

Episode: God and His Family No. 13

Narrator: Ananias of Damascus

Primary Scriptures: Acts 9:10-19

Story Summary: Ananias is scared to help Saul

Location: Israel

Time: circa 35 AD

Suggested Memory Scriptures: Acts 9:15

The early church members were persecuted in Jerusalem, so many of them scattered to other cities where they would be further from the authorities. Some of them landed in Damascus, Syria, about 150 miles away. Saul was a rising star in the Jerusalem leadership and he hated the Christians. He obtained the right to go to Damascus and bring back any Jesus followers as prisoners. On the way, Saul was blinded by the light of Jesus. Jesus sent him to Damascus where he fasted for three days while being blind.

The Lord came to Ananias in a vision and commanded him to go to Saul and heal him from his blindness. Ananias was understandably tentative about going. He reminded the Lord about all the harm Saul had done and the danger he, and the other Christians in Damascus, would be in if Saul was healed. The Lord commanded Ananias to go, he went, Saul was healed and the soon-to-be apostle Paul would change the world. This story of Ananias is told in Acts 9:10-19.

Why did the Lord choose Ananias? Why didn't the Lord use another person or another method to heal Paul? Why didn't the Lord use one of the big-named apostles like Peter or John? At least some of the answers might be found in Acts 22:1-21 when Paul is in Jerusalem after his Third Missionary Journey. In his speech, Paul said Ananias was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by the Jews in Damascus. Paul gave a quick summary of the teaching Ananias gave him, and his demands for Paul to be baptized, have his sins washed away, and call on the name of the Lord.

Ananias was prepared by years of study. He had earned a good reputation. He was a believer who was capable of instructing new believers. And, he was filled by the Holy Spirit. He was ready! And, when Jesus called, he was willing to go do what Jesus wanted him to do. Because Ananias was able and willing, he became one of the most influential men in the history of the Church.

It's a good model. Become a follower of Jesus. Know the Scriptures and follow them. Attain a good reputation. And, when Jesus says, "Go!" ...go!