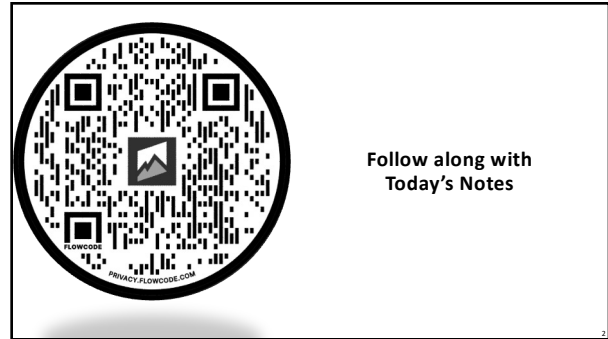


1



2

Acts 5 is a CONTINUATION and CONTRAST to a Story Begun in Acts 4

*Acts 4 –*  
*32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own; but all things were common property to them. 33 And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.*  
*34 For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales, 35 and lay them at the apostles' feet; and they would be distributed to each, as any had need.*  
*36 And Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means, Son of Encouragement), 37 and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.*

3

The end of Acts 4 is the church at its absolute BEST

Acts 5 is a 'STEP DOWN' in church behavior!

Luke the historian ably records BOTH



*"Take it away  
 and paint me  
 warts and all..."*  
 - Oliver Cromwell

4

Two Deep Spiritual Truths –

**#1 – What Satan cannot CONQUER he will try to CORRUPT!**

**#2 – Anything that God does well – anything that reaches people and transforms them – Satan will try to COUNTERFEIT, SMEAR, and DISCOURAGE**

5

Acts 4:32-37

**Great UNITY** v32

**Great SHARING** v32

**Great PREACHING** v33

**Great AGILITY** v33

**Great COMMITMENT to CONTENTMENT** v34

**Great SACRIFICE** vv34-35

**Great REACH and GROWTH** chs 2-4

**Great PRESENCE** v31

**POWER** greater than **PERSECUTION** ch4

**We even get a POSTER CHILD - Barnabas**

6

Acts 4:32-37

**BUT...**

...a certain man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira.... Acts 5:1

Acts 5:1-13

7

Acts 5

<sup>1</sup> But a certain man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, <sup>2</sup> and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet. <sup>3</sup> But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back some of the price of the land?" <sup>4</sup> "While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God."

<sup>5</sup> And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; and great fear came upon all who heard of it. <sup>6</sup> And the young men arose and covered him up, and after carrying him out, they buried him.

8

Acts 5

<sup>7</sup> Now there elapsed an interval of about three hours, and his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. <sup>8</sup> And Peter responded to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for such and such a price?" And she said, "Yes, that was the price." <sup>9</sup> Then Peter said to her, "Why is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they shall carry you out as well." <sup>10</sup> And she fell immediately at his feet, and breathed her last; and the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. <sup>11</sup> And great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all who heard of these things. <sup>12</sup> And at the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico. <sup>13</sup> But none of the rest dared to associate with them; however, the people held them in high esteem.

9

UGLY TRUTH ABOUT HUMAN NATURE in this passage:

Ch 4 was GREAT GLORY in the church

Ch 5 is GREAT PROBLEMS (SIN) - introduced to the unity of the church

— This is the first recorded instance of SIN in the church

— This is the first recorded instance of DEATH in the church

Luke gives us another set of POSTER CHILDREN:  
Ananias and Sapphira

10

The Acts 5 Event

Is an ugly reminder that humans will SIN, given the opportunity...  
even the **CHRISTIANS!**

— Even in the most Spirit-filled church, **EVIL** is at work!

— Jesus saves us from sin...the **PENALTY** of sin and He leads us in living now to  
roust out the **PRESENCE** of sin in our living.

— **GREAT** churches aren't **PERFECT** churches –  
they are **TRANSPARENT** and **GENUINE** and they deal with their problems.

This event was not about **CONCEALED CASH**;  
it was about **CORRUPTED CHARACTER**

There was **STOLEN VALOR** - naked **FRAUD** -  
and it had almost nothing to do with **FINANCES!**

11

Six Things Acts 5 Shows Us

Ananias and Sapphira were **POSERS** v41-2

<sup>1</sup> Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, <sup>2</sup> and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet.

- 1) Note: This passage affirms the right of **PRIVATE OWNERSHIP**  
(not a communist church)
- free to own property
  - free to buy and sell at will
  - free to distribute as saw fit
- (Peter states that in v4)

12

Six Things Acts 5 Shows Us

**Ananias and Sapphira were POSERS** vv1-2

<sup>1</sup> Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, <sup>2</sup> and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet.

**2) Ananias and Sapphira were NOT responding to an APOSTOLIC MANDATE or a SCRIPTURAL STATUTE:**

**IT WAS NEVER MANDATED OR STATED THAT THEY SELL THEIR PROPERTY!**

**THEY WERE NEVER OBLIGATED TO GIVE ANY OF THE PROCEEDS TO THE CHURCH**

13

Six Things Acts 5 Shows Us

**Ananias and Sapphira were PRAISE SEEKERS** vv1-2

<sup>1</sup> Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, <sup>2</sup> and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet.

**1) This passage affirms a pattern for CHURCH GIVING**  
- **VOLUNTARY GIVING** where the proceeds are brought and "laid them at the apostles' feet" (4:35;5:2)

**Donations were placed in the hands of spiritual leadership ...who coordinated the distribution of those funds for ministry... and who were in turn responsible before God for their use.**

14

The NT Pattern For Giving

<sup>29</sup> And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea.

<sup>30</sup> And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders.

Acts 11:28-30

On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come. 1 Corinthians 16:2

**Ananias and Sapphira were POSERS who sought to EXPLOIT that pattern for their own ends**

15

Six Things Acts 5 Shows Us

**Ananias and Sapphira were PRAISE SEEKERS** vv1-2

<sup>1</sup> Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, <sup>2</sup> and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet.

**2) We see the spiritual warfare by SATANIC ATTACK in two areas:**  
from **OUTSIDE** the church and from **WITHIN** the church  
- **PERSECUTION** (outside)  
- **INTIMIDATION** (outside)  
- **TEMPTATION** (within)  
- through **SELFISH ACTIONS** (within)

16

Even (Especially) believers can be SUSCEPTIBLE to Satanic influence

**Jesus actually called Peter SATAN at one point!**

Matthew 16 –

<sup>21</sup> Jesus began to say plainly to his disciples, "I must go to Jerusalem and suffer much from the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law. I will be put to death, but three days later I will be raised to life." <sup>22</sup> Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "God forbid it, Lord!" he said. "That must never happen to you!" <sup>23</sup> Jesus turned around and said to Peter, "Get away from me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my way, because these thoughts of yours don't come from God, but from man." (tev)

**Believers are most often derailed by their own SELFISH ACTIONS and INNER STRUGGLES**

*But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. James 1:14*

17

TIME OUT: Were Ananias and Sapphira Christians?

✓ They were INCLUDED among the believers in 4:32

✓ They were dealing with the HOLY SPIRIT 5:3

✓ The point of Acts 5 is about sin in the CHURCH

✓ Remember: Satan can INFLUENCE believers

✓ DEATH can be God's correction for believers –  
Matt 16:21-23; 1 Cor 11:30-32; 1 Jn 5:16

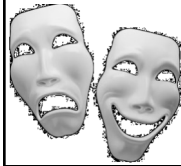
✓ The result of the 'event' of Acts 5 was fear coming on the whole church v11

18

Six Things Acts 5 Shows Us

**Ananias and Sapphira were UNASHAMED LIARS**

<sup>3</sup> But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back some of the price of the land?" <sup>4</sup> "While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God."



Their lying was a cover for their **HYPOCRISY**

God is motivated against **HYPOCRISY** more than nearly anything

Hypocrite (*hupocrites*) came out of the Greek theatre  
Spoke of the "dual nature" of actors who  
**PRETENDED TO BE SOMEONE THEY WERE NOT**

19

Who God's Harshes Judgments?

Woman at the well – John 4

Woman caught in adultery – John 8

Zaccheus the traitor – Luke 19

Consorting with tax collectors and sinners

Matt 11:19; Mk 2:16; Lk 15:1

Gentiles – Matt 8:5-ff; 15:21-ff

**NOPE!**

**It was the those who practiced their righteousness 'BEFORE MEN'**

20

God's Harshes Judgments...

Matthew 6 –

<sup>1</sup> Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. <sup>2</sup> When therefore you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

<sup>3</sup> But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing <sup>4</sup> that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you. <sup>5</sup> And when you pray, you are not to be as the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners, in order to be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

21

God's Harshes Judgments...

"You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me but in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.' " Matthew 15:7

13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from men; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in...

27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. 28 "Even so you too outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

Matthew 23:13, 27

22

**There is nothing so ugly in God's sight as those who flaunt a spiritual beauty they do not possess.**

- John MacArthur

**Even the offering from Ananias and Sapphira was as offensive to God as their LIE!**

<sup>11</sup> "What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?" says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed cattle. And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs, or goats.

<sup>12</sup> "When you come to appear before Me, Who requires of you this trampling of My courts?

<sup>13</sup> "Bring your worthless offerings no longer, Incense is an abomination to Me...  
Isaiah 1:11-13

23

Lying to the Holy Spirit –

**Hypocrisy is a focus on what *people* think rather than what *GOD* knows!**

"why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit...  
You have not lied to men, but to God." vv3,4

—Recognizes the **PERSONHOOD** of the Holy Spirit

—Recognizes the **DEITY** of the Holy Spirit...their lying was ultimately to **GOD**

24

#### The Source of Their Hypocrisy –

<sup>3</sup> But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to **keep back** some of the price of the land?"

**keep back** = *nophisasthai*  
To embezzle

25

#### Six Things Acts 5 Shows Us

**Ananias and Sapphira were CONSPIRATORIAL** <sup>v4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> "While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God."

**They did not just lie and deceive on a whim: THEY PLANNED IT**

26

#### Six Things Acts 5 Shows Us

**Even Christians can be SATAN's INSTRUMENTS when we do that** <sup>v3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to **keep back** some of the price of the land?"

— **filled** = *eplērōsen* – means to be **INFLUENCED**; same root as  
...when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was  
shaken, and **they were all filled** with the Holy Spirit... Acts 4:31

— **Their lie/deception GRIEVED the Holy Spirit**  
Ephesians 4:30

27

#### The End of Ananias and Sapphira

**God can be as glorified in the DEATH of the saints as He is in their lives!**

**God is PASSIONATE about a pure bride**  
(2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:25-27)

**Sometimes a saint CUT OFF is preferable to a saint CORRUPTED**

<sup>16</sup> If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life—to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that. <sup>17</sup> All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death.  
1 John 5:16-17 esv  
(cf 1 Cor 11:27-30)

28

#### Six Things Acts 5 Shows Us

**The FEAR of the LORD came upon the church** <sup>vv11,13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> And great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all who heard of these things. <sup>12</sup> And at the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico. <sup>13</sup> But none of the rest dared to associate with them; however, the people held them in high esteem.

**The 'purging of the Lord' created three things:**

**1) A great REVERENCE for God**

- Is a reminder that God will be glorified either in our **LIFE** or **DEATH**
- Is a reminder that the **LORD** directs how he is to be worshiped
- Is a reminder that **GRACE** is not license
- Is a reminder that **EVERY PART** of our lives should be pure before God

29

#### Six Things Acts 5 Shows Us

**The FEAR of the LORD came upon the church** <sup>vv11,13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> And great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all who heard of these things. <sup>12</sup> And at the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico. <sup>13</sup> But none of the rest dared to associate with them; however, the people held them in high esteem.

**The 'purging of the Lord' created three things:**


**2) A great POWER in Apostles' Ministry**

**3) A great RESPECT for the church**

30

Half of the misery in the world comes from trying to look, instead of trying to be, what one is not!  
-George MacDonald

Question today:  
WHAT ARE YOU?



31


*For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?*  
1 Peter 4:17 esv

32

Insights and Applications

**How to Overcome Hypocrisy...**

1. Be **BORN AGAIN** – only the regenerated can overcome natural human hypocrisy
2. Be **GENUINE** before God and **TRANSPARENT** before men
3. Regard a 'LESSER appearance with **GREAT**ER importance' than man's esteem – seek out God's approval



33

34