



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

December 2, 2012

P.O. Box 416
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Rockwood, TN 37854
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Elders:

Dana Carter
Kenneth Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Bobby Bear
Kendall Bear
Larry Brackett
Roger Carter
Steve McCreary

Minister:

Kirby Hinds

Secretary:

Susan Chandler

Service Times:

Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:30 pm

Monday

Ladies Class 10 am

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KNOWN BECAUSE OF KINDNESS

“Now in Joppa there was a disciple names Tabitha (which translated in Greek is called Dorcas): this woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did” (Acts 9:36).

A discouraging aspect of current American culture is the seemingly endless fascination with celebrities – actors, athletes, and those who are fabulously wealthy. Not only are there entire television programs and magazines devoted to this cult of celebrity worship, but even “serious” news programs have segments filled with the latest “buzz” and celebrity gossip. Most of the people followed, and profiled live lives of shallow hedonism.

How refreshing it is, then, to turn to the pages of the Bible and be introduced to a woman whose life was characterized by deeds of kindness. Tabitha (also know as Dorcas) was a Christian at Joppa, a city on the Mediterranean coast of Palestine. Readers of the Bible are introduced to Tabitha because she died, but she was significant because of the way she lived her life. You can read her brief story in **Acts 9:36-43**.

First, notice that the Bible makes special mention of her kindness. The first words of the narrative are those explaining who she was. The Bible says she was *“abounding with deeds of kindness.”* She was not known for one deed, but many – an overflowing number. Also, it is said that she *“continually did”* acts of kindness. This was a way of life for her. Thus, it not only describes her deeds, but her heart.

Secondly, take note of the fact that her brothers and sisters in Christ made a special effort to get Peter to go to Joppa. Wayne Jackson, in his commentary on Acts, makes mention of normalcy of same-day burial (**Acts 5:6**) and the delay in Tabitha’s case. He also wonders if their delay and call for Peter were indicators of their hope that he could do something about her death (The Acts of the Apostles from Jerusalem to Rome, p. 119).

We would likely not have known Tabitha if it had not been for her kindness. Not only did she make a difference in the lives of people then, but she continues to affect people today, because of her kindness. What a beautiful life – that started in a beautiful heart! How’s your heart?

Lance Cordle

WHAT DO YOU EXPECT?

By Gerald Elliott

Jesus tells us: *“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you: seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened”* **(Luke 11:9-10)**.

Have you ever noticed that we usually hear what we expect to hear? We see what we expect to see. Usually we even get what we expect to receive. If we don't expect it, we usually don't work for it, seek it or try to get it...so we don't receive it. If we expect something, we generally become a self-fulfilling prophecy. We will work in that direction. We will make necessary steps. We ask, seek, knock and find.

When Jesus was in Nazareth teaching **(Mark 6)**, the residents there did not expect anything from Him. In fact, they seemed to resent Him. *“...Where did this man get these things, and what is the wisdom given to Him, and such miracles as these performed by His hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and a brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us? And they took offense at Him **(Mark 6:2-3)**.”* It was almost like they were saying, “Who would want a miracle from Jesus? Or I would rather stay blind than be given sight by this carpenter.”

Among the people of Nazareth that day there were preconceptions that would not allow any positive expectations. It seems that the people of Nazareth agreed with Nathaniel, *“...Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” **(John 1:46)**.”* What the people of Nazareth expected (or did not expect) that day inhibited their faith and limited the blessings they received from the Son of God.

In many ways, this remains problematic today. So many of us do not expect Jesus to make a real difference in our lives, and so He doesn't. We do not look for Jesus to give us peace, so not seeking we do not find. We do not expect Jesus to change our heart, so even though we ask, we ask unbelievably, and we do not receive. We don't expect to be empowered during our worship times. So we don't really sing. We don't think about the words of the songs, we don't sing with enthusiasm or interest. We don't really pray, our mind wanders around the world when prayers are lifted to heaven. We don't seek the cross during the Lord's Supper, we spend our time thinking about who is wearing what and who is doing what. We listen to the lesson only half heartedly, not seeking to apply any truth to ourselves. At the end of the hour, we think...that was a waste of time. And it was, because we did not ask, seek, knock, and find.

What do you want from Jesus? This is what you will get.