

A Disciple Like Ananias

The Lord's church had its beginnings in the city of Jerusalem. Jesus, before ascending into heaven, told his apostles they would be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and into the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:8). As the borders of the kingdom began to spread, Saul, a zealous Pharisee and strict follower of the Law of Moses did not have any regard for this newly found religion in his homeland. As a result, Saul was granted permission by the High Priest, to bring those followers of this new religion back to Jerusalem and imprison them. Saul made havoc of the Lord's people. As he is traveling to Damascus to fulfill his treacherous task, he is met by the Lord. The Lord told Saul to go into the city and look for a man named Ananias and this man would tell Saul what he needed to do.

There were thousands of Christians available and the Lord chose Ananias to teach Saul of His way. At first, Ananias was hesitant because he knew of Saul's reputation, but the Lord told Ananias that Saul would be His chosen vessel (Acts 9:15). Ananias taught Saul and he was baptized into Christ (Acts 22:16). There are some valuable lessons we can learn from Ananias.

First, we must always be ready to help souls find the way of truth. Ananias took the opportunity presented to him and taught Saul the gospel message. If the Lord providentially sent someone our way today, could we teach them like Ananias taught Saul?

Second, although Ananias was hesitant, he still fulfilled the will of the Lord. Sometimes we will be hesitant to carry out the Lord's work as well. We will make excuses about how people do not want to hear, or the world is so evil that no one wants to hear the gospel and we will become hesitant in carrying out the Great Commission. Like Ananias, we need to overcome our hesitancy and put God's will first.

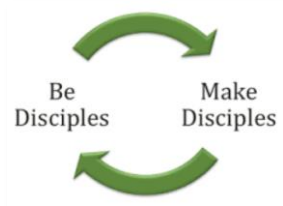
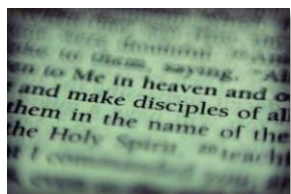
Third, Ananias helped launch the life of one of the greatest men to ever carry the gospel. When we teach others the gospel, we never know how that person's life will touch the lives of others. If we do not seize the opportunity like Ananias, we may be hindering the spreading of the borders of God's kingdom.

Finally, after Saul was converted Ananias put him in contact with the church at Damascus. The very people Saul was on his way to persecute, he now joins together with them. Immediately he began to preach Christ in the synagogues. The church would benefit greatly today if we could make it a priority for newly converted souls to become soul winners. It should be one of the top expectations of Christians when

they put on Christ in baptism. Making evangelism a priority among new converts will keep the church from being lulled asleep.

Thank God Ananias was a disciple who took the time to teach Saul. May we be followers of Jesus like Ananias was.

K.A. Pugh



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