

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE

SERMON OUTLINE

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“Tabitha A Woman of Compassion Who Was an Everyday Hero ”

Acts 9:36-43

Tabitha didn't preach before thousands. She didn't stand before governors and kings. She didn't write a powerful theological set of commentaries or best selling book on her fabulous prayer life or perform astounding feats - she simply served those who were in need.

Tabitha is someone who many of us pass over when we read the Bible. For us, Tabitha, is a minor character in the building of the early church, a person of no real significance. But for God, Tabitha is so significant, that He raises her from the dead.

Let us also note that not even one of the twelve disciples were brought back from the dead – yet Tabitha was. Significance in the kingdom of God, it turns out, is not defined by accomplishment, nor status, nor ecclesiastical power, popularity, impressive book sales or even massive global impact – Significance in the kingdom of God, it turns out....is defined by the Holy Spirit.

Now as we notice her name **Tabitha** is her **Aramaic** name and **Dorcas** is her name in **Greek**. Both names mean *gazelle* or *deer*. A gazelle was a creature with stunning eyes and swift feet.

Interestingly, **we don't know anything Tabitha said, but we know a lot about what she did**. We have no record of her words, but we do know about her work because her life of servant hood spoke loudly. As you read through the New Testament, women were very involved in the global expansion of the church. Look at Roman 16.

As we look at Tabitha, we can learn three things about her. The first things we learn is she was . . .

I. A DEVOTED DISCIPLE V-36

A disciple was a **learner**, a **follower** and one who was determined to be like his or her teacher. We know that she had a heart of compassion just like Christ did in *Matthew 9:35-36*.

Secondly, we learn she was . . .

II. A DOER OF DEEDS V-36

She served, and people knew it was because of her Savior. That's her identity. She was saved to serve. She was literally *“full of good works.”* **Wouldn't you agree that there are more people filled with words than there are people filled with works?**

Tabitha did not do anything heroic like Deborah or risky like Rahab. She simply served her Savior by ministering to the marginalized. Tabitha is the model of a devoted disciple who did good deeds in quiet, sacrificial and unassuming ways.

Thirdly, we see she . . .

III. DEFENDED DOWN AND OUT

Look at the last part of **verse 36** *“charitable deeds or literally helping the poor.”* deeds or literally helping the poor.” **Verse 39** helps us see that she was a seamstress. She's a picture of the *Proverbs 31:19-20* woman.

Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 5:16.

Apparently, Tabitha's unique compassion contribution was so important to Joppa Bible Baptist Church, that when she died, God raised her back to life! Check out *verses 37-39*. This type of miracle is totally amazing, but it is not unheard of in Scripture. There are at least ten resurrections recorded in the Bible.

We don't hear about what happens next, but I don't think she went out on a speaking circuit to give her testimony. I'm convinced that after she regained her strength, she went right back to her quiet and unassuming service.

Why was she raised? Was it because she was a great teacher that could never be replaced? No! Was she a huge financial contributor? I doubt it. Was she a miracle worker? No. And then it hit me. She was raised because God does not want compassion to die in the church!

By its very nature, you can't program servant hood because it's an attitude and a way of life. Like Tabitha lets be:

**A DEVOTED DEDICATED DISCIPLE, A DOER OF GOOD DEEDS
and DEFENDED THE DOWN AND OUT.**