

People of the Bible

Dorcas (Tabitha) Lydia, and Phoebe, Faithful Women

These women were exemplary Christians who demonstrated their faith by their material support of the Church.

Dorcas (also known as Tabitha) was well-known and much loved for her acts of charity in the city of Joppa, especially for making clothes for the poor. When Dorcas died suddenly, the members of her congregation sent to the neighboring city of Lydda for the apostle Peter, who came and raised her from the dead (Acts 9:36-41).

Lydia was a woman of Thyatira, who worked at Philippi selling a famous purple dye that was much in demand in the ancient world. She was also a “worshiper of God” at the local synagogue (Acts 16:14). When the apostle Paul encountered her in prayer among other proselyte women, his preaching of the Word brought Lydia to faith in Christ. She and her friends thus became the nucleus of the Christian community in Philippi (Acts 16:13-15, 40).

Phoebe was another faithful woman associated with the apostle Paul. She was a deaconess from Cenchreae (the port of Corinth) whom Paul sent to the Church in Rome with his Epistle to the Romans. In it, he writes of her support for the work of the Early Church (Romans 16:1-2).