

WAS DORCAS SAVED BY FAITH ALONE?

(Why PRAISE her good works if she was saved by faith alone?)

ACTS 9:36-43

. Here is the life, and death, resurrection, character, and good works of Dorcas. Acts 9:36, 37, "³⁶There was then in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which translated means Dorcas. She abounded in good works and alms that she did. ³⁷And it came to pass that in those days she became ill and died. After washing, they put her in a room."

--- She was a disciple, one who had embraced the faith of Christ and was baptized; and not only that, but she was **well known for her good works. She showed her faith by** her works, her good works, of which she was full, that is, in which she abounded. Her hands were full of good employment; She made a business of doing good, she was never idle, having learned to maintain good deeds.

--- Titus 2:14, Jesus Christ "[gave himself for us to](#) redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own, zealous for good works." 3:8, "This is a faithful word, and on these things I want you to insist firmly, that those who believe in God may seek to engage in good works. These things are good and useful to men." 3:14, "And let our brethren also learn to engage in good works in cases of need, lest they be fruitless."

Hebrews 11, the deeds (works, services) of men and women who were motivated by faith.

James 2, likewise, examples, demonstrating that faith without works is dead.

The works of James 2 are works that **justify us before God**. False teachers who teach salvation by faith alone say that James 2 speaks of being justified before men but this is twisting the Scriptures.

Dorcas was full of *good deeds*, like a tree that is full of fruit. Many are full of **good words**, which are empty and barren in good works; but Dorcas was **a great doer**, not a great **conversationalist**.

Among other good works, she was notable for **her works of charity and beneficence, which flow from love of our neighbor**.

She is praised **not only for the alms she gave, but for the works she did**. Those **who have no money** may be able to do so by working with their hands, or walking with their feet, for the benefit of those who need help.

--- She was full of **works**. There is an emphasis on **what she did**, because what her hand found to do of this kind she did with all her might and persevered. They were **deeds**, not only which she **set out and designed and** said she would do, **but she did; Not what she started doing, but what she did**. 2 Corinthians 8:11, "Now therefore also do it, that as you were ready to will, so you are also in fulfilling it according to what you have." 2 Cor 9:7, "Let each one give as he proposed in his heart: not in sorrow, not out of necessity, for God loves the cheerful giver."

This was the life and character of Dorcas and must be of all Christ's disciples; for, if we thus bear much fruit, then we are truly his disciples, Jn. 15:4, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, if it does not abide in the vine, so neither can you, if you do not abide in me." John 15:8, "By this my Father is glorified, that ye bear much fruit, and thus be my disciples."

--- **A list of all the services that women can perform should be made.**

Benevolence (like Dorcas), the one and another texts, the role of teacher, (Titus 2:3-5; 2 Timothy 1:5, Timothy, the product of the teaching of two women), teaching Bible classes in church and at home, participating with her husband in teaching her family and new or weak brothers, also to teach the unsaved; hospitality (mostly if a church meets in your home), Prepare bulletins and tracts, in fact, there are all kinds of services for women as well as for men.

--- **Read Romans 16 and** imagine what the services of these sisters mentioned by Paul were, how they helped him in the work of preaching the gospel.

--- Rom. 16:1, What did Phoebe do as a "deaconess" (servant) in the church? All sisters must be "deaconesses" and all males must be deacons (servants).

■ Rom. 16:6, How did Mary "work hard"? How did Trifena and Trifosa work?

--- Acts 9:37. Dorcas' life was taken in the midst of a life of great usefulness. "*In those days she fell ill and died.*" You cannot avoid the death even of merciful people like Dorcas, but you can expect them to find mercy from the Lord on that day, 2 Timothy 1:18, as Paul says of Onesiphoros, "Grant the Lord to find mercy near the Lord in that day."

--- "After washing they put her in a room"

--- Acts 9:38 "And as Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him, to beg him, Do not delay in coming to us." The text does not explain why men were sent to beg Peter saying, "Do not delay in coming to us." Some suppose that they sent Peter to come and resurrect Dorcas. Until that date the apostles had not performed such a miracle. Acts 3, Peter healed the man lame from birth but had not raised the dead.

Acts 9:39, "Peter arose and went with them; and when he came, they took him to the hall, where all the widows surrounded him, weeping and showing the robes and dresses that Dorcas made when she was with them."

--- Praising the deceased is appropriate when there was in them that which was worthy of imitation. *Here there was no eulogy of her in poems inscribed in her memory; but the widows showed the coats and garments she made for them, and bestowed upon them while she was with them.*

Here was the **merit of Dorcas**, when she was dead, that the **backs of widows praised her for the clothes she made them.**

--- She made with her own hands, *coats and garments for poor widows.*

--- James 2:15, 16, "And if a brother or sister is naked, and they are in need of daily maintenance, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, Go in peace, warm yourselves and be satisfied, but do not give them the things that are necessary for the body, what does it profit them?"

--- What a grateful sense the poor had of her goodness: *They showed the coats*, not ashamed to acknowledge that they were indebted to her for the clothes they were wearing. Those are horribly ungrateful who have kindness shown and will not at least make a recognition of it, showing the kindness that is done to them, as these widows did here. Showing the coats and garments that Dorcas made contributed to the praise not only of her **charity**, but of her **industry**, according to the character of the virtuous woman, who "stretches out her hand to the poor, and stretches out her hands to the needy." (Proverbs 31:20).

--- **They were here mourning the loss of her:** The widows stood beside Peter, weeping. They don't need to cry for her; She *rests from her works and her works follow her.*

--- They realize how good Dorcas did *while she was with* them, but now she's gone from them, and **this is their pain**. Those who are kind will find that the poor they *always have with them*, but the important thing is that those who are poor find people like Dorcas who care for them in their need.

--- Acts 9:40, "Then, bringing everyone out, Peter fell on his knees and prayed; and turning to the body, he said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up."

--- "Taking Everyone Out." Matthew 9:25, "But when the people had been cast out, he went in, and took the girl (daughter of Jairus) by the hand, and she got up."

--- 2 Kings 4:33, "When he then came in, he closed the door behind them and prayed to the Lord." (Elisha resurrects a child.)

--- The way she was resurrected. **In private**: She was laid in the upper room where there were many people mourning her death, *but Peter took them all out* .

--- **Peter rejected all that seemed vainglory and ostentation; he did not come to be seen.**

--- He **addressed God by solemn prayer, like Christ when He raised Lazarus;**

--- By the word, a **life-giving word, a word that is spirit and life**: He turned to the body, When he had prayed, *he turned to the body* and spoke on behalf of his Master, according to his example: "*Tabitha, arise.*"

Acts 9:41, "And he, giving her his hand, lifted her up; Then, calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive."

--- When she saw Peter, she sat up to show that she was real and alive; and *he gave her his hand and lifted her up and called the saints* and widows, who were all afflicted by her death, and presented her *alive* to them, for her great comfort, particularly of the widows.

Acts 9:42 "This was noticeable throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord."

--- The good effect of this miracle. **Many were convinced of the truth of the gospel**, that is, it was of heaven, and not of men, and they believed in the Lord. The thing was *known throughout Joppa*; It would be on everyone's lips quickly, and, being a **city of sailors, the warning of it would be taken from there to other countries**, and many were convinced by it. This was the design of miracles, to confirm a divine revelation.

--- **Many texts teach that the purpose of the miracles performed by Christ and the apostles were to confirm the Word.**

--- John 12:10, 11, "But the chief priests agreed to put Lazarus to death also, ¹¹ because because of him many of the Jews turned away and believed in Jesus."

--- Mark 16:20, "And they, going out, preached everywhere, the Lord helping them and confirming the word with the signs that followed it. Amen."

--- Acts 14:3, "Wherefore, they stayed there for a long time, speaking boldly, trusting in the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting that signs and wonders might be done by their hands.

--- Hebrews 2:3-4, "3How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? Which, having been first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard, ⁴God testifying together with them, with signs and wonders and various miracles and distributions of the Holy Spirit according to his will."

---Peter was induced to continue some time in this city. Discovering that a door of opportunity had been opened to him there, he remained there for many days, until he was sent from there, and sent from there on business to another place.

--- **Acts 9:43, "And it came to pass that he stayed many days in Joppa in the house of a certain Simon, a tanner."** He did not stop at the house of Dorcas lest he seem to seek his own glory; but he lodged with a certain Simon, a tanner, an **ordinary merchant**, which is an example of his condescension and humility: and for this reason he has taught us not to worry about *high things, but to condescend with those of low state*, Romans 12:16. And, though Peter might seem buried in darkness here in the house of a poor tanner by the sea, yet God brought him to a noble piece of service, which is recorded in the next chapter; for *those who humble themselves shall be exalted*.

[Wayne Partain, April 7, 2023]