



Repentance Tabernacle Church

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Joppa's Miracle!

Focus Verses: Acts 9:39-41 - ³⁹ Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. ⁴⁰ But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹ And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.

Lesson Text: Acts 9:36-42

Truth About God: God can raise us from the dead, physically and spiritually.

Truth For My Life: I will believe God for miracles, even over death.

The Bible gives us a picture of this disciple of Jesus: *"Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did"* (Acts 9:36). She was "full" of good deeds. Tabitha was not a "random act of kindness" person; she was a "routine act of kindness" person. Her acts of charity were not limited to a particular season of the year or to a select group of people. She made it the common fabric of her days to look for ways to encourage and bless other people. It is no wonder, then, that when she died, the community was collectively heartbroken. Tabitha had sown the seeds of such warm feelings by her care and kindness toward others throughout her life.

Tabitha impacted her community by what she did, not simply by what she felt or said. Let us do the same in our community. When Tabitha fell sick and died, those who loved her lovingly tended to her. They went through the appropriate burial preparations for her by washing her body and gently laying her in an upper chamber. When the disciples in Joppa remembered that Simon Peter was in a nearby city of Lydda, they sent two men, asking him to come without delay. Those who gathered began to show Peter the coats and garments Tabitha had made for them during her life, possibly attempting to impress on him how desperately they needed her to be resurrected.

After watching the widows' guilt show and listening to them testify of Tabitha's charitable life, Peter sent them all from the room so he could pray in private. At some point in his private prayer, he merely turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, arise." Immediately she opened her eyes, saw Peter, sat up, and was reunited with the saints of the church. **Peter prayed for Tabitha privately; Jesus raised her publicly.** At times God will work a miracle in the eyes of the crowd, but even then, it is so Christ will be glorified, not the person He chooses to use to pray the prayer. Simon Peter was not greater than the Spirit-filled believers who were already gathered there. Signs, including raising the dead, were to follow them just as well as him. For all of Peter's perceived brashness in Scripture, he showed profound humility here in seeking and doing God's will before an audience of one... the One.

Although death is destined for ultimate defeat, it still holds sway over the lives of men and women today. This is true both for the righteous and the unrighteous. The Scripture informs us that redemption from sin does not exempt us from an appointment with death. *"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"* (Hebrew 9:27). Every person, saved or not, will have this encounter unless Jesus comes to catch us away first.

But if we are in Christ, we need not fear death. For the righteous man or woman, death is no longer an evil intruder that breaks into our lives to snatch us away from happiness and loved ones. Instead, death is an obedient servant of God that comes to usher us from a land of suffering and heartache to one of perfect bliss, eternal reunions, and a place where we will worship our Savior face to face. **Death happens to all, which is why we must all be ready to meet the Lord when we die.**

When our appointment with death comes, what will people have to show of the impact we have made on them? What will live beyond us, whether tangible or not, that will testify to our intentional investment in others? Tabitha had a sizable collection of such testimonies, and we should seek to do so as well.

All glory belongs to God for the wonderful things He has done and will do!