

Aug 20, 2017



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Called To Proclaim Christ Acts 9:10-20

Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson examines the details of the mission of Ananias as he participated in the **Calling to Proclaim the Christ**. The study's aim is to show that sometimes God's call is to a general work, and sometimes it is specific and detailed. The study's application is to warn that we must not define a call so narrowly that it limits our awareness of and response to a call.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Lesson Introduction and Background

The text contains the words of the Lord in relation to Saul, or the Apostle Paul, as he would become known. They were spoken to Ananias, a follower of Jesus who lived in Damascus. He was unaware that while traveling to Damascus to thwart the efforts of the growing Christian church there, Saul had dramatically encountered the living Lord and been converted to Christ (Acts 9:1-9). The Lord spoke to Ananias, telling him to seek out Saul and pray for him that he might receive the sight he had lost when he met the Lord on the road. Understandably, Ananias was hesitant, for he was very familiar with the suffering Saul had inflicted on the believers in Jerusalem (Acts 9:10-14). The Lord's words assured Ananias that Saul now was a follower of Jesus and had been specially chosen by the Lord for an important task. That task was to bear the Lord's name "before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." In recounting his conversion later, Paul indicated that the Lord had given this message directly to him (Acts 26:16-17) and that Ananias had told him this as well (22:14-15). Thus, Ananias's words would have confirmed the Lord's call. While Paul, like Peter and the other apostles, would proclaim the gospel to their fellow Jews, Paul's ministry also would be to Gentiles and kings. Perhaps Paul's Roman citizenship and extensive learning especially prepared him for this wide ministry. In fact, in his three missionary journeys, he found the Gentiles for the most part more receptive to the gospel than his fellow Jews. While his ministry was always "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek [Gentile]" (Rom. 1:16), Paul became known as the apostle to the Gentiles (cf. Rom. 11:13; 1 Tim. 2:7). The revelation at his conversion that this would be the case must have been startling to Paul, as it would have been to any Jew. The relationship of Jews to Gentiles was an ongoing issue in the early church, and even Peter at one time succumbed to the notion that Jewish believers must separate even from believing Gentiles (cf. Gal. 2:11-14). Paul never wavered in his position. He understood that the gospel of grace is for all who believe, not just Jews, and he opposed even Peter when he wavered on the matter. Paul's commitment to the Gentile mission was unrelenting and uncompromising. No doubt much of this can be traced to the assurance he had from his conversion and from the affirmation of Ananias that this was what the Lord had chosen him to do. Paul would proclaim Christ to Gentiles in many places, but he would also speak for the Lord before Gentile rulers, most notably Agrippa and Caesar (Acts 25—26; 27:23-24). Those opportunities would come, however, only because of his suffering (9:16) and imprisonment. Paul was a chosen vessel for God. He had unique gifts and experiences that made him an effective missionary for Christ. But our text reminds us that Paul, like us, was merely a vessel. A vessel by itself is of little use. Only when it is filled does it serve its purpose. Like the great apostle, we must submit to the Lord and allow Him to fill us with the power, wisdom, and ability to serve Him.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

To proclaim the truth, you must know the One who is the truth

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

Lord, give us courage to speak out against the evils of our day; For only when the truth is known will sinners see a better way.

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

*The entirety of Your word is truth,
And every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever
(Ps 119:160 NKJV)*

(from "Our Daily Bread", Sept 17, 2017)

Series: God's Urgent Call

UNIT: Calls in the New Testament

NEXT WEEK

Called to Be Inclusive

(Acts 10:19-33)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Preparation for the Call (Acts 9:10-12)

Prepared by realizing that God works through people (10)

God prepares people so they can be witnesses (Acts 10:1-6, 19-20)

God prepares people so they can intercede (1 Sam 25:14-17, 32-34)

God prepares people so they can provide the conduit of healing (Acts 9:3-11)

God prepares through other's prayers for the receptiveness of God's word (Col 4:2-5)

Prepared by being available for God's use (10)

Available by first giving ourselves to God (2 Cor 8:5)

Available by submitting to God (2 Chron 30:8)

Available by offering ourselves to God as an instrument of righteousness (Rom 6:13)

Available by living for the Lord because we belong to Him (Rom 14:8)

Available by honoring God with our body (1 Cor 6:19-20)

Prepared by following God's instructions (11-12)

Following God's instructions through diligently studying His Word that testifies about His Son Jesus (John 5:39)

Following God's instructions through letting the Bible prove who Jesus is - the Savior of the world (Acts 17:2-3)

Following God's instructions through examining the Bible every day to know the truth about God (Acts 17:11)

Following God's instructions through knowing the Scriptures were written to provide knowledge and encouragement (Rom 15:4)

Following God's instructions through knowing the Scriptures are able to make us wise (2 Tim 3:15)

Objections to the Call (Acts 9:13-15)

Don't fear man (13-14)

Fear God, not man, because God can destroy the body and soul (Matt 10:28)

Don't fear, be ready to die if necessary and pray for God's will to be done (Acts 21:13-14)

Don't fear or worry but keep the faith (2 Tim 4:6-8)

Don't fear, just be faithful and the reward is the crown of life (Rev 2:10)

Don't fear, trust God (John 14:1)

Relent to the call (15)

Relent to please God (1 Sam 15:22)

To relent and be submissive comes from God (James 3:17)

Relent to those in authority over us (1 Peter 5:5)

Obedience to the Call (Acts 9:16-20)

Obedience despite delays in knowing details (16)

God sometimes delays His answers because His timing is not man's timing (Isa 55:8-9)

God sometimes delays His answers to display His faithfulness (Heb 10:23)

God sometimes delays His answers because He is patient (Ps 86:15)

Obedience is always the right response to God's instructions (17)

Obedience because our response should be out of love for God because if we love God, we will obey Him (John 14:15)

Obedience because our response is an obligation to live by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:12-14)

Obedience because our response should be to be obedient and serve God regardless of the circumstances (Dan 3:16-18)

Obedience because our response should be to offer our whole selves as living sacrifices to God (Rom 12:1)

Obedience because our response should be to throw off everything that hinders and serve God (Heb 12:1-2)

Obedience because our response should be to be thankful and worship God (Heb 12:28)

Deliverance for the call (18)

Deliverance through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit (2 Thess 2:13-14)

Deliverance through grace (2 Tim 1:8-9)

As God delivered those in the Old Testament, He will deliver us (2 Peter 2:9)

God delivers even into our old age (Isaiah 46:4)

God has always delivered and will continue to do so (2 Cor. 1:10)

Empowerment through strength (19)

Strength through Jesus (Phil 4:13)

Strength through enlightenment and power (Eph 1:18-19)

Strength through God's power during human weaknesses (2 Cor 12:10)

Strength for endurance and patience (Col 1:11)

Empowerment through provision of message (20)

Provision of the message from the Holy Spirit (Luke 12:12)

Provision of the message that no one can contradict (Luke 21:15)

Provision of the message through being filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:8)

Provision of the message expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words (1 Cor 2:13)

Provision of the message through the Spirit's wisdom and revelation (Eph 1:17)