

WORSHIP

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Have You Met Ananias?

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Acts 9:10-22

Who was Ananias? What was his background? Well, very little detail is given to us regarding who he was or what his background may have been. We know he was a Jewish disciple and he lived in Damascus. Some believe he may have been among the 72 disciples recorded in Luke 10:17. Maybe he was among those Jews in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. I think it is safe for us to assume he would have held influence in the church in Damascus, considering the nature of the situation he was involved in, the conversion of Saul. To be frank, who he was and what his role may have been in the local church has no bearing on the lessons his story provides us. All we need to know about him is provided in our text. He was a disciple that lived in Damascus, and he obeyed the Lord Jesus in a hard matter. With this stated I want to share three lessons I've identified that his story provides for us.



Lesson 1: how we feel about a matter is never an excuse for disobeying the word of God.

The Lord Jesus was instructing Ananias to do something that went totally against conventional wisdom, human experience, totally against what made sense given Saul's past. This is evident by the fact that Ananias, caught off guard by the Lord's request, raises objection. **V13** It is necessary that we do not gloss over the fact that Ananias' objection was based on what he had heard, not what he, himself, had experienced. Be careful Church in deciding how you will treat others based solely on what you have heard. Ananias was perplexed, at a minimum, by the Lord's instruction, but nonetheless he was obligated to obey. How you feel about a matter is never an excuse for disobeying God's word.

Prov 3:5 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding."

Isa 55:8-9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Luke 6:46 "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?"

Church, it is always in our best interest to obey God's word regardless of how we feel about it.

Lesson 2: Enthusiasm is not a prerequisite to obedience. V15 We can safely assume by Ananias' response to God's instruction that he had concerns, valid concerns might I say. Saul was a scoundrel, a professed and zealous enemy of the church. And Ananias was very aware



of his past dealings towards followers of Christ and that he was on his way to heap the same persecution upon disciples in Damascus. His reluctance was warranted. It was valid, but it was still not a reason for disobedience. Enthusiasm is not required for obedience. One can absolutely lack it and still obey! (expound, it is safe to assume that Ananias didn't kick the door down trying to get to Saul...) Here's my challenge to us, what decision or action have you delayed that you are sure God word is calling you to? I tell you today to do it and do it now, whether you are excited about it or not.

Micah 6:8 "No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." **NLT**

1 Sam 15:22 "And Samuel said, "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams." The songwriter got it right! Trust and obey for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus. Than to trust and obey! Ananias teach us this.

Lesson 3: Ananias teaches us how to move towards love. We must look a little harder to see this lesson, but it is here. **V17** Can you imagine how lonely Saul felt. How confused and extremely disappointed in himself he may have been. He had been wrong in his belief, foolish in his effort and now he was blind, literally. And one from the very community he had been working tirelessly to eliminate comes to his aid and touched him. I can only imagine how



sweet, how much of a relief Ananias' touch and the words from his mouth, felt and sounded to Saul. He touched him and called him "Brother". Acknowledging his place in the community, validating his call, letting him know he was not alone in his experience. Church, that's love, and this act of love, spawned by obedience, changed the course of the church. Ananias could have never imagined what Paul would accomplish for and what his witness would mean to the spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ. But here we are. And I, with great confidence, can attribute our being in this very place at this very moment to this act of obedient love by Ananias towards Saul. Never take for granted how one act of obedience or disobedience, for that matter, to God's word on your part could literally change the course of the world.

