

## Crossway Life Group, Week of November 18

See sermon notes on [CMC's webpage](#) for background information

### Community

Take time to share and pray for each other's concerns and joys.

### Growing in Cultural Understandings

One of the ways in which cultures and people differ from each other has been described as "uncertainty avoidance." That is, some of us find uncertainty very uncomfortable, and we want to do what we can to avoid it (sometimes we call them "planners"). Others of us find uncertainty to be exciting and adventurous.

- What are some strengths and weaknesses of each approach?
- In terms of uncertainty avoidance, how would you describe yourself?
- Living by faith in God can include a bit of uncertainty, such as when the people asked Peter to come to help Tabitha, or when Peter came to pray. What is it like for you to live by faith when there is uncertainty?
- When things are uncertain, "uncertainty avoiders" may find it very helpful to emphasize what is certain. When we walk by faith in Christ, what certainties can serve as a solid foundation for us?

**Scripture: Acts 9:31-43**

**Sermon: "God at Work"**

### Reading & Discussing the passage

- **Read Acts 9:31.** This verse describes the peace and growth of the early church. Note the two key qualities Luke highlights: **living in the fear of the Lord**, and **being encouraged by the Holy Spirit**.
- **Now read Acts 9:32-43.** As you read, watch for how these verses might be illustrating these two ideas: **living in the fear of the Lord** and **being encouraged by the Holy Spirit**. How does this section help us better understand what these two ideas might mean?
- In this passage, what are the actions of God's people and what are the actions of Jesus/God?

Ministry	Actions of God's people	Actions of God
Healing of Aeneas		
Meeting the needs of widows		
Raising Tabitha back to life		

- Compare and contrast the ministries of Peter in the resurrection of Tabitha, and Tabitha's ministry with the widows. How are they alike? How are they different? What ministries of people today might be more like Peter's, and what ministries might be more like Tabitha's? This is a great illustration of the importance of God's design of His church, that different people in the church have different gifts and abilities, and all are needed to fulfill God's design, even though some are more dramatic than others.
- **Read Philippians 2:12-13.** Note the rich integration of God's work and human actions. How would you describe the relationship between God's work ("It is God who works in you") and our work ("work out your salvation with fear and trembling")?

### Summary

**The church grows and lives are transformed by God's work through God's people**

### Application

1. In what ways are you like (or do you feel like) the first picture?
2. In what ways are you like the second picture?
3. In what ways have you seen or experienced something like the third picture, a time when human actions were infused with the power of God by the Spirit?
4. Where do you need to see the powerful work of God? How might you be an expression of the power and will of God?
5. Jesus said, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you...and you will be my witnesses." (Acts 1:8) What does or might that power look like in your life?



### Community

*How can your group be a blessing to people beyond yourselves?*

## Acts 9:19b-31 - New International Version

<sup>31</sup> Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

### Aeneas and Dorcas

<sup>32</sup> As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit the Lord's people who lived in Lydda. <sup>33</sup> There he found a man named Aeneas, who was paralyzed and had been bedridden for eight years. <sup>34</sup> "Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and roll up your mat." Immediately Aeneas got up. <sup>35</sup> All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

<sup>36</sup> In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor. <sup>37</sup> About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. <sup>38</sup> Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!"

<sup>39</sup> Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

<sup>40</sup> Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. <sup>41</sup> He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the believers, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive. <sup>42</sup> This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. <sup>43</sup> Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon.

## Philippians 2:12-13

"Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."