

The Church - What will People say at your Funeral? Acts 9:32-43

Message to Conversation Guide

Acts 9:32-43

32 As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit the saints in Lydda. 33 There he found a man named Aeneas, a paralytic who had been bedridden for eight years. 34 "Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and take care of your mat." Immediately Aeneas got up. 35 All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

36 In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), **who was always doing good and helping the poor.** 37 About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. 38 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!"

39 Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. **All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.**

40 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. 41 He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive. 42 This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. 43 Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon. NIV

Discussion Questions

1. Compare the Peter's healing of the paralytic man named Aeneas in *Acts 9:32-34* with the the following healing story in Jesus' ministry (*John 5:1-18*, specifically *John 5:18*).
2. Aeneas had been sick for a long time, eight years to be exact (*Acts 9:33*). He had been waiting for a long time for relief from the predicament he was in. Discuss the following principles listed below.
 - *Even though I have been in my situation for a long time that doesn't mean that will always be my situation.*
 - *Negative situations can be reversed in split second.*
3. Peter speaks the name of Jesus over Aeneas: "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and take care of your mat." *Acts 9:34b*. Discuss the we don't help people but Jesus helps people through us.
4. Lydda was close to Jerusalem where Peter resided. In fact it was only **22 miles. n.w. from Jerusalem.** Peter didn't have to go very far to find needs to minister to. Discuss how we are often prone to think of ministry opportunities far away (missions) when in fact there is

ministry very close to where we are. **Lydda was a town about 11 miles SE of Joppa** so Peter's trip to help Dorcas was also nearby. Who can you think of that is in your vicinity to minister to? Often we overlook ministry opportunities that are very close to us.

5. What kind of reputation did Dorcas (or Tabitha) have according to the scriptures below? What was she known for?

Acts 9:36

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Acts 9:36

39 Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

6. Powerful legacies are based on the following principles that are listed below.

- *People that leave great legacies are focused on others. Acts 9:36*
- *People with great legacies use their talents to help others. Acts 9:39*
- *People with great legacies are deeply missed when they depart from this earth!*

7. Peter's raising Dorcas to life gives us a glimpse into the future of all departed saints. Discuss what it is going to be like when people are reunited at the resurrection.

Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive. Acts 9:41b

1 Thess 4:13-18

13 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. 14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 15 According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage each other with these words. NIV (see also Rev. 21:2-4)