

Good morning! What's your favorite book of the Bible? I have different ones. I love the Psalms and Proverbs when I want to worship or celebrate---or even grieve. I love Romans when I am studying. I think my all-round favorite though, is the Book of Acts. In Acts, we get a picture of how the Church looked, fresh from the hand of Jesus. Think of it: they had known Jesus in the Pre-Resurrection zone and now they were trying, in the Post-Resurrection zone, to figure out how to follow Him. Whether we know it or not, you and I are still trying to figure that out! Again and again, these guys were trying to sort out what they knew, what they had seen Jesus do, and what they had *never* seen Him do but thought He might want them to do. Let's look in on Peter together this morning as he gets called into an unusual situation:

There was a believer in Joppa named Tabitha (which in Greek is Dorcas). She was always doing kind things for others and helping the poor. About this time she became ill and died. Her body was washed for burial and laid in an upstairs room. But the believers had heard that Peter was nearby at Lydda, so they sent two men to beg him, "Please come as soon as possible!" So Peter returned with them; and as soon as he arrived, they took him to the upstairs room. The room was filled with widows who were weeping and showing him the coats and other clothes Dorcas had made for them. But Peter asked them all to leave the room; then he knelt and prayed. Turning to the body he said, "Get up, Tabitha." And she opened her eyes! When she saw Peter, she sat up! He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then he called in the widows and all the believers, and he presented her to them alive. The news spread through the whole town, and many believed in the Lord.

**Acts 9:36-42**

Don't you just love this passage? Tabitha, a beloved follower of Jesus, had passed away. Peter was in the area so some believers went to him quickly to beg him to come. Why did they want him to come? Was it because he was a prominent leader and they thought he might be a good one to preach the funeral? Did they actually think he might raise her from the dead? The Bible doesn't tell us. Peter didn't wait four days like Jesus did with Lazarus---he came immediately. When he arrived, there was all of the family and friends hubbub that

so often surrounds a death. People were milling around, talking about how wonderful she was and how sad it was to see her go. We've all been part of an experience like that. Interestingly, Peter took control. The Bible says, "Peter asked them all to leave the room; then he knelt and prayed." I wonder why he asked everyone to leave the room---maybe so he could concentrate. I also wonder what he prayed. Maybe something like "*OK God, what now?*" We don't know. But when he talked to the corpse, she opened her eyes and sat up! Can you imagine his exhilaration? What do you know---it worked! I have never seen anyone raised from the dead, but I have seen people healed and delivered from demons and I can tell you it can be very exciting. I cannot imagine how Peter must have felt at that moment. I don't think he knew what God was going to do. You and I don't know what God will do next, either. He may heal the person we pray for or He may not...but will you be available to find out?