

## Acts 5

- I. 5:1-11 Ananias and Sapphira
- II. 5:12-16 Signs and Wonders
- III. 5:17-21 The Apostles Go to Prison
- IV. 5:22-32 Back Before the Council
- V. 5:33-42 Gamaliel's Counsel

### Introduction: Acts 4:36-37

- I. 5:1-11 Ananias and Sapphira

- A. 5:1 *But* This story contrasts with that of Barnabas.
- B. 5:3 & 4 Notice that the Holy Spirit is **a Person** who can be lied to, and is **God**.
- C. 5:8 Peter gave Sapphira a chance to tell the truth, but she didn't take it.
- D. 5:11 Here as in v.5 the result is *great fear*.

- **Application 1:** What was their sin, which God judged so severely? Hypocrisy.
  - The apostles didn't pressure them to give the full price of the land. (5:4)
    - No "word from the Lord" that the Holy Spirit was leading someone to sell some land and give the proceeds to their ministry.
  - A & S didn't have to sell the land in the first place.
  - Having sold it, they were welcome to use their own money as they pleased.
  - A & S were at fault in wanting to appear more generous than they really were.
- **Application 2:** A Biblical Attitude Toward Giving
  - Biblical Baseline is the Tithe (one tenth)
    - Abraham (Genesis 14:20) and Jacob (Genesis 28:22) before the Law, as an offering from the heart.
    - Under the Law, the tithe became mandatory for all Jewish citizens.
      - If we count all the mandatory sacrifices and offerings, the percentage is actually much more than that.
    - The Lord accuses Israel of robbing Him when they held back their tithes and implies that their poverty was actually due to their stinginess. (Malachi 3:6-12)
  - In the NT, the tithe is not so much eliminated as superseded – the same way other commandments are (Murder? No, anger. Adultery? No, lust.).
    - Jesus encourages us to give generously, so that more will be given to us (Luke 6:38).
    - Paul reinforces that principle, by comparing it to sowing and reaping (2 Cor. 9:6-8)
  - Three NT principles to help guide us in our giving:
    - **Give Generously** based on what you have (Mark 12:41-44)
    - **Give Systematically** rather than on the basis of emotional appeals (1 Cor. 16:2)
    - **Give Discreetly** not drawing attention to what you give (Matthew 6:1-4)

## II. 5:12-16 Signs and Wonders

- A. 5:15 *the shadow of Peter* There was nothing magical in Peter's shadow, but it's possible that the Lord was using this as a point of connection – a means of expression – for their faith.

- i. Compare with the example of the woman with the flow of blood:

*Matthew 9:20-22 (NKJV) <sup>20</sup>And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. <sup>21</sup>For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well." <sup>22</sup>But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour.*

- a) Is it possible that the woman was expressing a somewhat superstitious attitude? Possibly, but she also had genuine faith in Christ. His garment was merely her point of connection. She was looking more to Jesus than the garment.

- **Application:** Something Similar in Praying for the Sick

*James 5:14 (NKJV) Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.*

- Elders are not guaranteed any special powers of healing. Nor do we have any magic oil.
- So why does James encourage this practice?
  - It's a point of connection. It helps us to express our faith – and encourages our faith.
  - Simple practices like elders praying or anointing with oil, build our faith if we do them.
    - Can the Lord hear and answer the prayers of one sick person praying alone for him or herself? Absolutely, but that person's faith will be encouraged and strengthened by asking the elders to pray.

## III. 5:17-21 The Apostles Go to Prison

- A. 5:17 *Sadducees* Remember that these guys don't believe in angels, or much of anything that involves the supernatural. And the angels are fully aware of this.
- B. 5:21 Now picture this: The apostles begin teaching publicly, at the temple "early in the morning" as the angel said. Meanwhile, the high priest gathers the council assuming the apostles are still in prison. Now he calls for them.

## IV. 5:22-32 Back Before the Council

- A. 5:23 The guards were apparently unaware the apostles were gone!
- B. 5:25 Arrgh! How irritating! How humiliating!
- C. 5:26 The captain and the officers are the ones afraid the people will stone them.

D. 5:28 *You have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine* Oh that Christ's enemies would feel compelled to say that about us!

*And intend to bring this Man's blood upon us* Maybe so. Or perhaps their conscience is just beginning to bother them.

*Matthew 27:24-25 (NKJV) <sup>24</sup>When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it." <sup>25</sup>And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children."*

*"Conscience is the internal perception of God's Moral Law." – Oswald Chambers*

The high priest can fight with the apostles all he wants, but the real battle he faces is internal. This high priest is either Annas or Caiaphas and this is the same council that tried Jesus. The high priests were intensely disliked by the Jewish people in that day for their corruption. Do you think his soul was tormented at this time?

E. 5:29 Obviously, civil or religious authorities like this generally ought to be obeyed, but when their commands directly contradict the commands of God, who should we listen to? God, of course, and that's what Peter is saying.

i. Ironically, the Jewish leaders similarly resisted the Roman rule when it interfered with Jewish religion. They were right to do so, because theirs was the biblical faith. Now, however, they are rejecting their own Messiah and attempting to silence His apostles.

F. 5:30-32 Again Peter confronts them with the Gospel.

V. 5:33-42 Gamaliel's Counsel

A. 5:33 *they were furious* literally, "cut in two". That's what the Word of God does, it cuts like a sword. (Hebrews 4:12)

B. 5:34 *Gamaliel* The most prominent and highly respected rabbi of that day. His most famous student? The apostle Paul. (Acts 22:3)

C. 5:38-39 What about his counsel? He's right that you can't overthrow the work of God. He's wrong in that every work of men quickly comes to nothing: Islam has been going for well over 1000 years and some say it's the fastest growing religion on earth today, due to its high birthrates in Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Does that make it a work of God?

D. 5:41 How do you stop these guys? When you beat them, they count it as a blessing!

E. 5:42 And so, with or without permission, they keep teaching and preaching Jesus.

● **Application:** That's what we're going to do too – keep teaching and preaching Jesus.