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. He then called everyone together and showed them that Dorcas was alive.

Word quickly spread all over Joppa, and many people came to believe in the Lord because of the miracle they had witnessed.



Helping Reminder Cards



A Kindly Helper



ACROSS

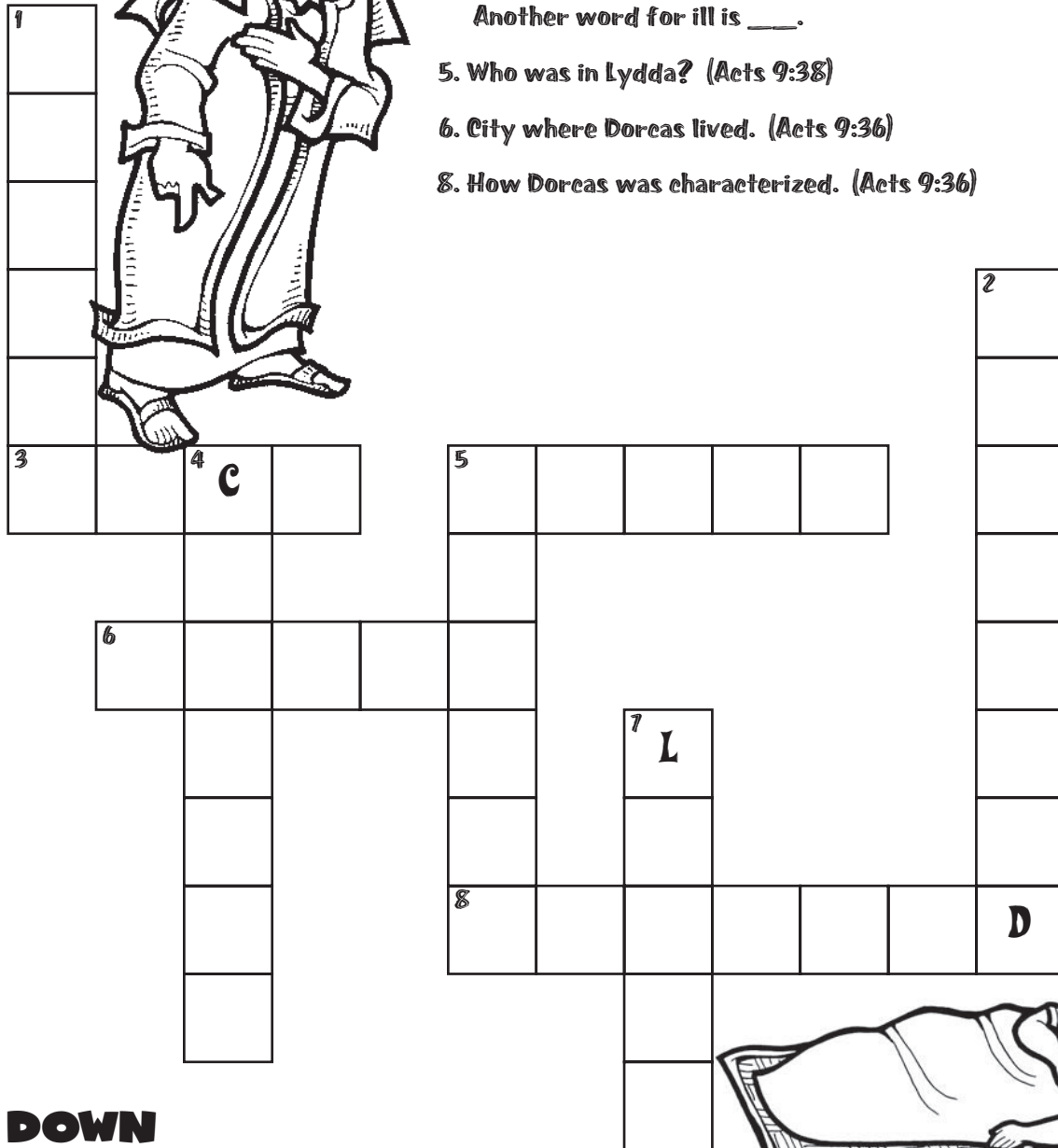
3. Before Dorcas died, she was ill. (Acts 9:37)

Another word for ill is ____.

5. Who was in Lydda? (Acts 9:38)

6. City where Dorcas lived. (Acts 9:36)

8. How Dorcas was characterized. (Acts 9:36)



DOWN

1. Who our story is about. (Acts 9:36)

2. What people did when Dorcas was raised. (Acts 9:42)

4. What Dorcas made for others. (Acts 9:39)

5. What Peter did. (Acts 9:40)

7. What happened to Dorcas. (Acts 9:41)

We Can Help Others

Match the picture of the character in need on the left with the picture of that character being helped by someone else on the right.

