

Connection to Proverbs 3:21-35

As we faithfully seek to follow God's wisdom and His directions, a natural byproduct of this is demonstrating compassion to those around us. Ananias is found faithful to following God's calling which led to him demonstrating compassion to an unlikely recipient.

Introduction/Opening

Words without actions are just words and God calls us to more than words. Solomon reminded his readers to demonstrate compassion in Proverbs 3:21-35. Once we have wisdom from God and follow His direction, it is time to demonstrate His compassion to others. This move of obedience can be perceived to be nerve racking as the follower of Christ moves from complacency to obedience. But, in the end, living in obedience is more than worth it. In Acts, we find an example of showing God's compassion.

Outline

1. Demonstrating Compassion Requires Action.
 - a) Compassion can be defined as "love in action." Those who seek to follow Jesus and His teachings see that we are called to be compassionate to others. This calling is made clear in today's passage in that God called Ananias to demonstrate compassion to an unlikely candidate. God told Ananias, "Get up and go" (v. 11). Ananias could not be obedient to this calling and remain passive.
 - b) The showing of compassion can also yield close contact with others. Ananias was called to place his hands on a staunch opponent of the church (v. 12). Saul was known for his actions against those who followed Jesus, and Ananias was being called to be within arms reach of him. This required both action and courage.
2. Demonstrating Compassion Requires Courage.
 - a) Have you ever been asked to do something that made you pause and wonder if you were actually being asked to do that? God had called Ananias to a task, and now Ananias seems to be asking for a little clarification. He spends time in verses 13 and 14 giving God a little history lesson. If one is going to follow God's wisdom and direction by demonstrating compassion to an unlikely recipient, he or she is going to need a good amount of courage.
 - b) How did Ananias know about all of Saul's actions? News of threats travel fast even without social media (vv. 13-14). Ananias was going to need a great deal of courage in order to be faithful to God's calling.

3. Demonstrating Compassion Requires Obedience.

- a) “Ananias went” (v. 17). He had voiced his concern, but at the end of it all, he was obedient. Not only did he go, “he placed his hands on” Saul (v. 17). He did not let fear stop him from being obedient to demonstrate the compassion God was calling him to share with an unlikely candidate.

Conclusion

Ananias was not the first one to ever demonstrate compassion to an unlikely candidate. He learned this action through the model set by Christ. Christ was obedient and courageous in going to the cross for our sins. If anyone is an unlikely candidate for this compassion, it is not just Saul but us too.

If you have not received this compassion from Christ, don't let the day pass without accepting His love acted out for you on the cross. If, however, you have received His compassion, then let's be like Ananias and share His compassion with those around us.

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