

January 25, 2015

SETTING A NEW DIRECTION FOR LIFE

Living In True Fulfillment

Acts 9:1-20

The New Year is always associated with making new resolutions and establishing goals to bring about desired change in one's life. It is an opportunity to examine the past and develop plans for better decision making in the future. In the great story about the transformation of Saul we also see the character and faith of a man named Ananias. In these short verses we have a model of the life God desires for us to live. Let's discover the action we must take to follow this example and honor the Lord with our lives.

1. We find our identity as a follower of Jesus.

"In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias." **Acts 9:10**

"A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there."

Acts 22:12 (NIV)

"Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are My disciples." **John 13:35 (NLT)**

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." **Galatians 2:20**

2. We attune our lives to the voice of Jesus.

"The Lord called to him in a vision, 'Ananias!' 'Yes, Lord,' he answered. 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. In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.'" **Acts 9:10-12 (NIV)**

"While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased. Listen to Him!'" **Matthew 17:5 (NIV)**

"My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me."

John 10:27 (NIV)

3. We share our fears and concerns to Jesus.

"'Lord,' Ananias answered, 'I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on Your name.'" **Acts 9:13-14 (NIV)**

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." **1 Peter 5:6-7 (NIV)**

"Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about what happens to you." **1 Peter 5:7 (NLT)**

4. We allow the Lord to clarify His call and purpose.

"But the Lord said to Ananias, 'Go! This man is My chosen instrument to carry My name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for My name.'" **Acts 9:15-16 (NIV)**

"Teach me Your way, O Lord, and I will walk in Your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear Your name." **Psalms 86:11**

"'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,' declares the Lord. 'As the heavens are higher than the

earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.’” **Isaiah 55:8-9 (NIV)**

“My purpose is to give life in all its fullness.” **John 10:10 (NLT)**

5. We walk in obedience and minister in His power.

“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.’” **Acts 9:17**

“For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.” **2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV)**

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.” **Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)**

6. We allow Jesus to use us for His glory.

“Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized...” **Acts 9:18 (NIV)**

“If you keep yourself pure, you will be a utensil God can use for His purpose. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work.” **2 Timothy 2:21 (NLT)**

“Now glory be to God! By His mighty power at work within us, He is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope. May He be given glory in the church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever through endless ages. Amen.”

Ephesians 3:20-21 (NLT)