



## Growth Group Curriculum Week 4 – October 3, 2021 – Acts 9:32-43

**Growth groups are one of the best and easiest ways to find community at church. Thank you for loving and caring for each other.**

In Acts 9:31, we read that the early “church” was enjoying a time of peace. The persecution that they had faced had waned. The one who had been the biggest proponent of wiping out the Christian church – Saul – had now become a believer. The result of this time of peace was that the apostles had the freedom to travel to other areas to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

As we pick up our text, Peter has made his way to Lydda. He encounters a man who has been paralyzed for eight years. He tells him, “Jesus Christ heals you”, and the man was healed, got up and began to walk around. Numerous people heard what had happened and they turned to the Lord and believed. In the book of Acts, there are seventeen instances of people coming to faith after a miracle has been performed.

Peter journeys from Lydda to Joppa. Joppa is one of the oldest seaports in Israel and dates back some 4500 years. Some may recall that Joppa was where Jonah initially headed after being told by God to go to Ninevah. In Joppa, Peter heals a woman by the name of Dorcas or Tabitha. Dorcas was known for her care and concern for others. We read that she was always doing good and helping the poor.

As Peter arrives, many of the widows whom Dorcas had no doubt helped, were standing around her body and mourning. They were probably wearing the robes and clothes that Dorcas had made for them. Peter sends them away and then prays for the Lord to resuscitate her. Once Dorcas is breathing again, Peter calls for the widows and shows them that Dorcas is living.

Once again, word about the miracle performed spreads, and people come to faith. Miracles were never done by the disciples or Jesus just to impress people. Miracles revealed the authenticity of God’s revelation and signaled the new age that had dawned with the arrival of Jesus. The kingdom of God had drawn close in Jesus and that power was still active even though Jesus had ascended into heaven.

Peter would continue his journey to Caesarea where he would have a dream that made it very clear to him that the gospel message was for all people. After chapter 10, we only read about Peter one more time in the book of Acts. The Apostle Paul will soon become the main focus of the book of Acts and we will only read about Peter in Acts 15, when the early church makes some decisions about welcoming Gentiles into the church.



## Exploring the Text

Acts 9:32-43

<sup>32</sup> As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit the Lord's people who lived in Lydda. <sup>33</sup> There he found a man named Aeneas, who was paralyzed and had been bedridden for eight years. <sup>34</sup> "Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and roll up your mat." Immediately Aeneas got up. <sup>35</sup> All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

<sup>36</sup> In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor. <sup>37</sup> About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. <sup>38</sup> 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!"

<sup>39</sup> 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.

<sup>40</sup> 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. <sup>41</sup> 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. <sup>42</sup> This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. <sup>43</sup> Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon.

## Questions

*If you are answering these questions alone, we would urge you to try journaling. Rather than just pondering the answers, try writing them out along with a prayer to the Lord.*

- 1) Have you ever witnessed a miracle or been a part of something miraculous happening? What was that experience like?
- 2) What do you consider to be a miracle? Is it always something big like a physical healing or a resuscitation like we see in our text from today?
- 3) What would you say is the purpose or point of miracles in the Bible?
- 4) What similarities and differences do you see in the two miracles that you read about?
- 5) Why do you think Peter cleared the room? Is it necessary to be alone to work miracles? Why do you think Peter called the widows and believers back into the room after Dorcas was raised?
- 6) Is there any significance to Peter staying with a tanner? How would Jewish believers, of Peter's day, have felt about tanners? How do you think that visit connects with Peter's vision in Acts 10:9-23?
- 7) Do you think there is a certain formula for a miracle?
- 8) Do you think God still works miracles today? Do you think we miss opportunities to be a part of God's miracles because of the busyness of our lives?

