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### Meet Mr. Ordinary Christian!

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## MEET MR. ORDINARY CHRISTIAN !

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS  
NUMBER 33  
ACTS 9:10-12

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Little Rock, Arkansas

At some time most every Christian has gotten a guilty feeling after hearing the testimony of a missionary or a dedicated Christian and he says to himself, "I'm not in full-time Christian service and I guess I just don't amount to much. I guess I'm just a third class Christian or a real disappointment to God". But please remember that the missionary giving the testimony and the great dedicated Christian who thrilled you with his story also had many hardships and trials. Life is hard for every Christian. There is no such thing as the easy Christian life.

Let us all remember that if we are Christians, if we are true followers of Christ, we are in full-time Christian service. Often the ordinary life is the life most important in Christ's work. The ordinary Christian is very similar to the lineman in a football game. The backfield runner is the man who carries the ball, makes all the gains, and gets most of the praise. But any football player will tell you that no backfield man would amount to much if it were not for the blocking and hard-nosed rugged work of the linemen. The linemen in Christianity are those we call the ordinary Christians. These Christians who hold the line and do the blocking are the ones who are really responsible for the real success of the Christian message. Ananias here in our story is such a man.

ACTS 9:10 "And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord" The words translated "Behold, I am here Lord" more correctly translated actually say, "Who, me Lord?" He is actually saying, "Are you really calling me, Lord?" Ananias is shocked! He has been just an ordinary Christian and surely he can't be any good to the Lord. Would God call on an ordinary man to do such a job as this? Please notice that Ananias is called "A certain disciple". He is one who is prepared to do something for the Lord. He knows doctrine. There is a lot of routine in his life. But please remember this is exactly the kind of life that Christ can use, a life filled with patience, stability, poise, perseverance, and willingness. In fact, this is where Christianity is tested the most. The real key to Christian effectiveness is the ordinary Christian. Mr. Ordinary Christian sustains Christianity. So please remember Ananias was a prepared believer. It is wonderful to be doctrinally prepared when the Lord calls on you. The word "Ananias" means protected by the Lord. This man lived up to his name, quite a bit different from the first Ananias we met earlier in this book.

Look at some principles pertaining to the ordinary Christian life.

1. The ordinary Christian life is the most difficult life of all.
2. The ordinary Christian life has fewer stimulants and requires a deeper faith and a deeper dependence upon God.
3. The common place of life is always underrated. The ordinary Christian fills all the gaps where it really counts. It is the ordinary people who make up the most of life. Often the monotony of the ordinary life is great. Remember it is not the spectacular upon which you can build, but the day by day ordinary faithfulness of Mr. Ordinary Christian.
4. The obscure and ordinary service that Ananias rendered to Saul of Tarsus had worldwide repercussions. Ananias had the privilege of being the first man to work with Saul after his conversion. And remember, this man Saul of Tarsus became the greatest believer of all times.

5. If you are an ordinary Christian, and you try to compare your life with the spectacular life of some great Christian, you will become disillusioned unless you understand Bible doctrine. Bible doctrine causes Mr. Ordinary Christian to discover his place, get in that place and be perfectly satisfied with it. Understanding of the Word of God makes this possible. God does not intend for all of us to be the same. God knows who and what you are and he is going to choose for you. Let God choose your slot and get in that slot and go to work.
6. There is something glorious and wonderful about the Ordinary Christian life. This is the Christian who never gives down in the thick of the battle.
7. Under "Operation Grace" there is no such thing as an ordinary life, even though every life has many monotonous details connected with it.
8. Ananias demonstrated the importance of faithfulness in little things. Here is the importance of an ordinary Christian knowing Bible doctrine. When Jesus wanted Saul of Tarsus, his greatest man, to get off to a good start he didn't send him to a preacher in Jerusalem. He sent him to an ordinary disciple in Damascus. Jerusalem was so filled with legalism and ritualistic religion that God wouldn't even deal with Saul in Jerusalem. The worst place to get saved in all the world at that time was Jerusalem. Remember, the Ethiopian Eunuch had to leave Jerusalem in order to get saved. The people God used the most in the first century were people who were in no way connected with Jerusalem. The entire Book of Hebrews was written in 67 A.D., three years before the destruction of Jerusalem, to call to our attention the failure of the legalistic Jerusalem church. Legalism ruined the Jerusalem Church. The Book of the Acts points this out. God can never use legalism. Saul is going to go to Antioch when the missionary movement got started and not to Jerusalem. Saul did not get saved in Jerusalem, but in Syria near Damascus. And remember, the final word on Bible doctrine came from Paul, not from Peter. Jesus could have saved Saul of Tarsus in Jerusalem, but he picked this time and place--why? Because the one man in the world most prepared to help Paul in this critical hour was none other than Mr. Ordinary Christian himself, Ananias. All over the world there were spectacular believers, but of all of them God picked out Ananias. Ananias had a deep understanding of Bible doctrine. The first year after salvation is the most important year in a Christian's life. In that first year they are bogged down in legalism, even though they are saved. It is so easy at that time to get wrong impressions about the Christian way of life. Christianity is understanding the plan of God in human life, and you can have inner peace and poise and power if Christ is in you. Judas was an unbeliever and he phased himself out and ended by committing suicide. Then the church elected a man to replace Judas, but he was the wrong one and he was phased out and you never hear of him again. But Saul of Tarsus, to become Paul, was the twelfth apostle. Ananias was mentioned in this passage and never again. But he was one of the greatest Christians of all times. Possibly, we ought to erect a statue to him with the inscription, "My name isn't important. I'm just Mr. Ordinary Christian". We must realize that everything we do is for the Glory of God.

Here in verse 10 we realize that Ananias realized how dangerous Saul was and he said, "Who, me Lord?"

ACTS 9:11 "And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth" Please notice the instructions from the Lord are very specific. There is

only one street in Damascus that is straight and it runs East and West. All other streets in that city were winding. This street still exists today. He is to go to the house of Judas, a well-known Jewish man there, and inquire for a man named Saul of Tarsus. It says of Saul, "He keeps on praying". It is present linear action.

Acts 22:12 adds something about Ananias that we do not get here. Let us read that verse, "And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews who dwelt there". A devout man refers to the fact that he knew the law of the Old Testament. Please remember that there is ample information in the Old Testament for men to be saved, Ananias also had a good report among the brethren. His life preached a great sermon and other people heard it and responded to it.

Saul of Tarsus is a new convert and he is now blind and he just keeps on praying. He is waiting for God to give him guidance. Paul was helpless because he was physically blind, but he was also spiritually blind. He is going to have to get legalism out of him so he can get the grace of God in his mind. He was physically and spiritually blind. So he went three days without food in total blindness. Remember, this is the man who will become the world's greatest saint. We know he had met the Lord in salvation, but he is still spiritually empty.

ACTS 9:12 "And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight." Saul, in his blindness, has seen a vision of what Ananias is to do for him. "That (purpose clause) he might receive his sight." And this refers to the spiritual sight that is going to come to his mind. Paul is going to receive Bible doctrine in his mind and this is what is so important. This word "Receive his sight" is aorist tense, active voice and subjunctive mood. This means that in a point of time he was saved, but the experience is to go on and on and the subjunctive refers to the potential of the experience. He is to keep learning and keep learning and one day he will give out doctrine so the whole world will be blessed by it. The active voice here indicates that Paul is going to learn Bible doctrine because he wants to learn it.

From this lesson let us all get this one fact in our minds--The Ordinary Christian is dear and precious to God. The Kingdom of God goes forward on the life and power of the Ordinary Christian.