

# Ananias – just ‘a’ disciple

Christ Church: 17<sup>th</sup> July 2022 10.00 am. & online  
Acts 9:1-19; 22:12-16

This is the famous story of Saul’s conversion. He is one of the most important people in the New Testament, and Luke tells us here how his incredible ministry started. And what a story! Conversion means turning around and this was a huge turnaround.

I find it hard to identify with Saul who became Paul. He is a super saint. But there is another person in this story: Ananias. Today I want to focus on him.

There are three Ananias’ in Acts. In Acts 5 there is the husband of Sapphira and a nasty piece of work. In Acts 23 and 24 it’s the name of the High Priest. But this is a different Ananias in our story. We know nothing about him other than these verses and where Paul retells the story in Acts 22. Three things we do know about him:

## 1: A disciple

In Acts 9 all we have to describe Ananias is verse 10. In Acts 22 Paul retells the story to a crowd 22:12. He describes Ananias as devout, observer of the law, highly respected by the Jews.

But Luke describes him as ‘a’ disciple. Note the word ‘a’. Paul later describes him as ‘a’ man. He wasn’t ‘the’ disciple, the leader of the disciples, the great evangelist, the important disciple, a famous disciple. He was just ‘a’ disciple. You and I can identify with that.

That’s the point: God needed ‘a’ disciple to play a key role in this amazing story. But there are two more things that can be said about him, that could therefore relate to any one of us too.

## 2: An ordinary but empowered disciple

This is Ananias from God’s perspective. The Lord called to him in a vision (verse 10). ‘Ananias!’ ‘Yes, Lord’, he answered. See verses 11,12. Jesus had chosen Saul to be his great evangelist (see verse 15) – but he had chosen Ananias too!

But not only had he chosen Ananias, he gave him the power to do this special piece of work. He gave him the power to heal (verse 18), and to prophesy (22:13-15). But he was still only ‘a’ disciple. See the impact of God’s power in ‘a’ disciple!

## 3: A frightened but obedient disciple

This is Ananias from a human perspective. Read 9:13,14. Imagine God asks you to go and tell Putin that he is wicked and God will judge him. Remember the story of Nathan being told by God to drop by on David and tell him he is an adulterer and a murderer. I’d be terrified and Ananias certainly was. This looked like certain death.

But he was obedient. ‘Then Ananias went’, (9:17,18). He calls Saul ‘brother’!

You might think this was the start of a successful career as a famous Christian. Not at all. We know nothing more about him. He was, after all, just ‘a’ disciple. Just like you, just like me.

## So, what is ‘a’ disciple?

- 1 It’s a learner from a teacher. It’s someone who admits they’ve got a lot of learning to do. What are you learning from Jesus, day by day? What are you allowing him to teach you through his Word and through how you go about applying it? Do you wear L plates? Do you long to learn?
- 2 It’s a follower of a leader. It’s all about going places, of change, of being led by someone who is showing you the way. ‘Follow me’ said Jesus. How are you following this week? At work, at home, in church?
- 3 It’s someone ready for the unexpected. It’s all about being useable for the Master. Of being ready for when he might just pick on you to lead someone to Christ. And then never to do anything special again. Are you ready?

Would you own the title, ‘disciple of Jesus’? Will you seek to live out that calling this week? Are you ready for the unexpected? Anything can happen when God’s power, through the Holy Spirit, fills ‘a’ disciple.