

## **Ananias – Just an Ordinary Believer**

*“Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, “Ananias.” And he said, “Here I am, Lord.”*

*11 So the Lord said to him, “Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. 12 And in a vision, he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight.”*

*13 Then Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. 14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name.”*

*15 But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. 16 For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.”*

*17 And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” 18 Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.” Acts 9:10-18*

### **Who Was Ananias?**

1. The name Ananias means *“protected by the Lord.”*
2. He was not in a pulpit ministry, but a disciple.
3. There is no such thing as a “part time” minister.
4. He was a church member and worker who used by the Lord to point Saul in the right direction.
5. Ananias is called a “certain” disciple because he will be used to direct one of God’s most important ministers (Acts 22:12-13).
6. Like any Spirit-filled believer, Ananias received a vision (Acts 2:17) then was obedient.
7. Ananias also understood grace, laid hands on Saul and kept it secret. Many others would be proud of their role in laying hands on such an important man, then run and tell everyone.

### **The Problem with Saul**

1. God wanted Saul to learn early the power of anyone who is dedicated to the Lord.
2. In his arrogance, Saul might have expected a minister from the local church, Peter, John or one of the original disciples to come and lay hands on him.
3. A man's position and power before he is born again is of no value to the Lord.
4. God will spend much time sweating out the background and pride of Saul of Tarsus as he did Moses or anyone.
5. Just as Moses learned humility in the backside of the wilderness, so will Saul who became the apostle Paul.

***“So the Lord said to him, “Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying.” (vs. 11)***

1. All streets in Damascus wind and curve except for one street which is straight and called Straight.
2. Saul was still praying because he had not heard any more from the Lord.

***“And in a vision, he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight.” (vs. 12)***

1. In a vision, God prepared both the one who would be prayed for and the one who would do the praying.
2. God is good to verify his will on both people.
3. He did this already with Peter and Cornelius when the new birth and infilling came to Caesarea in chapter ten.

***“Then Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem.” (vs. 13)***

1. Paul saturated the city of Jerusalem with his evil toward believers. His reputation spread to many cities.
2. Ananias had also heard of the coming persecution to the saints at Damascus.

***“And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name.” (vs. 14)***

1. Ananias' answer is typical of many God speaks to.
2. He immediately tells God of the *circumstances*.

***“But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.” (vs. 15)***

1. God told Ananias just to do what he was told to do.
2. Saul will “bare” to the Lord's name.
  - a. Greek βασιτάζω means to “lift with the hands a flag or standard.”

- b. God told Ananias something people will not see for fifteen years.
- c. Paul would carry the gospel to the Gentiles, the Romans, and the Greeks.
- d. He would also carry the gospel to kings, Nero and Agrippa.
- e. Finally, he would carry redemption to the children of Israel, the religious leaders of Gentile capitals, and Jerusalem.

***“And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” (vs. 17)***

- 1. We have one of the first recorded cases of laying on of hands by someone who is not considered to be the five-fold ministry.
- 2. Peter and John have laid hands on the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17), but until now, no layman has used this ministry.
- 3. This ministry is available to all believers (Mark 16:18).
- 4. Ananias called Saul “brother.”

### **Lessons From Ananias**

- 1. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are available to all (1 Corinthians 12:7).
- 2. The Holy Spirit can guide and lead any believer to help or correct another believer.
- 3. Ananias might have been the only one who would go to Saul. The other ministers would not trust Saul.
- 4. Ministers cannot receive correction or be open to hear the Holy Spirit’s leading only from other ministers.
- 5. Ananias was not afraid to confront Saul even though he knew of his history against the Church.
- 6. Saul was not afraid to receive guidance from Ananias though he was unknown to him and most others.
- 7. God led Ananias by a vision just as Peter received a vision on the housetops and Paul would later receive a vision at Troas.

### **Other Bible Examples**

- 1. 2 Kings 5 – Naaman’s servant **house girl** told him Elisha, in Samaria, could heal him of his leprosy. A **messenger** was sent out to Naaman by Elisha – not Elisha himself. Naaman’s **servant** talked sense into him to go into the waters of Jordan.
- 2. Paul was approached and told not to go to Jerusalem by ordinary believers, then by four daughters of Phillip, before the prophet Agabus told him the same thing.