



GROWTH

Acts 7-12

Conversations That Matter: Ananias

Uncomfortable: Acts 9:1-31

Scene 1 - Paul's journey to Damascus (1-9)

Scene 2 - Ananias' Assignment (10-19a)

- A. God's Assignment for Ananias - What? (10-12)
- B. The Response of Ananias - Fear (13-14)
- C. God gives him the reason for asking Ananias to meet with Paul (Why?) - Paul is a chosen instrument (15-16)
- D. Ananias obeys God and visits Paul/Paul is filled with the Holy Spirit (17-19a)

Scene 3 - Paul in the synagogue (19b-22)

- A. Proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God (20)
- B. Increased in Strength (22a)
- C. Confounded the Jews with his teaching about Jesus (22b)

Scene 4 - Plot to kill Paul/Paul's Escape (23-25)

Scene 5 - Paul returns to Jerusalem (26-31)

- A. Disciples are fearful/Barnabas validates Paul (26-27)
- B. Paul Preaches in Jerusalem/Hellenists try to kill him (28-29)
- C. The Response of the Church/Growth of the Church (30-31)

Discussion Questions

1. Read Acts 9:10-18. Have you ever felt God calling you like he did Ananias to do something or go somewhere but you were hesitant or afraid to obey (see vv. 13-14)? How did you respond?
2. Read Acts 9:26-30. Saul was persecuted for speaking boldly about Jesus, but the other disciples supported him. Have you ever experienced persecution for your faith? Have you supported a fellow believer when they were enduring oppression? What are some meaningful ways people have supported you during tough times?
3. Read Philippians 1:27-28. In these verses what three ways does Paul teach the church how to protect and support each other when we take a stand for Christ?
4. Pray together asking God to fill your heart with courage in the face of hardship and that you will grow in your ability and passion to encourage each other consistently to have Christ-centered courage.
5. Assignment: Send a letter or a text, or make a phone call to encourage someone in their walk with God.

Some of these questions are adapted from the Abide Bible

Acts 9:1-31: But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

³ Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. ⁴ And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" ⁵ And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ⁶ But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." ⁷ The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. ⁸ Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹ And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

¹⁰ Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." ¹¹ And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, ¹² and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." ¹³ But Ananias answered, "**Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at 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 instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. ¹⁶ For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.**" ¹⁷ So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "**Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.**" ¹⁸ And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized;

¹⁹ For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. ²⁰ And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God." ²¹ And all who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name? And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests?" ²² But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

²³ When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, ²⁴ but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night in order to kill him, ²⁵ but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket. Saul in Jerusalem

²⁶ And when he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples. And they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. ²⁷ But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. ²⁸ So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. ²⁹ And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists. But they were seeking to kill him. ³⁰ And when the brothers learned this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

³¹ So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.

Philippians 1:27-28 let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.



L.I.F.E. Group Leader's Guide

Main Idea: God sometimes gives us uncomfortable assignments. God's interaction about the assignment he gave to Ananias teaches us so much about how he has placed people in our lives with assignments to step in the intersections of redemption in our lives. Many of these assignments God gives us come with hesitation, and sometimes fear, but God has promised us to walk beside us in these moments, and given us each other to encourage each other through these steps of faith.

Looking Back: Last week's focus was on Philip's Incredible ministry with the people of Samaria. Have you ever stepped into a situation that God lined up like he did with Philip? Share about your experience.

Icebreaker #1: Have you ever had a moment where somebody sharing their testimony about becoming a follower of Jesus and you were amazed at their story of the their intersection of redemption? Do you see the amazing moments of your story?

Study Question #1: Read Acts 9:10-18. Have you ever felt God calling you like he did Ananias to do something or go somewhere but you were hesitant or afraid to obey (see vv. 13-14)? How did you respond?

Study Question #2: Read Acts 9:26-30. Saul was persecuted for speaking boldly about Jesus, but the other disciples supported him. Have you ever experienced persecution for your faith? Have you supported a fellow believer when they were enduring oppression? What are some meaningful ways people have supported you during tough times?

Study Question #3: Read Philippians 1:27-28. In these verses what three ways does Paul teaches the church how to protect and support each other when we take a stand for Christ?

Praying Together: Pray together asking God to fill your heart with courage in the face of hardship and that you will grow in your ability and passion to encourage each other consistently to have Christ-centered courage.

Assignment: Send a letter or a text, or make a phone call to encourage someone in their walk with God.

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS (CRU)

- 1) What does this passage tell you about God and His Character?
- 2) What does this passage tell you about People?
- 3) What does this passage tell you about His relationship with people?
- 4) How might the Holy Spirit be prompting you to live differently?

