

I. THE HURTING

- A. Peter last heard of in ACTS 8:14-25 – dealing with Simon the Sorcerer
 - 1. You remember the local shaman to whom all the people gave “heed”
 - a. He was a fraud that used his influence to gain power and wealth
 - b. He claimed to be someone great, but he FOOLED the people
 - c. And then Peter showed up with the Gospel!
 - i. The Gospel changes EVERYTHING
 - ii. The Gospel went off like a bomb in my life
 - iii. Jesus CHANGED me!
 - iv. 2 COR. 5:17 – “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”
 - 2. When the Gospel got on the scene:
 - a. Unclean spirits came out of them
 - b. Many with palsies were healed
 - c. Many lame were healed
 - d. The Holy Ghost came to all those who got Saved
 - 3. Peter ALWAYS was CAREFUL to give God the Glory for every miracle
 - a. Yet that Simon wanted to give them money to learn the “trick”
 - b. That is so often the response of the lost
 - i. They think Salvation is some new leaf we’ve turned over
 - ii. They ask, “how are you doing that?”
 - iii. They say, “if only I had your self-discipline.”
 - c. Salvation is NONE of those things!
 - i. When Christ creates a new creature the OLD passes away
 - ii. When the Holy Spirit indwells that person CHANGES!
 - iii. The change is not from “WITHIN”
 - iv. The change can only come “FROM HIM!”
 - 4. So, Peter didn’t go on vacation nor is Paul the only story we see
- B. Peter goes to Lydda (a city Northwest of Jerusalem)
 - 1. He was the Pastor at Jerusalem but ALSO an Apostle
 - a. He had additional duties to the Saved and the churches
 - b. At this time, there were strong ties between the churches
 - c. They all had been scattered due to persecution (some by Saul)
 - d. Hard times draw people together
 - i. A husband and wife, families, close friends
 - ii. A trial will show those around who are your real friends
 - 2. Peter goes and FELLOWSHIPS with the saints there (vs. 32)
 - a. We shouldn’t isolate ourselves from our church

- b. Take **ADVANTAGE** of fellowship opportunities among the Saints!
 - c. Our church has at least **FOUR** chances each week!
 - i. To deepen friendships, to pray for one another
 - ii. To be spurred onward for the cause of Christ
 - iii. To “let your guard down” and be real (away from world)
 - 3. Stick around for a little while and talk with people – they might talk back!
- C. Peter meets Aeneas at Lydda
 - 1. Aeneas may have been Saved and a church member there
 - a. We only know that vs. 33 uses the words “and there”
 - b. Which might refer back to the Saints Peter came to visit
 - c. All we do know is that Aeneas is saved **NOW** (vs. 35)
 - 2. Aeneas had been in his bed for **EIGHT YEARS**
 - a. My back hurts if I get sick for a day or two
 - b. I can’t imagine 8 long years!
 - 3. But no more! Now he is healed!

II. THE HELPER

- A. Peter also met a young lady named Tabitha, called Dorcas (gazelle)
 - 1. She was a woman **FULL** of good works and almsdeeds (vs. 36)
 - a. The name Dorcas tells us what those around her thought
 - b. A gazelle is lovely creature, tender and harmless
 - c. A sweet spirit, not loud and boisterous, but quiet and meek!
 - 2. She made coats and garments for the widows around her
 - a. Not for herself, nor profit, but for the **WIDOWS** among the saints
 - b. Look at the testimony she had (vs. 39)
 - 3. She was thought well of by all the disciples there (“they” vs. 39)
 - 4. She became sick and died (vs. 37)
- B. It is often hard to understand why people are taken from this life
 - 1. When my own father passed away six years ago this month
 - a. It was **EXPECTED** but still “sudden” as all death is
 - b. He had been sick for a long time and declining
 - 2. But then you read things on Facebook about a young father killed
 - a. I know of a few – Missionaries serving God with a sudden death
 - b. Or a young pastor leaving behind a wife and family
 - c. We don’t now know, nor **CAN** we understand in this life why!
 - 3. Don’t make the mistake of demanding from God an answer
 - a. It is likely that we could not comprehend it anyway
 - b. And lifespan is **NOT** a direct result of “good deeds”
 - i. Or Stephen would not have been stoned
 - ii. Tabitha might still be alive today!
 - iii. Nor do all the evil people die as children.
 - c. That’s not the way life works, and we know it.
 - 4. None the less, the Bible commands with promises! How about this:

- a. EPH. 6:1-3 – “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. (2) Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) (3) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.”
 - b. Wise to take hold on every chance – maximize your life if you can
 - c. I’m 50 years old today because I don’t run with scissors.
 - d. My MOTHER told me not to!
- C. Tabitha was a SERVANT
- 1. She had a sweet spirit that served the saints
 - 2. She saw a need and worked to fill in the gap – that takes watchfulness
 - a. So many times, we are so focused on ourselves that we are blind
 - b. We cannot see the obvious desperate needs of others
 - 3. Want to be thought as a great conversationist? Ask questions of others!
 - a. Find out if someone needs help and then help them
 - b. I mean REALLY help them
 - i. Don’t bring a prayer request to the church
 - ii. When you can bring a bag of groceries to their door!
 - iii. Maybe YOU are who God will use to answer their prayers
 - c. A need seen is an assignment given!

III. THE HEALING

- A. In both cases, Aeneas and Tabitha, Peter is used of God to heal
- 1. For Aeneas, Peter speaks to him, and God heals him (vs. 34)
 - 2. At no time did Peter claim any personal involvement in the healing
 - a. Peter told Aeneas EXACTLY who had the power to heal
 - b. And when Aeneas was healed, it was 100%
 - c. What God does, He does RIGHT
 - d. Healed IMMEDIATELY (not after months of therapy and pills)
 - 3. Not just arise, but make your bed (vs. 34)
 - a. Pick up all that sick stuff and throw it away
 - b. You won’t need it anymore
 - c. Even in this, God tells us to be neat and excellent for Him
- B. With Tabitha,
- 1. Peter put the weeping widow ladies forth
 - 2. Then he KNELT and PRAYED! He couldn’t help, he knew, but God could
 - 3. And then he turned to the body, and said, “Tabitha, arise”
 - a. Only AFTER he spoke to God did he speak to her
 - b. And by the way, she wasn’t there, it was just her body
 - c. God, and God alone, resurrected her that day
- C. These so-called faith healers today want all the glory for themselves
- 1. They are no better than Simon the Sorcerer – Peter knew about him
 - 2. Look at Peter’s character, he was simply obeying God
 - 3. And God used Peter for great things

4. Because Peter was careful to give God all the praise and the glory for it!

IV. THE HEARING

- A. The healing was important, but it wasn't the MAIN thing
 1. Pastor Gray used to say, "Keep the main thing the main thing!"
 - a. Yes, they were healed, even raised from the dead
 - b. And that was very meaningful to Aeneas and Tabitha
 - c. But the Bible records an even greater miracle!
 2. People heard the GOSPEL and RESPONDED to it!
- B. Look first at the healing of Aeneas (vs. 35)
 1. What an amazing testimony – ALL that dwelt there SAW Aeneas
 - a. And turned to the Lord!
 - b. And not just them, but all of those that dwelt at Sharon
 - c. Those people ALSO saw Aeneas and turned to the Lord
 2. Now, Preacher, do you really think everyone in both towns got Saved?
 3. I really do! Because that's what the Bible says!
- C. Look at the raising of Tabitha (vs. 42)
 1. It was known THROUGHOUT ALL of the city of Joppa
 2. And MANY believed in the Lord
 3. All heard, and that meant many believed

V. THE HEART

- A. If you do not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ today
 1. Let me tell you about Him – He is the GREAT PHYSICIAN
 2. LUKE 5:31 – "And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick."
 3. He can heal you of the sickness called sin
- B. You see sin is a malady that has no cure man can produce
 1. It is a deadly illness that cannot be stopped or defeated by man's power
 2. HEB. 9:27 – "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"
 3. The prognosis isn't good. Sin has no survival rate.
- C. ROM. 6:23 – "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
 1. Through Jesus Christ you can be made whole from this sin-sickness
 2. He alone can save you,
 - a. He is that balm in Gilead that can bind your death wounds
 - b. He is the physician that can truly heal your soul
 3. Be saved today!