

# GETTING IT STRAIGHT

By Rod

*Based on Acts 9 vv 1-18, this sketch attempts to show how amazing it was that Saul, the chief persecutor of the early church, became the leading light in its ministry to the Gentiles.*

## CAST

Ananias        *A follower of Jesus resident in Damascus*

The Lord       *Not seen on stage*

Thomas        *Another member of the early church in Damascus*

*Ananias is at home and is praying.*

Ananias        Dear Lord, you know how difficult it is for your followers at present. I ask that you sustain your people during this terrible persecution in Jerusalem.

And I pray for others scattered around the world - especially for us here in Damascus, now that we have heard that Saul of Tarsus has come here to round up your followers.

Oh Lord, I feel moved to pray that you would raise up a mighty leader for us, your followers. Someone who will be fearless. Someone who will be full of zeal for you, and who will be able to inspire us in this time of danger and suffering.

Lord            Ananias.

Ananias        Yes. *(Looks around, but sees nobody)* That's funny. I thought I heard someone call my name. Must have been the wind. I must get that door fixed.

Now, where was I? Ah yes. *(Reverting to prayer)* Lord please provide us with a mighty leader. Someone who can help us stand up to this terrible Saul of Tarsus.

Someone with a firm knowledge of the scriptures, who will be able to teach, and defend the faith in argument. Someone who will have the freedom to be able to travel and take your good news all over the world. Someone who will be eloquent and educated and so able to speak before leaders and rulers.....

Lord            Ananias.

Ananias        *(Irritated)* Yes, who is it? *(Looks up and sees 'vision of the Lord')* Oh, Lord... er... I'm sorry. I did not realise it was you. Er ... yes, Lord. What do you want?

Lord            Go to Straight Street.

An              Yes, no problem, Straight Street.

Lord            To the house of Judas..

An Judas... on Straight Street? Right, I know where that is.

Lord And ask for a man from Tarsus called Saul.

An Yes, Lord, Saul of Tarsus. ... Er, hang on. Did I hear that right? Did you say 'Saul of Tarsus'? (*Thinking*) You mean you want me to sneak in and strike him down? Good idea, Lord. Er ..but how will I get close enough to him?

Lord He is praying.

An Ah, so it will be easy to creep up on him when he's not looking..

Lord He is praying to me.

Ananias I find that hard to believe, Lord. I think you will find that it is more likely that he is 'preying on' your followers. If you'll pardon the pun. Anyway I don't think it would be very wise for me to go right up to him and say, "Hi there, I am Ananias – I follow the Lord". I'd be arrested on the spot. And I have heard that he has done terrible harm to your saints in Jerusalem.

Lord In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.

An (*Slowly. Thinking.*) You said "A man named Ananias" – so for this vision to come true it doesn't necessarily actually have to be **me** does it? I mean, there are plenty of Ananias's in Damascus. There's Ananias the tanner, Ananias the doctor. Oh, he'd be good – if, as you say, Saul is blinded. He might have some ointment or something. You could send him ... instead of me?

Lord Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.

Ananias (*Realising the importance of this message. Change if attitude to humble obedience*) Oh, right. I see. Thank you Lord for asking me. I'll go straightaway. (*Leaves up centre aisle. There he meets Thomas coming the other way*)

Thomas Hello Ananias. Where are you off to in such a hurry?

An Hello, Thomas, I'm off to Straight Street to the house of Judas.

Thomas Oh, I wouldn't go there if I were you. The word on the street is that Saul of Tarsus is staying there.

An            That's why I'm going - to see Saul of Tarsus. Although he won't be able to see me as he has lost his sight.

Thomas      Oh, that's a relief. If he has lost his sight he won't be able to chase around arresting people who follow the Lord. That's a real answer to prayer.

An            The Lord has told me to go and place my hands on him to restore his sight.

Thomas      You what? Let me get this straight. You are going to the house of Judas on Straight Street specifically to **help** this man who is Public Enemy Number One for all the saints in Damascus.

An            That's right. Exciting isn't it?

Thomas      'Exciting' is perhaps not exactly the word I would use. *(To himself)* 'Madness' might be nearer the mark.

An            *(Not hearing the final two words)* You can come along with me if you like. I reckon Saul is one of us now.

Thomas      Oh.. er... thanks for the offer and all that – but I am on the way to the market. We need some bread ... very urgently.

An            Oh well, never mind. Must dash. The Lord seemed pretty insistent I go straightaway.

Thomas      Straight to Straight Street eh. *(Laughs in exaggeratedly cheerful way)*

An            Ah yes. Very good.

Thomas      Ananias old friend, are you absolutely sure you got God's message right? From what I have heard this Saul is a pretty terrifying guy. It could be a trap.

Ananias     Thanks for your concern, Thomas. I don't understand it myself, but I think I've got to do it – and straight away. Bye then. *(He sets off)*

Thomas      Oh ..bye, Ananias. See you again soon. *(Pausing to think about the 'danger' that Ananias may be going to.)* Or at least – I hope I'll see you again soon.

*THE END*