

A Certain Disciple **Acts 9:10-19**

Are Bible characters better than we are?

Did they have special character that we cannot have today?

They were just like us, nothing special except circumstances.

Consider one called Ananias from Damascus

Saul of Tarsus, future apostle to Gentiles, has seen the risen Savior and is waiting in Damascus

God sends Ananias

Is Ananias a special "hero of faith"?

Or just someone like you or me.

"Certain disciple" -- no mention of anything special, or out of the ordinary (where was he born?
parents? up bringing?)

An encouragement to all "ordinary disciples"

Ananias Was Willing

"Here I am." - I am ready and willing to do what You want - **Acts 9:10-12**

Went on his way - **Acts 9:17**

True of most people, to a degree most are interested in some kind of God and want to please Him

Most people, in most situations want to do the right thing.

We are like Ananias; in that we want to do what God commands.

He was "devout" - **Acts 22:12**

God sees the good in every person.

Why would He send His Son to die if people were a hopeless cause?

God knew what Ananias had to offer (even if Ananias or others did not know) & that he was ready
for service -- knew He had work for him to do.

God knows what good people can do, if are simply challenged to do it.

We need to be more like God in this regard.

People want to hear from the Lord and they want to do what He asks.

Many, though, like Ananias, are not so sure once the command is given.

Ananias Was Arguing With The Lord

Basically, he says "Lord you don't know Saul like I do! - **Acts 9:13-14**

He came here to do harm and arrest people like me.

Now you want me to walk into his place and offer myself up?

You don't know what you are asking!"

Amazing, man so willing to respond is so hesitant to do what Lord wants.

Our love & trust for God, is sometimes overcome when we must experience things we do not like.

We tell God things He "doesn't know" about our life and why He should change things for me.

Often happens when one finds Bible instructions that they disagree with.

He really doesn't mean what He wrote, it must mean something else

Some people do this with baptism. They want to be saved by a prayer of faith, then read baptism
is required for salvation - **Acts 22:16; Acts 2:38**

But they will say "it really doesn't mean that."

Like Ananias, they try to tell God what He really needs to know.

This happens in many other ways as well.

Love your neighbor - until my neighbor acts ugly toward me.

Forgive those who sin against me - until the sin is really bad.

On the list can go.

We often meet God's clear commands with reasons they cannot be obeyed.

Like Ananias, I sometimes tell God what He needs to know.

Ananias Was Obedient

The Lord just says, "Go!" and leaves it at that - **Acts 9:15-16**

God doesn't write Ananias off as a lost cause.

Puts His foot down and tells willing man that he must also be obedient

Sometimes people think mistakes they made ruined chance to serve God.

That isn't true.

No matter how much or long you have argued with the Lord, He still wants you to "go" and do what He asks.

You can be just as good a servant as Ananias if you will believe in yourself as much as God does.

Ananias, after the discussion, finally went to Saul - **Acts 9:17**

God said, "Go," & this humble servant went.

Went when Lord told him to go. Went where the Lord told him to go. Did what the Lord told him to do.

A noble & beautiful example of a surrendered life.

Imagine what that was like.

Ananias knew, as a leader in the Christian community in Damascus, he was probably high on Saul's list of people to arrest.

So, uncertain or maybe even afraid, Ananias knocked on the door.

That took great courage and trust in the Lord.

This is what happens when you stop arguing and start obeying.

None of your family may have been baptized for the remission of sins.

It may take great courage to break with tradition and do what the Lord commands. You may lose friends, or family members will be angry.

As Ananias, uncertain & afraid, must trust the Lord and do what He says.

You may not have a neighbor who is easy to love.

But, God wants His children to stand out, not because they are always right, but because they always love.

And, you may have a neighbor that you need to forgive.

Stop arguing and do the hard thing, the right thing and forgive that neighbor anyway.

Ananias Was Achieving

I can only imagine the look on Ananias' face when Saul was baptized - **Acts 9:18-19**

The arch enemy of Christ.

The man who had led the attack against the church in Jerusalem.

Had single-handedly chased most of the Christians out of that city.

Came to Damascus to do more damage, surrenders & is baptized.

Ananias must have marveled, just as we would, that God could reach a man like that with His grace.

Ananias must have realized that someone bigger than he had done all this.

He knew it was the Lord and His awesome ability to save that made Saul a servant of the King.

He experienced success because he trusted God and obeyed.

But he knew the success was from God.

It is important to look at the process that brought this success.

It starts with a willing man, someone who wants to know God and do what is right.

It continues through the weak faith of one who argues, trying to teach the Lord what "He needs to know."

It finds its success, though, when this person of faith, even weak faith, acts on his faith and obeys.

Ananias probably didn't relish the idea of walking into Saul's place and trying to convert this enemy of Christ.

But his obedience made all the difference in Saul's life, and in the lives of countless thousands and millions who have come to Christ because of the apostle's teaching.

Ananias Was Faithful

Faithful to "love"

Addresses Saul as "Brother Saul."

Lays hands on Saul – sight - **Acts 9:12**

Faithful to "loyalty" - **Acts 9:17**

Lord sent me -- imagine telling "Saul" the Jesus was the Lord.

Unwavering loyalty to the Lord.

Faithful to "humility"

No mention of self, or praise for self

Jesus was clearly at the center of his life, message & work.

Ananias -- nothing more than a tool

Be A Disciple

Trust The Lord:

Ananias was able to achieve so much because he trusted in God.

Could've dismissed this task as impossible, beyond his abilities, too risky

But, he trusted the Lord and finally went and the history of the church was forever changed. We, too, need to trust the Lord, even when (maybe especially when) it doesn't make good sense to us.

Just do what God asks and let Him create the results.

Submit To The Lord:

Ananias could have trusted God and then not gone to Saul.

But, he went beyond listening to God, or even trusting Him. He trusted to the point of obedience.

Yes, like us, he argued with God, looking for an excuse to get him out of this job, but, ultimately he obeyed, and God did great things.

So, stop arguing with God, and just do what He says.

Trust in Him, be baptized into His Son, as Saul was, and watch the good that the Lord will do.

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