

NOTES

WARM-UP

- How would you want to be introduced to someone?
- What is one encouraging remark you received from someone? How did it affect you?
- Who is one person you are close to within the church? Tell us something about him/her.

WORD

¹⁰ In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord," he answered. ¹¹ The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. ¹² In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight." ¹³ "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name." ¹⁵ But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name." ¹⁷ Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord---Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here---has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸ Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, ¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength. Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. **Acts 9:10-19**

God speaks to us in different ways. Saul heard God's audible voice, while God spoke to Ananias through a vision. These encounters radically change their way of life and even charged them with impossibilities that are hard to take. This is how powerful the voice of God is. He speaks not only to those who believe but even to those whom He called for His purpose while they are still in their unbelief. How does the voice of God impact ordinary people like us?

1

Changed by the voice of God

¹ Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as

prisoners to Jerusalem. ³ As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" ⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁶ "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." ACTS 9:1-6

Saul's radical move to persecute Christians paved the way for the Lord to radically change his heart. His encounter with the Lord Jesus made him realize that what he was believing was a lie. It changed him from the murderer Saul to Paul, an apostle of God to the gentiles. Truth can indeed set us free if we will allow the Lord to speak to our life. Are there areas in your life that which God is speaking truth through His word? How would it change you if you would follow it?

2 Charged by the voice of God

¹³ "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name." ACTS 9:13,14

After a powerful encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus, Saul who later will become the Apostle Paul was instructed by God to wait in the house of Judas on Straight Street. In this critical moment for Saul, God used a disciple named Ananias, not an apostle or a preacher, to help and disciple Saul. The voice of God ministers to us and in the same manner, He uses us to minister to others. It may be an impossible situation as we can see it but trusting His voice will lead us in witnessing His great power unfold. Is there a situation in your life that seems impossible? Let us trust God that as He instructs us, He will give us the grace to move in faith to obey His instructions. Surely, it will not just be a blessing to us but to others as well.

APPLICATION

- How would you feel if you received words that speak of God's great destiny for your life?
- What practical things can you do this week to intently make time in quieting yourself and devoting your time to God's word?
- What ideas do you have on how you can speak hope and destiny to others? Can you share one of them?

PRAYER

- Pray that each person in the group will have the courage, words, and faith to share what God has done in their lives with others.
- Pray for a deeper hunger for the word of God that you may know Him better.
- Within your group, pray and speak God's purpose and blessing for each other.



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