

# Peter Heals Aeneas and Raises Tabitha

(Acts 9:32-43)

## Introduction

**Ask:** Do you know what a spiritual gift is?

A spiritual gift is an extraordinary power given to you by the Holy Spirit when you become a believer in Jesus. God gives each of us spiritual gifts so that we can use them to be a blessing to others and to help unbelievers come to faith in Jesus. You have at least one spiritual gift. These are things like:

[Teacher, list the spiritual gifts on the whiteboard as you give the students a simplified description of them. You will use this list of gifts later during the game.]

Spiritual Gift	Description
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	Helping people work together.
<b>ENCOURAGEMENT</b>	Inspiring other people to do the right thing.
<b>FAITH</b>	Believing that God can do anything (move mountains).
<b>GIVING</b>	Joy in providing money and other things to help in God's work.
<b>HEALING</b>	Curing people miraculously.
<b>MERCY</b>	Having compassion for people who are suffering or are lonely.
<b>PREACHING/EVANGELISM</b>	Ability to boldly share the gospel.
<b>SERVICE/HELPS</b>	Seeing people's needs and being willing to do things no one else will do (clean toilets).

<b>TEACHING</b>	Explaining God's Word so that others understand it.
<b>WISDOM</b>	Having God's understanding.

Our human body has different parts that work together to make our bodies work properly. If we were missing any part of our physical body, such as our legs, the other parts of our body have to work harder to do the work that the missing parts would do.

Just like our physical body, the Body of Christ is made up of believers with gifts and talents that help the church work properly. If every believer is using the gift God has given them, all the believers will be working together to accomplish God's will.

Today we'll see how God gave spiritual gifts to His followers to be a blessing to others and to help unbelievers come to faith in Jesus.

## Opening Prayer

Father, thank You that You have given us spiritual gifts that we can use to be a blessing to others and to help unbelievers come to faith in You. Help us to desire spiritual gifts and to recognize them in each other. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## Memory Verse

*God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. (1 Peter 4:10)*

## Lesson

We have been studying the Book of Acts. At the end of our last lesson we learned that Saul was sent to Tarsus [show on a map]. While Saul was in Tarsus, God continued to use the Apostle Peter.

Acts 9:32-33

*Meanwhile, Peter traveled from place to place, and he came down to visit the believers in the town of Lydda. (33) There he met a man named Aeneas, who had been paralyzed and bedridden for eight years.*

[Teacher, show Lydda on a map.]

**Ask:** What do you think it would have been like for Aeneas [Un-ne-uhs] to be paralyzed and in bed for 8 years? [Allow responses. Helpless; dependent.]

Acts 9:34

*Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you! Get up, and roll up your sleeping mat!" And he was healed instantly.*

God used Peter to heal Aeneas.

Notice that Peter didn't say, "*I am the apostle Peter and by my authority and power I heal you.*" He knew that healing is a miracle that only God can do.

Let's see why God gave Peter the spiritual gift of healing.

Acts 9:35

*Then the whole population of Lydda and Sharon saw Aeneas walking around, and **they turned to the Lord.***

When people living in Lydda and Sharon saw Peter use the spiritual gift of healing, they turned to the Lord.

The same is true for you. When other people see you using the spiritual gifts that God has given you, they will see God's power at work and will want to turn to Him for themselves.

As Peter continued to visit with the believers in Lydda, there was a believer named Tabitha who lived in Joppa. [Locate Joppa on a map.]

Let's read how Tabitha used her spiritual gifts to serve the Lord.

Acts 9:36

*There was a believer in Joppa named Tabitha which in Greek is Dorcas. She was always doing kind things for others and helping the poor.*

Tabitha had the spiritual gift of serving. God made her aware of the needs of others and she was always doing kind things for others and helping the poor. One of the ways she helped poor widows was by making them clothes.

But one day Tabitha became sick and died so they prepared her body for burial.

Acts 9:37

*About this time she became ill and died. Her body was washed for burial and laid in an upstairs room.*

When believers in Joppa heard that Peter was nearby in Lydda, they sent two men with a message for him to come quickly to Tabitha's house.

Acts 9:38

*But the believers had heard that Peter was nearby at Lydda, so they sent two men to beg him, "Please come as soon as possible!"*

**Ask:** Why do you think they sent for Peter? (They had heard that God had given him the spiritual gift of healing.)

Peter went to Joppa with the two men and went upstairs to the room where Tabitha's body was placed.

Acts 9:39

*So Peter returned with them; and as soon as he arrived, they took him to the upstairs room. The room was filled with widows who were weeping and showing him the coats and other clothes Dorcas had made for them.*

When Peter was in the room the widows were crying and showing him the clothes that Tabitha had made while she was alive. As her body lay lifeless, her good deeds were being remembered.

Peter sent everyone out of the room.

## Acts 9:40-41

*But Peter asked them all to leave the room; then he knelt and prayed. Turning to the body he said, "Get up, Tabitha." And she opened her eyes! When she saw Peter, she sat up! (41) He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then he called in the widows and all the believers, and he presented her to them alive.*

Once again God used Peter to perform a powerful miracle. Peter could not raise a person from the dead in his own strength. He could only raise Tabitha because the Holy Spirit lived inside of him.

Let's see why God gave Peter the gift of healing.

## Acts 9:42

*The news spread through the whole town, and **many believed in the Lord.***

As we saw with Aeneas' healing, when people in Joppa heard that Tabitha was raised from the dead many believed in Jesus.

## Acts 9:43

*And Peter stayed a long time in Joppa, living with Simon, a tanner of hides.*

Peter and Tabitha both used the spiritual gifts that God had given them to serve others. And, when people saw the power of God, their faith grew.

The moment you believe, the Holy Spirit comes inside of your heart and gives you one or more spiritual gifts. When you use the gifts and talents God has given you, others will be inspired to know Jesus.

[Teacher, spend a few minutes talking about the spiritual gifts that God has given to each of the students in your class. Explain how they can use their gift to help strengthen other people's faith.]

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Father, help me to know what my gifts are and then give me opportunity to use them for Your Name's sake and for Your glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**LEARNING ACTIVITIES****GAME CENTER*****Hedbanz***

Divide the class into teams. Write the names of the spiritual gifts on sticky notes to stick on a student's forehead. Seat one student with their back towards the whiteboard, so they cannot see the list of spiritual gifts and stick the name of a spiritual gift on their forehead.

The student then must ask his teammates for a clue as to what gift it is. The team must respond without using the term.

Either limit the number of clues or put a timer on it. If the student guesses the correct gift, their team gets 100 points.

Or, use the following questions in another game or discussion:

1. Who was Peter visiting in Lydda? (Believers)
2. Why was Aeneas bedridden? (Paralyzed)
3. How long was Aeneas bedridden? (Eight years)
4. Who healed Aeneas? (Jesus Christ)
5. When the people living in Lydda saw Aeneas walking what did they do? (Turned to the Lord)
6. Why did Peter go to Joppa? (2 men came and asked him to come quickly)

7. How did Tabitha live her life? (Always doing good and helping the poor)
8. What did the crying widows show Peter? (The clothes Tabitha had made for them)
9. How did the people respond to Tabitha being raised from the dead? (Many believed in Jesus)
10. What can you do this week to use the gifts God has given you?

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