

<u>OWN THE VISION - *TRANSFORM LIVES*</u>

Acts 9:1-28

- **Celebration's Mission** - To lead people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ and difference-makers in the world
- **Celebration's Vision - We pray God will use the Celebration family to: 1) Exalt Jesus** (Ephesians 3:21), **2) Transform Lives** (Titus 3:3-7), **3) Strengthen Families** (Acts 16:19-34), **4) Improve Communities** (Acts 8:5-8) **and 5) Impact our World** (Matthew 28:19-20).
- **Saul of Tarsus was a Jewish leader (Philippians 3:5-6) and a persecutor of Christians (Acts 8:1), who became the Apostle Paul after encountering the Lord.**
- Paul - *"Once we were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. But when God our Savior revealed His kindness and love, He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.."* (Titus 3:3-5)
- ***What transformations has the Lord brought to my life?***
- Paul - *"Everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."* (Philippians 3:8)
- **Saul of Tarsus was helped to become a devoted Christian and dynamic leader by Ananias, Barnabas, the Apostles and others (Acts 9:1-28).**
- ***How can the Lord use us, like He used Ananias and Barnabas, to bring transformation to people's lives?***

The Lord Uses Us To Transform People's Lives As We:

RECEIVE <u>DIRECTION</u> FROM HIM

- *"There was a believer in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, calling, 'Ananias!' 'Yes, Lord!' he replied. The Lord said, 'Go over to Straight Street, to the house of Judas. When you get there, ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying to Me right now. I have shown him a vision of a man named Ananias coming in and laying hands on him so he can see again.'"* (Acts 9:10-12)

- **The Lord speaks to His people through His Word (Psalm 119:103-105), His Spirit (Acts 13:2), His people (1 Kings 17:24), Dreams and Visions (Joel 2:28), etc.**
- Jesus - *"My sheep hear My voice . . . and they follow Me."* (John 10:27)
- ***In what ways has the Lord spoken to me, and am I submitting to His direction?***

The Lord Uses Us To Transform People's Lives As We:
OVERCOME OUR <u>FEARS</u>

- *"'But Lord,' exclaimed Ananias, 'I've heard many people talk about the terrible things this man has done to the believers in Jerusalem! And he is authorized by the leading priests to arrest everyone who calls upon Your name.' But the Lord said, 'Go, for Saul is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles and to kings, as well as to the people of Israel.' So Ananias went and found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' Instantly something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized.* (Acts 9:17-18)
- **Sometimes we allow our fears to keep us from serving God and making a difference in the lives of others.**
- *"God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline."* (2 Timothy 1:7)
- **We have to overcome our apathy and our anxieties to be used by God to make a difference in the lives of others and in our world.**
- ***What are some fears I need to overcome so I can help other people?***

The Lord Uses Us To Transform People's Lives As We:
BELIEVE PEOPLE CAN <u>CHANGE</u>

- *"When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to meet with the believers, but they were all afraid of him. They did not believe he had truly become a believer! Then Barnabas brought him to the apostles and told them how Saul had seen the Lord on the way to Damascus and how the Lord had spoken to Saul. He also told them that Saul had preached boldly in the name of Jesus in Damascus."* (Acts 9:26-27)
- **Barnabas constantly encouraged and affirmed people because he saw not just what they had been or were, but what they could become.**
- *"Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."* (Hebrews 10:24)
- ***Who are some people that I need to affirm and believe in?***

The Lord Uses Us To Transform People's Lives As We:
CHALLENGE PEOPLE TO <u>GROW</u> IN CHRIST

- *"When Barnabas reached Antioch . . ., he encouraged all the believers to always obey the Lord with all their hearts."* (Acts 11:22-23)
- **We need to be encouragers to people, but we also need to exhort people to love the Lord and live for Him.**

- Peter - *"You must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* (2 Peter 3:18)
- ***Who are some people I need to challenge to start growing in their faith?***

The Lord Uses Us To Transform People's Lives As We:
PREPARE THEM TO BE JESUS' <u>DISCIPLES</u>

- Jesus - *"Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you."* (Matthew 28:20)
- **We help people become Jesus' disciples by teaching them God's Word, involving them in ministry with us, and being a godly example and encourager to them.**
- Paul - *"Teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others."* (2 Timothy 2:2)
- **Every person who has been a Christian for several years should be discipling 1-2 new Christians in their *Life Group*.**
- ***Who are 1-2 people I need to disciple in the near future?***

The Lord Uses Us To Transform People's Lives As We:
GIVE TO <u>HELP</u> OTHERS

- *"There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them and bring the money to the Apostles to give to those in need. For instance, there was Joseph, the one the apostles nicknamed Barnabas (which means 'Son of Encouragement'). . . . He sold a field he owned and brought the money to the Apostles."* (Acts 4:34-37)
- **When we give generously, we are supporting God's work of transforming people's lives, circumstances and relationships.**

- ***What is the Lord saying to me through this message, and how am I going to respond to it?***