

## Why Send Ananias?

*John Isaac Edwards*

In Acts 9:10-11, we read of the occasion where the Lord sent a certain disciple named Ananias unto Saul of Tarsus. It occurred to me that if some things said today are true, it would have been entirely unnecessary for the Lord to send Ananias to Saul. Thus we ask, *Why send Ananias...*

**1) *If Too Bad To Be Saved?*** Some may think they have been too bad to be saved. If so, why send Ananias? Saul was among the worst. When the blood of Stephen was being shed, Saul was standing by, consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him (Acts 7:58; 22:20). “As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison” (Acts 8:3). He said, “And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women” (Acts 22:4). He wrote Timothy, “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” (1 Tim. 1:15). If Saul, the chiefest of sinners, could be saved, then you have not been too bad to be saved!

**2) *If Saved By Grace Alone, Without Doing Anything?*** I met a man recently who tried to tell me that we are saved by the grace of God alone, without us doing anything. If that be true, why send Ananias? When Saul asked, “...Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?...” (Acts 9:6), why didn’t the Lord tell him he was already saved by grace alone, and there was nothing for him to do? Why was he told, “...Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do” (Acts 9:6)? Why would Ananias tell him “...all things which are appointed for thee to do” (Acts 22:10)? This same individual suggested to me that Saul was saved when he fell off his horse! I asked him how he knew it was a horse and not a mule or a donkey. If you read the text, there is no mention of a horse and not a word said about salvation by grace alone!

**3) *If Saved By Prayer?*** Many today are told that to be saved they just need to pray. Where was anyone in the New Testament who was not a child of God ever told to pray for salvation? “Pray the sinner’s prayer” is the plea of the day, yet Saul was not saved by

prayer! No need to send Ananias, if saved by prayer, “...for, behold, he prayeth” (Acts 9:11)!

**4) *If Saved By Zeal?*** It takes more than being zealous to be saved! Saul “...was zealous toward God...” (Acts 22:3). In fact, he was “...exceedingly zealous...” (Gal. 1:14). If just being zealous toward God is all that is necessary to go to heaven, why send Ananias? Zeal is important, but it must be according to knowledge! Paul wrote concerning Israel, “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God” (Rom. 10:1-3).

**5) *If Saved By A Good Conscience?*** One may say, “I just trust my conscience, to do whatever it allows and to go wherever it leads.” Let’s ask Saul of Tarsus a question: “Saul, when you ‘imprisoned and beat in every synagogue

them that believed' on the Lord (Acts 22:19), did your conscience bother you? His answer: "...I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day" (Acts 23:1). Again he said, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 26:9). Saul did many things that were wrong religiously, and yet had a good conscience! No need to send Ananias to Saul, if one can just let his conscience be his guide and "live in all good conscience"! This shows that one's conscience is not a safe guide in spiritual matters!

**6) If Saved By Being Religious?** Some are convinced that just being religious is all that it takes to be saved, and that it really makes no difference what religion one practices, that one is just as good as another. If that be true, why send Ananias? Saul was a religious man. He was a Jew. "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion...And profited in the Jews' religion..." (Gal. 1:13-14). He was "Circumcised

the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee" (Phil. 3:5). He said, "...after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee" (Acts 26:5) and "...as touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless" (Phil. 3:6). He had to make a change in his religion! He changed from being a Jew to being a Christian! Have you thought about the fact that it takes more than being religious to be saved, that one religion is not as good as another, and that you may need to change religions?

**7) If Saved By Following Traditions Of Men?** No need to send Ananias, if one can just keep the religious traditions that have been handed down to him. Saul was "...exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers" (Gal. 1:14). Many believe and practice what they do because that is what their parents believed and did. Jesus said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me..." (Mt. 10:37). Traditions of men cause one to transgress the commandment of

God, make the commandment of God of none effect, and render one's worship vain (Mt. 15:1-9)!

**8) If Saved Without Being Baptized?** Ananias was sent to Saul to tell him what he must do (Acts 9:6), all things appointed for him to do (Acts 22:10). Now read Acts 22:16 to find out what Saul was told to do: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). Remember that what he was told was a "must" (Acts 9:6). Baptism stood between Saul and his sins being washed away! Notice the response of Saul to what he was told. He didn't argue or fuss about it — immediately he was baptized (Acts 9:18). If we have honest and good hearts like Saul, we will do the same. If you have not yet obeyed the Lord, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins..."

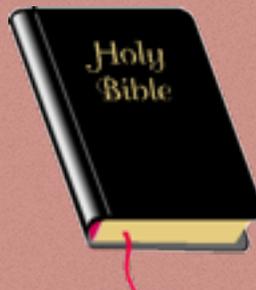
The fact that the Lord sent and Ananias went to Saul makes these truths stand out.

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