

God uses ordinary people who are willing to be obedient in order to accomplish His extraordinary purposes. Ananias' obedience played a vital role in Saul's transformation into Paul, one of the greatest missionaries in history.

After Jesus' resurrection and ascension, He promised His followers the power of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:8 *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

The church began to grow rapidly through teaching, fellowship, prayer, and the work of the Holy Spirit. As the gospel spread, persecution increased. Stephen became the first Christian martyr, and Saul zealously pursued believers, believing he was serving God by eliminating followers of Jesus.

On the road to Damascus, Saul encountered the risen Christ. This personal encounter changed the direction of his life forever.

Key Truth: Knowing about Jesus is not the same as knowing Jesus. A genuine encounter with Christ produces transformation and a new purpose.

1. God Uses Ordinary People: Acts 9:10 *"In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias."* Ananias was not described as an apostle, prophet, or famous leader. He was simply a disciple. God often chooses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things. Throughout Scripture, God works through people who are willing to trust and obey Him.

Application: God is not looking for perfection; He is looking for obedience. Every believer has a role in God's kingdom. God can use anyone who is willing to say "yes" to Him.

2. God Goes Before Us: Acts 9:11–12 The Lord gave Ananias detailed instructions regarding where Saul was located and what was happening in his life. God had already prepared Saul's heart before Ananias arrived. Deuteronomy 31:8 *"The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."*

Key Truth: God prepares the way before He calls us to act.

Application: We often hesitate because we focus on our limitations. God's work does not depend on our ability. We are called to be willing vessels while God accomplishes His purposes.

3. Grace Is Bigger Than a Person's Past: Acts 9:13–14 Ananias knew Saul's reputation. Saul had persecuted Christians and caused great suffering. From a human perspective, Saul seemed like the least likely person to become a follower of Jesus. Yet God saw something different.

Acts 9:15 *"This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel."*

Key Truth: God sees potential where people see failure.

Application: We must not write people off because of their past. No one is beyond God's grace. God often transforms the people we least expect.

4. Following Jesus Comes with a Cost: Acts 9:16 *"I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."* God's plan for Paul included both purpose and suffering. Scripture never promises a trouble-free life for believers.

Acts 20:23 *"I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me."*

2 Timothy 3:12 *"In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."*

John 16:33 *"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

Key Truth - Following Jesus may cost us something, but not following Him costs everything.

Application: Faith does not eliminate hardship. God never promised comfort; He promised His presence. Our hope is found in Christ's victory and eternal life.

5. Obedience Changes Lives: Acts 9:17–19 - Ananias obeyed God and went to Saul. One of the most powerful moments in this passage is when Ananias addresses him as: *"Brother Saul."* Ananias no longer viewed Saul according to his past. He viewed him according to what God had done in his life. Saul received his sight, was filled with the Holy Spirit, and was baptized.

Key Truth - Our obedience can become part of someone else's testimony.

Application: God often uses simple acts of obedience to change lives. We must see people through the lens of God's grace. God can use us to help others take their next step toward Christ.

New Identity in Christ: 2 Corinthians 5:17 *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. The old has gone, the new is here!"*

Because of Jesus: We are forgiven. We are made new. We are called God's children. We are heirs of His promises.

Our past no longer defines us.

Discussion Questions:

1. What stands out most about Ananias' response to God's calling?
2. Why do you think Ananias hesitated to obey?
3. How does God's choice of Saul demonstrate the power of grace?
4. What misconceptions do people often have about following Jesus?
5. How does Jesus prepare believers for hardship and persecution?
6. Who might be a "Saul" in your life—someone God may be calling you to reach?
7. How can you become a more willing vessel for God's purposes?

Takeaways:

- God uses ordinary people for extraordinary purposes.
- God goes before us and prepares the way.
- No one is beyond God's grace.
- Following Jesus involves sacrifice and perseverance.
- Obedience opens the door for God to work in powerful ways.
- In Christ, we are made new and given a new purpose.

Weekly Challenge: Ask God to reveal one person He wants you to encourage, pray for, serve, or share Christ with this week. Trust that God has already gone before you and prepared the way.

The collage consists of five posters:

- CUMBERLAND FELLOWSHIP**
CFLife.Church
A photo of three people singing and worshipping on stage.
- July Love Your Neighbor**
TRAUMA INFORMED COMMUNITY ALLIANCE (TICA)
Collecting Hygiene Items:
shampoo
deodorant
toothpaste
toothbrush
soap
hand sanitizer
feminine products
- BAPTISM AT THE AMP**
JULY 22 | 6:00 PM
A blue poster with white text and a wave graphic.
- PASTOR TRACK**
SIGN-UP ON THE APP!
STARTS AUGUST 3, 2026 4:30PM
A poster with a blue background and a photo of a person.
- MEN'S FELLOWSHIP**
THURSDAY'S 6:30AM
CFTERRACE
A poster with a large orange circle and white text.

