



## The Acts of the Spirit

GATHERING THE CHURCH

# ACTS 8:10-19

"THE CONVERSION"

OCTOBER 29, 2023

## CONTEXT

The Book of Acts is the theological history of the Church. In the previous weeks, we explored how God's people (the Church) have become where heaven and earth meet. The Church is multiplying rapidly, and with it, opposition from the outside and obstacles from within. Despite the opposition, these followers of Christ are sown, not scattered, into areas and people groups in need of hearing the Gospel.

## SERMON SUMMARY

Pastor Joey preached about the conversion of Saul because of the ordinary and faithful obedience of Ananias. This story is not only the turning point in the early Church but the whole world. Saul (later more prominently known by his Greek name, Paul) is arguably one of the most influential persons in history, and Ananias is never heard about again. But without Ananias' faithful and ordinary obedience, we cannot know how God would have accomplished his redemptive plan.

We never know when our faithful witness will be the hinge around which someone else life pivots.

Pastor Joey admonished us to learn from our brother, Ananias in the following ways:

- See our purpose: As ordinary people, we are God's agents of transformational change in others' lives.
- Hear God's voice: As ordinary people, we must attune ourselves to hear God's direction as to where he wants us to witness about him.
- Be willing to Act: As ordinary people, we must act in the face of risk/fear to see God change people's lives.

When we act in the power of the Holy Spirit in these three ways, we can expect, like Ananias, to be the agent of change in the lives of others AND for the course of human history.



# ACTS 9:10-19

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## DISCUSSION

### Expand Your Awareness

- Pastor Joey emphasized how God uses seemingly ordinary people to create pivotal turning points in our lives.
- Take a moment to tell a story about a turning point in your life and how ordinary people or things impacted you.
- What could have happened in your life had they not interacted with you in that time and space?

### Extract the Truth:

Pastor Joey highlighted that despite God being the one who changes people's hearts with the Gospel, his method of doing so ALWAYS includes using an ordinary person as the deliverer of the message. Let's investigate Ananias's involvement in this story.

### Read Acts 9:10-19

- What jumps out to you from the text?

Pastor Joey said God uses people who SEE their larger purpose, HEAR his direction, and are WILLING to take action despite risk.

- What do you see as evidence of Ananias' clear grasp of his purpose to share the good news of new life in Jesus?
- Where do you see evidence of Ananias' listening to Jesus' voice and direction?
- Where do you see evidence of Ananias' willingness to take action despite the risk?

### Explore Your Experience

We often believe that as ordinary people, we cannot have that same transformational impact on others that Ananias had, so we avoid making ourselves available to others. To change this, we must focus our awareness on the mental, emotional, and circumstantial obstacles that get in our way of being God's agents of change.



*This document can be used for either personal or group reflection.*

*Group facilitator: you do not need to ask every question but can select the best ones for your group dynamic.*



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- What mental obstacles keep us from seeing our larger purpose as God's change agent in others?
- What life circumstances get in the way of hearing Jesus's direction?
- What emotions often paralyze us from acting in the face of risk?
- Now that we are aware of those things, how does becoming aware of them help us to be no longer controlled by them?

## Experience Transformation

Experiencing Transformation requires choosing, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to adopt a new way of thinking, feeling, and acting in the world. Because Christ has reconciled us to himself, we can now put on new selves, becoming agents of change in the world around us.

- Do you want to be more useful in God's kingdom? Then, what needs to change about your thinking to see yourself as God's change agent?
- Do you want to hear more of God's voice of direction? Then, what needs to change about your daily actions to better hear God's voice of direction?
- Do you want to share your faith in the face of risk? Then, what emotions do you need to challenge to be able to embrace sharing your faith with others?

## Engage the World

- Pastor Joey said that to be like Ananias, we must ask ourselves, if given the opportunity to share the Gospel, do I know what to say or do? `

If the answer is no, then we should equip ourselves with the skills to speak about Jesus. One easy way to do so is by joining a Life2Life group starting soon at Faith Church. For more information, please visit [faithchurchindy.com/life2life](http://faithchurchindy.com/life2life).

If the answer is yes, then we should focus on hearing God's direction and taking action.

- Which category do you think you fall under? And what next step is God prompting you to do today?



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## Closing Thought:

Read Romans 10:13-15

" For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them if no one is sent?"

## Pray For:

- Awareness of how God wants to use you in the lives of others.
- The silence and pace to hear God's voice & direction.
- A willingness to take action in the face of risk.



**PREPARE FOR  
NEXT WEEK:**

Read Acts 9:19-25