



Tabitha

Lives to Serve

“Mom, I’m hungry!” the widow’s son cried.

The widow peeked out her doorway. *Where is Tabitha?* she wondered.

“Mommy, I’m cold!” Her small daughter shivered.

The young widow began to worry. Her husband had died, and now she barely had any money to care for her family. Kind Tabitha had promised to bring food and a new robe for her daughter.

But Tabitha was not usually late!



Widow – a woman whose husband has died



“Come with me, children. Let’s visit our friend, Dorcas,” said the widow. (Dorcas was another name for Tabitha.)

When the family arrived at Tabitha’s house, they peered inside. They saw Tabitha’s tall wooden loom and the stool where she always sat to weave the clothes.

Suddenly, they heard a woman coughing. “Tabitha?” they called.

The widow and her children rushed in to Tabitha’s room. They

saw their friend lying in bed and looking terribly pale.

“Oh, Tabitha, please don’t die!” the widow begged. “We need you!”

The anxious widow picked up her children and hurried outside to the streets.

“Tabitha is sick!” she shouted to all the poor widows from the church.

“Tabitha is sick!” she cried to the other church people standing nearby.

At once, the followers of Jesus came running from everywhere

in the village of Joppa. They all wanted to take care of the lovely lady, Tabitha, who had always taken care of them.

But – how sad! – nobody could do anything to help. In just a short time, dear Tabitha was dead.

“How will we live without her?” wailed all the poor widows.

The women washed her and dressed her in burial clothes. Then they laid her in a room upstairs.

“There must be something we can do!” said the people of the church. “Why don’t we ask the apostle Peter to come help us?”

He’s visiting a town nearby.”

Meanwhile, all the widows, young and old, stayed in the room with Tabitha. They didn’t want to leave their friend.

When Peter entered the room, the widows crowded around him, crying.

“Tabitha loved Jesus, and she showed His love to us,” said one of the widows. “See this beautiful robe she made me!”

Then another widow spoke up. “Tabitha was always helping those in need. Look at the bright colors she wove into my coat. I feel like a queen.”

“The name Tabitha means gazelle,” said a woman softly. “Tabitha’s eyes were just like a gazelle – dark and gentle. Oh, if only those kind eyes would open once more.”

TABITHA’S TAILORING

Fine quality, handmade tunics and coats
for poor widows and their families

• JOPPA •

Peter pointed to the door.
“Everyone must leave!” he ordered.

As the widows turned to go, they saw Peter kneeling to pray. “I wonder what God will do,” they whispered to each other.

After a few moments, Peter called the widows and the other church people to the room.

Beside him stood Tabitha – **ALIVE!**

“What a miracle!” the people shouted. The widows rushed in to hug their friend.

(Now in those days, before the whole Bible was written, God gave the apostles power to do miracles so people would believe that Jesus is the Son of God. And that’s just

what happened! When the people of Joppa heard about this miracle, many of them believed.)

The church was glad to have Tabitha back. But Tabitha had work to do! She looked at the young widow who had visited her house that day.

“I know a little girl who needs a robe!” said Tabitha, smiling.

**Learn from Tabitha’s biography:**

- God has power to do anything – even raise the dead!
- Spend your time serving those in need, like Tabitha did.

Parent Ideas

Tabitha Lives to Serve

Scripture: Acts 9:36-43

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- God has power to do anything – even raise the dead!
- Spend your time serving those in need, like Tabitha did.

1. Read-together activity

This activity will work if your child has not read the biography yet. First, ask your child if she has ever heard of Tabitha (Dorcas) from the New Testament. Show her yarn or a spool of thread as a hint. See what she already knows about Tabitha – don't tell her any further information. Then ask her to write three things she would like to find out about Tabitha. Tell your child to listen for these items as you read the biography. When you are done reading, discuss what she learned. Does she have any more questions? Were there any surprises?

2. Read-together activity

You or your spouse (or a female relative) could dress up as the fictional young widow in the biography. Change the wording in the biography in order to read it dramatically from a first-person perspective. For your costume, simply wear a bathrobe and a head covering made of a towel and secured with a headband. Bring a broom, pottery or beautifully-colored clothing as props. Or instead, make up your own character and costume and read the biography in that character's voice.

3. Discussion activity

Ask your child questions like these:

- Why did the widows love Tabitha so much? (What was Tabitha like? What did she do for them?)

- Do you know a person living today who's like Tabitha? Describe this person. (*Parents, you may need to remind your child of a kind, helpful person you both know.*)
- Pretend you were one of the poor widows in the biography. If Tabitha had stayed dead, what might have happened to you? What would you do?
- How did God show His power in the biography?
- What happened when the people in Joppa heard of the miracle?

4. Application activity

Ask your child, "Have you ever been a 'Tabitha' to someone else? What did you do?"

To encourage more "Tabitha-like" behavior, choose a category of basic needs (food, medical supplies, clothing, shelter, school supplies, etc.). Toss a Frisbee™ back and forth. Each time you or your child catches or picks up the Frisbee, name a way your family could care for a person with a need in that category. For example, if your category is clothing, your child will catch the Frisbee and say, "We could buy two pairs of socks and give one away." Keep tossing, brainstorming and changing categories. Pick your favorite idea and DO IT!

Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Provide a box of school supplies to a needy child (through a local school or children's shelter). Your child can help you shop for items.

Parent Ideas

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Scripture: Acts 9:36-43

- Does your church serve a local food pantry or homeless shelter? Participate in that ministry together. Prepare your child for what she may experience.
- Do any local ministries build homes for low-income families? Contact the ministry to see how your family can be involved.
- Donate used clothes to a local shelter. Or, in the spirit of Tabitha, make an article of clothing with your own hands (e.g., knit scarves or hats, sew simple skirts, etc.).
- Enable children around the world to participate in Awana® clubs through Adopt-a-Club®. Visit www.awana.org for more details.
- Sponsor a needy child through a Christian organization. To spark connections and cultural learning, choose a child from another country with the same gender and birthdate as your own child.

5. Application activity

For Tabitha, service was a way of life – not a one-time event! Pray for servants' hearts. Pray that God will bring service opportunities into your daily life this month so your child forms a habit of service. Pray especially for opportunities to serve the people of God (1 John 3:17).