



# One Page Sermon

## By Pastor Robb McCoy

### April 28, 2024

### “Tabitha, Rise Up!”

Recap of service from April 28, 2024

Scripture: Acts 9:36-43

The middle chapters of Acts are full of incredible moments of the Spirit breaking through in remarkable places. Fulfilling the promise of Christ that the Good News must be taken to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth, the Chapters 8-10 of Acts describe that happening—big time.

After the murder of Stephen (which Saul oversaw), the church scatters, and in the scattering something remarkable happens. Philip travels to Samaria, where many new people receive the Holy Spirit. Then he is directed to leave and the Holy Spirit guides him into an encounter with an Ethiopian Eunuch, and the good news is taken to Africa. In the first half of chapter 9 Saul, the great persecutor, encounters the Risen Christ and becomes the apostle to the Gentiles. In chapter 10 Peter has a wild vision of God’s grace being opened like a sheet upon the world. Then he brings the Good News to Cornelius, a Roman Centurion.

In a matter of a few chapters, the Good News has come to Samaria, Africa, Saul, and a Roman Centurion. Then in the middle of it all is Tabitha and Aeneas. Aeneas, bedridden for 8 years is lifted up by Peter. While there, messengers are sent to bring him to Tabitha, who has died in Joppa.

Tabitha is named as a disciple. She is a woman of compassion and good works for the poor. Peter is brought into the community that is already mourning her death. His responds to the needs of the widows and the saints of Joppa by raising her up as well.

In this action, Peter is recreating the ministry of Jesus. In Luke 8:40–56 and Mark 5:21-43 Jesus raises Jairus’s daughter from the dead. See the parallels that occur in both stories:

- There is a healing of someone with an extended ailment.
- Messengers on behalf of the dead/dying are sent to the healer.
- Peter/Jesus took everyone upstairs and cleared out the crowd.

- The one being raised is taken by the hand.
- Jesus says, “Talitha Koum” or “Little girl, rise up.” while Peter says, “Tabitha rise up.”

Peter is now working in the place of Christ. In this moment he restores the disciple to the community that needs her. He honors her work as a woman of compassion and good works. He restores her—but also the the grieving community to new life.

This story of two individuals being healed and restored to life comes in the midst of a larger movement of the Spirit. In between seismic shifts, we have a story of two individuals.

As we worship today, we are in the middle of General Conference meeting in Charlotte. In many ways we may feel as if we are in between seismic shifts of society. The General Conference might be shifting our denomination in dramatic ways. As the Holy Spirit moved to astonishing places such as Samaria, Ethiopia, and the Roman Centurion, the Spirit empowered Peter to continue the work of Christ. The Spirit, in the middle of seismic shifts, stopped in a community to restore the good works and compassion of a woman named Tabitha.

The work of restoring communities to life is still the work of Christ, Peter, and thus the Church. The work of honoring discipleship of women is still the work of the Church. The work of compassion, good works with the poor, is still the work of the Church. All of this is still best accomplished—not only in seismic shifts—but in ordinary homes. Ordinary Tabithas are still being disciples. We are a church of people like Aeneas and Tabitha. We may be wounded or dying, but in the midst of seismic shifts, we can hear the cry of our Savior telling us, “Rise up.”



**Next Week: Part 3 of 4 “The Women of Acts”  
The Purple Reign of Lydia, Acts 16:11-15, 35-40**