

Our Great God

Acts 9:32-43 ³² Now as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down also to the saints who lived at Lydda. ³³ There he found a man named Aeneas, bedridden for eight years, who was paralyzed. ³⁴ And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed." And immediately he rose. ³⁵ And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

³⁶ Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which, translated, means Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity. ³⁷ In those days she became ill and died, and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. ³⁸ Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him, urging him, "Please come to us without delay." ³⁹ So Peter rose and went with them. And when he arrived, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping and showing tunics and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them. ⁴⁰ But Peter put them all outside, and knelt down and prayed; and turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. ⁴¹ And he gave her his hand and raised her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. ⁴² And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³ And he stayed in Joppa for many days with one Simon, a tanner.

❖ Introduction

- This is a section of Scripture where God is displaying His power
- **There are many struggling even right now with worry and anxiety over sickness and death**
 - We have someone from our congregation in the hospital right now
 - And she is having a tough recovery and the doctors are unsure what it is
- **We have others who have faced death in their family**
 - Or fear it for themselves.
- **Satan may have some... and he is causing them all kinds of pain and sorrow**
 - Because his temptations have a hold of them
- **But, here we take a glimpse at a God who can do anything**
- **God is Showing off a bit right now...**
 - He is giving us hope.
 - He is showing us that there is someone that can cause the lame to walk and the dead to rise
 - God is showing He is greater than physical ailments
 - God is showing He is greater than death
- **More than just a nice story and historical facts**
 - I know I may say this a lot...
 - But please do not read this chapter and walk away with nothing but a couple names
 - Names of people that were healed by an apostle named Peter
- **Walk away with a view of our God that Heals and Raises from the dead**
 - Walk away knowing that our God is great and mighty and powerful
 - Our God can do anything

❖ Outline:

- God Turns Peoples Lives Around
- God Heals the Sick
- God Raises the Dead
- God Still Heals the Sick
- God Will Raise the Dead
- God's Purpose in Displaying His Power
- Our Powerful God

❖ Recap: God Turns Peoples Lives Around

➤ Not Sure what all Flint preached last week...

- He and I talked through a little bit of it
- I know that they were some very challenging verses to hash out.
- I do want to look back at the previous section for a moment
- Because I want to Reiterate, or “iterate” it for the first time
- It goes with the overall theme of what we see in verses 32-43

➤ Jesus has saved Saul.

➤ Saul was against the church

- 9:21 “Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name?”

➤ Saul got to work for Jesus immediately

- 9:20 “²⁰ And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.”

➤ Saul quickly is able to prove who Jesus is

- 9:22 But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

➤ The Hunter becomes the hunted and He is already making disciples

- 9:25 ²⁵ but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.

➤ Saul quickly becomes the Jewish Leaders most wanted man

- Goes right to his old stomping grounds
- Same group of people that Stoned Stephen
- 9:28-29 So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. ²⁹ And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists. But they were seeking to kill him.

➤ God Gives Peace to the Church

- The previously hunted and scattered church is given peace
- God turns His enemy into His greatest advocate
- And the church is given peace
- 9:31 ³¹ So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.
 - The conversion of Paul led to peace
 - Led to the church being built up
 - They walked in the fear of the Lord
 - They walked in the Comfort of the Holy Spirit
 - It multiplied

➤ Fear of the Lord, Comfort of the Holy Spirit and it multiplied

❖ God Heals the Sick

- ³² Now as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down also to the saints who lived at Lydda. ³³ There he found a man named Aeneas, bedridden for eight years, who was paralyzed. ³⁴ And Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed.” And immediately he rose.

➤ Aeneas

- He was apparently a believer...
- Because Peter had come down to the Saints
- And this man had been stuck in his bed for 8 years and unable to walk
- He was paralyzed
 - Does not say he was born with it, likely he fell, or maybe an animal fell on him
 - Something had made him unable to walk

- **Very difficult to recover from things like this**
 - They did not have the doctors and modern medicine that we do
 - Yet, even in our day people that are paralyzed rarely walk again...
 - Unless they were just suffering from some temporary damage
- 8 years this man was in the bed... so it is unlikely his was temporary...
- **Through Peter, Jesus heals Aeneas**
 - **“Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed.” And immediately he rose.**
 - Aeneas is healed instantaneously
- **This Healing is not About Peter**
 - Nor is it about Aeneas
- **The Healing is all About the Name of Jesus**
 - Jesus Christ Heals you... immediately he rose
 - God is continuing to make his name great among his people
 - He is continuing to show His power
 - **There is absolutely no power in Peter...**
 - Peter simply believes in the power of Jesus...
 - He has faith...
 - He has faith in a mighty God that spoke all things into being...
 - And here, Jesus continues to show the world that He is real
- **So... let's pause right here, and I will come back to this point...**

❖ **God Raises The Dead**

- **³⁶Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which, translated, means Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity. ³⁷In those days she became ill and died, and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. ³⁸Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him, urging him, “Please come to us without delay.” ³⁹So Peter rose and went with them. And when he arrived, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping and showing tunics and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them. ⁴⁰But Peter put them all outside, and knelt down and prayed; and turning to the body he said, “Tabitha, arise.” And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. ⁴¹And he gave her his hand and raised her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive.**
- **Tabitha**
 - A wonderful woman dies...
 - This is the kind of person that everyone wonders why she died...
 - She did a lot of good works, and she was generous and loving...
 - **And she is dead**
 - She is not just sleeping, or out of it
 - They are getting ready to bury her
 - She is dead
 - This is a little bit trickier than healing a lame man
 - Right?
- **The people call for Peter...**
 - Obviously they knew God had been doing mighty things through the hands of the apostles...
- **He simply goes to her room:**
 - He prays
 - He is seeking God in this.
 - He is asking Jesus if He would heal her possibly

- Or asking Him to heal her
- **After praying it seems he had received his answer**
 - Because he just tells her to rise
- **Tabitha's Resurrection is not about her or Peter**
 - It is about the Power of Jesus to raise the dead
 - In both instances of the miraculous, we see a dependence on God by Peter
 - In the first Peter tells the man that Jesus Christ heals you
 - In the second Peter kneels to pray
 - Showing his dependence in Christ for all things...
- **And she just comes up from the dead**
 - Amazing... God does amazing things
- **Healing the Lame vs Raising the Dead**
 - All the same for God
 - He can as easily heal a broken finger
 - As He can bring a million back to life

❖ **God Can Heal the Sick**

- These verses are intended to increase our faith in a powerful God
- To teach us about our God's power
- **We Must believe this today**
 - God still heals the sick.
 - He is still able to heal the sick
- **Why don't we see the miraculous as much today?**
 - We are not looking!
 - We lack faith.
- **1) We are not looking**
 - **Jesus is healing every day**
 - In other countries I read of Jesus doing miraculous things through his servants
 - Real healings, not these fake healing shows, where these guys get money and take advantage
 - **He also heals today through medicine and modern science...**
 - All good things come from God... Anything life sustaining is from God
 - But, lets not go too far with that...
 - Because the emphasis here is on the miraculous
 - ◆ It is on bringing the glory to God
 - ◆ And He does not intend to share His glory with medicine...
 - **Even today in hospitals, Doctors and nurses are amazed at people being healed**
 - Many times after the death sentence is handed down...
 - People make a full recovery...
 - **And the reason they do this, is because people pray**
 - People pray to their Powerful and mighty God
 - Who can do all things
- **2) We lack Faith**
 - Peter had faith to heal
 - Peter was a vessel Jesus would use to heal...
 - Peter believed
 - And the people believed Jesus could do these things...
 - **We often do not**
 - We have become so empty of faith

- And, where there is no faith, it seems there is no healings
- Jesus went through this while He was on earth
- He would not heal because people did not believe
- **Why?**
 - Because we are not in the Word
 - We do not have faith because we are not reading about our mighty Jesus
 - Who can do all things
 - Who heals and raises the dead

➤ **Why does God allow people to be ill or lame or whatever ailment they may have?**

- So, here is the question, that I think will help us bring things together a bit...
- The disciples asked this question and Jesus gave them an answer...
- **John 9:1-3 As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. ² And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.**
- God intends to display His mighty Works in people...
 - And this man was blind so God could display his power in him...
- **What a great and mighty reason**

❖ **God Raises the Dead**

➤ **What do we learn from Tabitha's rising from the dead**

- And how do we apply that today...

➤ **People being raised from the dead is very uncommon in our day**

- Not saying that it does not happen... Because it is likely that God still does this.
- But it seems very rare...

➤ **It was rare even when Jesus walked the earth**

- And it seems rare in the book of acts with His disciples
- Here we see Peter with Tabitha
- And we also read about Paul raising the young boy that fell while he was preaching a long time

➤ **God has Shown us His power in raising the dead...**

- So, I think we can learn two things from His raising Tabitha from the dead
- 1) Let's have faith that God can do this today
- 2) Let's Remember that He will certainly resurrect all of His children

➤ **1) He can still do this today**

- I do not want to pass by this story and think that it can not be done today...
- You can bet your life if something happens to my loved one...
 - And I was moved by the Holy Spirit
 - I would pray this... I would pray knowing that He has the power to raise them from the dead
 - He does have the power
- **I would not necessarily know if that is what He wanted to do...**
 - But He can do it...
 - He can do amazing things...

• **Psalm 147:5 Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.**

➤ **2) All Resurrections done by Jesus or His apostles are just pre-cursors**

- They show us what God will do for those who are His...
- He will raise them to life...
- All of us who know Jesus can live with this hope today...
- **Jesus tells Martha:**

- John 11:25-26 ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.

- **This is no small thing.**

- It is no small thing to die and then be given life again...
- God passed down a judgment of death to all who sin...
- And we have all sinned...
- Therefore we all die...

- **And that would be the end of it...**

- That would be the end of our life... over... done...

- **But God offers us a way to be resurrected...**

- And to continue on as living beings
- Enjoying all the joys of God and His creations

- **Paul says:**

- Romans 6:5 ⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

- **We have nothing to fear in this life...**

- For God holds our life in His hands...
- And His Son came and died for us
- And this brings glory to God
- And it secures a future for us... A living future

❖ **The Purpose of God Displaying His Power**

- **I am not trying to beat a dead horse (just a saying)**

- Meaning I am not trying to just stick this into every sermon
- So you will be convinced that God is moving to bring Salvation
 - It just happens to be in almost every section so far.
 - So let us look again at what happens after God displays His power

- Vs 35

- ³⁵ And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

- Vs 42

- ⁴² And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.
- They turned to the Lord/Many believed in the Lord

- **God continues His work of reaching the Lost...**

- And He is using the church to do it.
- In this case He uses Peter to do two miracles
- And these miracles are a display of the power of Jesus to these people...

- **The Miracles are not enough to save the people...**

- The miracles are always used in conjunction with the preaching of the gospel...
- We see this as the habit of God in the early church...

- **Therefore: Let us pray for God to do mighty works**

- And let us pray that God will lead us to people we can tell the gospel to
- And that we will have the boldness to tell them

❖ **Our Powerful God**

- **We have an all knowing God**

- We have a God concerned with His People
- We have a God concerned with His people because of His great name

- **We as Christians should not live in fear over sickness and death...**

- Now, I say this not to say that we should be unconcerned or unaffected
- That would be against how God made us.
- He has made us to love others, and even ourselves
- Our bodies were made to last forever...
 - It is sin that brought an end to that...
- **But, We need to see our God aware of all things...**
 - He is intimately aware of every sniffle and major sickness we have
 - And He allows them...
- **God is Free to do as He wishes...**
 - And we are free to ask of Him anything according to His will
- **Look at The Example of Job...**
 - Things were great...
 - God allows him to be tested by Satan...
 - His possessions are stolen
 - His children are taken from him...
 - He is made sick with boils
 - I would not have wanted to be Job...
 - But God glorified Himself through Job...
 - Job continued to trust in the Lord
 - His wife wanted him to just curse God and die
 - Job told his wife:
 - Job 2:10 ¹⁰ But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?”
 - Later God restores more to Job than he had previously...
 - But, the main point was that God is God...
- **God has Sovereign Freedom...**
 - Isaiah 46:10b ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,’
 - Daniel 4:35 ³⁵ all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, “What have you done?”
- **God has allowed us access to Him in prayer...**
 - And there is much power there...
 - But, before we can ever pray...
 - We need to know the God we are praying to
 - We need to be in the word of God so we will know God
- **The Word of God gives us Faith**
 - God’s word is alive... it really is...
 - Jesus spoke it, And He is called the Word...
 - So, as we read it, it works in us and produces within us Faith...
- **This Faith can lead to Purposeful Believing Prayer...**
 - **He is there for all of His Children**
 - Those that are far off and those that are close by...
 - He loves all of His children...
 - ◆ If you are truly one of His... having been born again
 - Do not think that you are too sinful for God to hear you
 - Or you have not done enough for Him to deserve His blessings...
- **God does not love you or answer your prayers because you are worthy anyway...**
 - His love toward you is not based off of your worthiness...

- That is bad theology...
- **To ever think you are not good enough for God**
 - And that you will need to get to work if you want his love
 - Is not a right understanding of God's Word
 - It is just as bad as:
- **Thinking you are good enough for God**
 - That you have been doing well enough to deserve his love
 - This is not a biblical understanding of God
- The Point is this: We are never good enough... not when we are bad, not when we are good
- **God's love toward us is founded in two things**
 - 1) The Worthiness of His Son.
 - 2) The Greatness of His name.
- **Every time God forgives Sin...**
 - It is because His Son gave His life for sinners
 - It is because Jesus took the punishment for their sins...
 - So, it is Jesus that makes us right with God
 - Look at how Paul explains it
 - **2 Cor 5:17,18a ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸ All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself**
 - He continues to explain this:
 - **Verse 19a that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them,**
- **God's Mercy toward sinners brings glory to His name**
 - Consider these few verses
 - **Psalm 25:11 For your name's sake, O Lord, pardon my guilt, for it is great.**
 - **Jeremiah 14:7,9 "Though our iniquities testify against us, act, O LORD, for your name's sake; for our backslidings are many, we have sinned against you.... You, O LORD, are in the midst of us, and we are called by your name; leave us not"**
- **This is not to say it does not matter how we live or act**
 - Because it does matter...
 - Our fellowship with God is broken when we live in sin
 - Also, he will discipline his children so we straighten up...
- **But: God's goodness to us does not depend on our fickle nature**
 - Thank goodness...
 - We are so up and down and all over the place...
 - It would be a crazy world where God's goodness depends on:
 - The goodness of his people
 - 1) God makes us good (righteous) through Jesus
 - 2) It brings glory to His name to be good to us

❖ Invitation

