

## Our Surprising Lord. Acts 9:1-31

Surprises – some of us love them, some of us hate them, by their nature we don't expect them

What we expect, generally, is that things will carry on as they always do, that we will be able to go about our business as we intend

But sometimes

A pandemic is declared the day before you were flying out to New Zealand

The ultrasound shows you two babies, not the one you'd planned for

The quiet meal you were invited to turns into a room full of people singing happy birthday

Sometimes surprises happen

Does your understanding of the world leave room for God to surprise you?

Perhaps you don't believe in God, or have an idea of God as remote, uninvolved in the world.

You have no room for God to work in the world, let alone surprise you –

Perhaps you are a Christian. The Lord has saved you, and you are grateful for that, and you say you believe God is active in the world, but deep down you think that it is now all up to you – convincing people about Jesus, getting people to change, keeping the church moving in the right direction.

You pray, but live with low expectations of the Lord Jesus acting in the world beyond what He can do through your faithful obedience

Whatever you believe or expect of God today as we look at Acts 9 we are going to meet people who were surprised, surprised by the Lord Jesus

And in God's mercy I hope you will also meet the Lord who surprises, have your exclusion of the Lord from His world or your low expectations of His activity challenged.

### **The surprised**

Let's start with Saul [9:1-9] whose plans are disrupted in a most unexpected way. This Saul is later in Acts called Paul [Acts 13:9]. Saul and Paul are the same person, and I'll use the both names through the talk.

This Saul can't be dismissed as a fictional figure.

He is a real person whose letters we have, the letters of Paul that make up a major part of the New Testament.

Even the most sceptical biblical critic admits the existence of Paul, and that in Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Thessalonians at least we have letters that come from his hand

Letters that have proven to be massively influential in our world, and particularly in Western history, through his influence on major figures like Augustine and Luther, shapers of the Western tradition.

And those letters, from Paul's hand, independently confirm what we read about him in Acts, confirm his life in Judaism as a zealous persecutor and his great change

So Paul in Philippians can write of himself that he was a strict Pharisee and a zealous persecutor of the church

*Phil. 3:<sup>4</sup> although I have reasons for confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he has grounds for confidence in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup>circumcised the eighth day; of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; regarding the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup>regarding zeal, persecuting the church; regarding the righteousness that is in the law, blameless.*

Or in 1 Timothy refer to himself as

*1 Timothy 1:<sup>13</sup> even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an arrogant man. But I received mercy because I acted out of ignorance in unbelief,*

And in Galatians speak of ‘former way of life in Judaism’ when he

*Galatians 1:<sup>13</sup> For you have heard about my former way of life in Judaism: I intensely persecuted God’s church and tried to destroy it. <sup>14</sup>I advanced in Judaism beyond many contemporaries among my people, because I was extremely zealous for the traditions of my ancestors.*

When we are thinking about what is recorded here about Paul [cf Acts 22 and 26] we are hearing about the experiences of a real person

And we have met this Saul/Paul already in Acts as someone who had witnessed and approved of the stoning of the Christian Stephen [Acts 7:58, 8:1]

And who had then embarked on a fierce persecution of the church, ravaging the church and dragging people off to prison

*Acts 8:<sup>3</sup> Saul, however, was ravaging the church. He would enter house after house, drag off men and women, and put them in prison.*

What we learn at the beginning of Acts 9

*Acts 9: Now Saul was still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord. He went to the high priest <sup>2</sup>and requested letters from him to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any men or women who belonged to the Way, he might bring them as prisoners to Jerusalem.*

is that he is determined to carry on his campaign to extinguish the early Christian movement and so wants, where he can, to pursue the believers who have scattered to the surrounding provinces and bring them back for trial and punishment in Jerusalem.

He starts with Damascus, a city about 240 kilometres north of Jerusalem. It makes sense to start here as this was a city which we know in the century before had an extradition treaty with the Jewish high priest, and this appears still be the case [Bruce p. 233].

So Saul gets letters from the High Priest authorising him to seize and return to Jerusalem any Jewish believers he might find, and sets off on his mission.

But, as you heard, it does not go as planned.

On the way he is surprised, you could even say ambushed, by the Lord Jesus

*Acts 9:<sup>3</sup> As he traveled and was nearing Damascus, a light from heaven suddenly flashed around him. <sup>4</sup>Falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?”*

<sup>5</sup>“Who are you, Lord?” Saul said.

*“I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting,” he replied. <sup>6</sup> “But get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”*

It is a life changing surprise, as we see, changing his mind about Jesus, and changing the whole direction of his life, what he will give himself to, what he lives for, from this point on.

Jesus, from being a false prophet, a false Messiah whose followers were leading the people away from obedience to Israel’s God, is now for Paul the Son of God, the Christ

*Acts 9:<sup>20</sup> Immediately he began proclaiming Jesus in the synagogues: “He is the Son of God.” ...*

*<sup>22</sup> But Saul grew stronger and kept confounding the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.*

And where before he was zealous to oppose Jesus’ followers at every point, now He is zealous to follow Jesus, someone who in his own words lives to please Jesus and whose purpose, whatever the cost, is to complete the ministry he received from Jesus.

*2 Cor. 5:<sup>9</sup> Therefore, whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to be pleasing to him.*

*Acts 20:<sup>24</sup> But I consider my life of no value to myself; my purpose is to finish my course and the ministry I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of God’s grace.*

What so surprised Paul on that Damascus road that it changed, not just what he was going to do on arrival in Damascus, but his life completely?

The fundamental surprise was Jesus’ reality, that He was alive and exalted as Lord

Paul says that on that road he saw and heard Jesus, appearing and speaking to Him from heaven, from the light of God’s glorious presence [Acts 9:17, 26:13-14, 16, 19; 1 Cor. 15:8]

When up to this point you had thought that Jesus was a justly condemned, humiliated and killed false prophet, that is definitely a surprise.

And with that surprising discovery came some other surprises for Paul

He is surprised that he could be so wrong. There he was – zealous for God, sure he was doing what was right, what pleased God, so sure that he could imprison and condemn to death those who disagreed with him.

Yet completely wrong. Those he was condemning for believing in Jesus - they were the one who were pleasing to God, not him.

Is it any wonder that later Paul, drawing on his own experience, describes unbelief as blindness

*2 Corinthians 4:<sup>4</sup> In their case, the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

On meeting Jesus Paul is surprised by just how wrong he had got it.

And then he is surprised that God could be so merciful as to exert His great power to save Him – that He didn’t leave him blind, but used that blindness to give him sight, an understanding of who Jesus is and what He has done on the cross

This is an act of great power

Paul compares the act of revealing Jesus' glory, not just to his outside sight in the light of the Damascus road [9:3, 22:6] but to His inner sight, the convicting of his heart of Jesus' greatness, as like God's great work at Creation

*2 Cor. 4: 6 For God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.*

On meeting Jesus Paul experiences an act of great power, and a surprising mercy. Paul in that meeting is both convicted of his undeserving – that he was a rebel against God who had taken up arms against God's King Jesus – and also of Jesus' mercy

*1 Tim. 1: 13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an arrogant man. But I received mercy because I acted out of ignorance in unbelief, 14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*

And with that mercy Paul also finds something he never expected. Not just that Jesus is the exalted Lord, but that believing in the Jesus he had opposed was worth everything

Worth everything, because in believing in Jesus he found what he longed for but could never obtain by his own efforts – an assurance of forgiveness and peace with God.

This is what he wrote to the Philippians. After reciting all the privilege he enjoyed in Judaism he continued

*Phil 3: 7 But everything that was a gain to me, I have considered to be a loss because of Christ. 8 More than that, I also consider everything to be a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. Because of him I have suffered the loss of all things and consider them as dung, so that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own from the law, but one that is through faith in Christ—the righteousness from God based on faith.*

In having faith in Jesus as Lord Paul was now reckoned righteous, someone who had nothing to fear in God's judgement, who could live at peace with God – and he knew that was worth everything, for that was an assured place in God's kingdom, eternal life in the new heaven and earth.

Saul had a life changing surprise on that road to Damascus

There he was Surprised to find that Jesus is the living exalted Lord, and with that discovery he was

Surprised to see how great his sinful rebellion against God was, the depth of his blindness

Surprised by the mercy of God, that it could even spare a proud persecutor

Surprised to find that in believing in Jesus he had the treasure that was worth the loss of everything else.

But Saul is not the only one surprised in Acts 9

There are others.

Take Ananias. The Lord tells him to go and restore sight to blind Saul vv. 11-12

*Acts 9: 10 There was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias, and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias."*

*"Here I am, Lord," he replied.*

*11 "Get up and go to the street called Straight," the Lord said to him, "to the house of Judas, and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, since he is praying there. 12 In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and placing his hands on him so that he may regain his sight."*

But with Saul's known record Ananias is rightfully hesitant v. 13, surprised at the Lord Jesus' directions

*<sup>13</sup> "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard from many people about this man, how much harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And he has authority here from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."*

*<sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to him, "Go, for this man is my chosen instrument to take my name to Gentiles, kings, and Israelites. <sup>16</sup> I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."*

Ananias is surprised first at who Jesus chooses to save, have mercy on

And then Surprised by whom Jesus chooses to use in His great mission, at who God keeps company with

But despite the surprise Ananias trusts his Lord enough to go and do as commanded.

*Acts 9:<sup>17</sup> Ananias went and entered the house. He placed his hands on him and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road you were traveling, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."*

The Jewish population of Damascus are also surprised vv. 19-22

*Acts 9: Saul was with the disciples in Damascus for some time. <sup>20</sup> Immediately he began proclaiming Jesus in the synagogues: "He is the Son of God."*

*<sup>21</sup> All who heard him were astounded and said, "Isn't this the man in Jerusalem who was causing havoc for those who called on this name and came here for the purpose of taking them as prisoners to the chief priests?"*

*<sup>22</sup> But Saul grew stronger and kept confounding the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.*

Surprised at the change in Paul

Surprised at his testimony, and the convincing nature of the biblical prove that Jesus is the Messiah

But many of them are not pleased with this surprise, and despite Paul's testimony and the reality of his change, a change they themselves were witnessing

Their blindness is such that they try to kill him [vv. 23-25]

And this brings us to the last group to be surprised by the action of the Lord Jesus in revealing Himself to Saul

The Christians in Jerusalem vv. 26

*Acts 9:<sup>26</sup> When he arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, since they did not believe he was a disciple.*

They are so surprised by the mercy and power of God, that they could not believe it

### **The Lord who surprises**

Paul, Ananias, the members of synagogue in Damascus, the believers in Jerusalem

All surprised by the action of the Lord Jesus – by the revelation of His reality, and His mercy, to Saul

What do we learn of the Lord Jesus from the surprizes He gave these people?

Firstly, His reality – that He is the living Lord, who, amongst all the others He has appeared to alive after His crucifixion, has appeared also to Paul.

That is what Paul claims

The light seen on the road is the appearance of the risen Jesus in glory, in the light of the presence of God [Acts 9:17, 22:14, 26:13-14]

And so Paul writes in 1 Cor. 15 of the risen Jesus, having appeared to Cephas [Peter], the twelve,

*1 Corinthians 15:<sup>3</sup> For I passed on to you as most important what I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve. <sup>6</sup> Then he appeared to over five hundred brothers and sisters at one time; most of them are still alive, but some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup> Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup> Last of all, as to one born at the wrong time, he also appeared to me.*

Let's pause and think. If your world view doesn't allow God to act in the world, what are you going to do with Paul's experience?

What do you do with a Saul whose mind and life appears to have been changed so radically and who attributes that change to a surprising work of Jesus?

You can deny the reality of the change. That is pretty hard in Paul's case.

Authentic letters of Paul from very early on speak of that change, and it was a change that he persisted in until his death even though it cost him everything, brought him suffering and hardship, and he is very clear about the cause, and very clear that, in his own words

*1 Cor. 15:<sup>14</sup> and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is in vain, and so is your faith. – and believers like him should be pitied more than all people [1 Cor. 15:12-19]*

According to Paul his change wasn't the result of his searching, or doubting, or reflection. He was intent on persecuting followers of Jesus and he says it was Jesus appearing that changed him.

I guess if you can't deny the change, you have to find another explanation for it than the one Paul gives, a non-God explanation.

People have tried – seeking to give psychological explanations for Paul's change. Paul's guilty conscious becomes overactive, and he suffers a mental crisis.

Think that through.

It takes a lot of confidence to believe your explanation of Paul's experience is more credible than his own. He was a lot closer to the event than you, and he does give the impression of being both a realist and intelligent.

And what you do for Saul, you will need to do with the testimony of every Christian you meet, even where the change cannot be denied for meeting Jesus is still changing people, as we have been hearing in Andy's videos talking to people here about the change Jesus has brought to their life

Can see them on the Meet Jesus page on the website

[Meet Jesus \(bpc.org.au\)](http://bpc.org.au)

But if you have the confidence, you can keep repackaging the experience of people who have met Jesus so that it is no longer recognizable to the person who has had the experience

But don't deceive yourself that you are giving a truer explanation of the experience, the way things really are

No – what you are doing is fitting the experiences of others into your understanding of the world, your comfortably closed world, to stop you being surprised, to confirm your starting rejection of God

Or it may be your uncomfortably closed world

A world without hope, where in the end death takes everything of value

A world without ultimate justice

A world where beauty is destined to crumble into meaninglessness

Open your eyes

Paul's life changing experience is real, and the explanation he gives for it true

The Lord Jesus lives, and He is exalted, the Lord

And we see here in His dealings with Saul

His power, which is the power of God. It is not just the power to blind. It is the greater power of being able to open eyes by blinding them, to shine light in the darkness of our rebellion against God.

To do a work deep in our hearts, to free them from our loved and self justifying lies to embrace the truth.

Believers

Remember that – when there are those around us who seem so entrenched in their opposition, so determined in their unbelief, so beyond our persuasion – and isn't that everyone

Remember that the Lord Jesus is powerful to make the blind see, to raise the dead, to take a stony heart and give it life

IN Paul's experience we see Jesus' power, the same power at work in every believer whose eyes are opened to His glory

And we see here the Lord Jesus' goodness

He is merciful even to His enemies – why are you persecuting me? He asked

It was personal, and the Lord who appeared from heaven could have done much more than just blind Paul

He could have destroyed him in an instant

But instead He had mercy on Saul, the mercy of God, of the one who is the judge of all

*1 Timothy 1: <sup>13</sup>even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an arrogant man. But I received mercy because I acted out of ignorance in unbelief, <sup>14</sup>and the grace of our Lord overflowed, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*

And Paul says that the mercy shown to him should encourage each of us to seek his mercy

*1 Timothy 1: <sup>15</sup>This saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—and I am the worst of them. <sup>16</sup>But I received mercy for this reason, so that in me, the worst of them, Christ Jesus might demonstrate his extraordinary patience as an example to those who would believe in him for eternal life.*

You might be sitting there thinking that your denial of Jesus is wrong, has been a lie, an excuse to keep living to please yourself, and not your Lord

Paul says Jesus put up with him – with his slander of Jesus, his attacking Jesus' people, his pride - and showed him mercy so that you would know there is mercy for you – what ever you have done, however you have been treating the Lord Jesus

Or you might know you are a Christian, but still be crippled by the consciousness of your disobedience

Past or present

Hear Paul. Jesus came to save sinners. See the mercy he showed Paul and have confidence in His mercy

He will save you – not because of how hard you try now to live the Christian life, or your success in living that life, but because of His mercy.

But some of you might be thinking – what kind of mercy is it where the Lord Jesus says

*Acts 9: <sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to him, “Go, for this man is my chosen instrument to take my name to Gentiles, kings, and Israelites. <sup>16</sup> I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”*

That sounds more like punishment than mercy

And you are shocked by the cost to Paul of this mercy

That is not the way Paul saw it. Remember his words to the Phillipians

He thought this mercy worth everything

*Phil 3: <sup>7</sup> But everything that was a gain to me, I have considered to be a loss because of Christ. <sup>8</sup> More than that, I also consider everything to be a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. Because of him I have suffered the loss of all things and consider them as dung, so that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own from the law, but one that is through faith in Christ—the righteousness from God based on faith.*

In a world where all must die and face judgment –

Christ’s mercy spared Him judgment

Assured him of the resurrection and of Christ’s steadfast love for him [Gal. 2:21]

In fact, Paul could rejoice in His sufferings for the Lord Jesus [2 Cor. 12:10, Phil. 1:17-18, Col. 1:24; Rom. 5:3]

Jesus is always up front about the cost of believing for us all, that it will mean denying ourselves, giving up our lives to follow Him. Paul reminds us that is a cost worth paying, a cost it is a joy to pay

Brothers and sisters, remember that when you hesitate to present the gospel to people of other cultures and faiths –

We can do that can’t we

We can think, believing the truth is going to make life so hard for them in their family and community

There is a cost, but to not share the gospel with them because of that is false kindness

Denying them the opportunity of choosing eternal life, condemning them to hell for their sin

In the surprises of Acts 9 we meet the Lord Jesus who is mighty and merciful

And the Lord who is faithful, faithful to His people and to His saving purpose

To His people. He has not abandoned them in their suffering for His name. He is united with them in their suffering – “why are you persecuting me” He asks. And He is active to bring them relief from their suffering, to bring them respite



As a consequence of His surprising Saul

*Acts 9: 31 So the church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.*

And we see in His appearing to Saul the Lord Jesus is faithful to His purpose to be the Saviour of the world, to have disciples from every nation,

Faithful to the saving purpose that has embraced those of us who are believers here today

Paul was His chosen instrument to bring the good news that Jesus is Lord with authority to forgive and give life to the Gentiles, the non-Jews, to people like us

As Jesus said to Paul, He was sending Paul to non-Jews to

*Acts 26: 18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a share among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'*

It is by Jesus' surprising action that the gospel has come to us

The good news that we don't need to become Jews and keep the Jewish law to be saved

That we too, like Paul, are justified by faith in Jesus crucified and risen

This is the Jesus who surprised Paul and the others we meet in Acts 9

Powerful, with the power of God

Merciful, extending the mercy of God to rebels

Faithful, to His people and His purpose

Doing what no-one expected, no-one planned, and probably what no-one was praying for.

In the Lord Jesus' calling and saving of Paul we see again what we see in the cross, that our God, Father, Son and Spirit, is the God who can do more than we can ask or think

Always more powerful, more merciful, more faithful, more present, more active than we imagine

**Living trusting the God who can do more than we can ask or think**

And seeing that, it is good to remind ourselves of what it means for us to say this surprising Lord is our Lord,

Let me mention four things

It means that we will pray big prayers, outrageous prayers

We don't need to see how God can do something before we ask, let alone think that God can only do something where we can suggest to Him the way to do it

We can just ask and leave it up to Him how he answers

So we can pray for labourers for the harvest without a plan to produce them. He can do it

We can pray like Paul for those not yet believing –

Of people like himself, people with a zeal for God that manifested in violent opposition to the gospel, people with a faith they were committed to

Paul could say

*Romans 10: Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God concerning them is for their salvation.*

That is a big prayer, a prayer for a work of God in hard hearts

We can pray that big prayer for our proud and rebellious fellow citizens

Trusting the God who can do more than we ask or think means we will pray big prayers

And it means we will be Faithful in sharing Jesus with all

We never know what God will do in someone's life, and we should not limit what He can do

He can use all kinds of experiences to bring people to meet Jesus

He can open blind eyes

So we should speak of Jesus with all who come across our path as we have opportunity, even those we might think are determinedly hostile to Jesus

And trusting the God who can do more than we can ask or think means we should be Like Ananias and practice trusting obedience to the surprising direction of God

For most of us the surprising, challenging direction of God won't come in visions

No, it will come to us in His commands

Sometimes we will think they make as little sense as the command to go and pray for Saul the violent persecutor

Like the command to forgive the one who has hurt us when they repent, with the risk of being hurt again for no repentance is perfect

Or The command to deny ourselves sexual fulfilment outside of marriage to someone of the opposite sex, with the pain of denied desire and the threat of loneliness

Or the command not to take revenge Romans 12:19, or to be generous to the one who asks Matt. 5:38-42].

There will be times Jesus' commands seem to make little sense to us, and obeying them risky

But our Lord is more powerful, more faithful, more merciful – than we can imagine

He knows what He is doing, and how it will work out

So we trust Him and do what He says

And trusting the God who can do more than we can ask or think means having a heart like Barnabas, who, when Paul came to Jerusalem, could welcome and not be afraid of the surprising work of the Lord Jesus in the life of a persecutor and enemy of the church

Barnabas took the time to listen to Paul. We know that because he could explain his story v. 27

*Acts 9:27 Barnabas, however, took him and brought him to the apostles and explained to them how Saul had seen the Lord on the road and that the Lord had talked to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus.*

And he was able to recognise the surprising work of the Lord Jesus, because his heart was attuned to that work  
 Knew that the Lord Jesus came into the world to save sinners  
 Was confident in the in the depth of the power and mercy of God  
 Trusting our God we can be like Barnabas, who through his welcome gained a co-worker in the gospel,  
 someone with whom he could share in the mission of His Master.  
 The Lord Jesus has not changed. He is still the lord who surprised Saul on that road  
 He lives – powerful, merciful, faithful, worth all to know  
 If you are not yet a believer do you feel the challenge of that  
 The testimony of Paul, this giant of Western history, won't change. Given once it remains forever, and its  
 presence continues with us, continues to influence us even today  
 And there will always be more to testify to this surprising Jesus, for the Lord Jesus continues to change people  
 You can keep on dismissing it – or one day think – maybe he can change me,  
 Give me what is worth everything – forgiveness, peace with God, eternal life  
 Why don't you ask Him to do that  
 He is very much alive, and has the power to do that  
 And He is merciful  
 He won't turn you away  
 The Lord Jesus has not changed  
 He lives – powerful, merciful, faithful, worth all to know  
 Believer, do you know the encouragement of trusting this living Lord  
 It is easy at times to feel that it all depends on you, but in saving Paul He is reminding us that He is at work  
 without us, doing more than we can ask or think  
 It is easy to start living with reduced expectations of the Lord's work in the world.  
 But here our Lord has reminded us of just how powerful, how merciful, how faithful He is  
 Trust Him and pray and keep on praying big prayers – for the things that really matter – salvation, the work of the  
 gospel, and knowing you can leave how he answers up to Him  
 Trust Him and speak when you don't have all the answers and you can't imagine those you speak to ever  
 changing  
 Trust Him and live that life of trusting obedience even when what is asked of you doesn't seem to make much  
 sense  
 The trusting obedience that included Ananias in the surprising saving work of the Lord Jesus, that in changing  
 Paul's life forever has changed the lives of millions since by bringing them to know the same mercy He received  
 and He was called to proclaim to all.