

Church – The Beginnings, Part 13
The Community of Faith, Finances, and the Fear of the LORD
Acts 4:32 – 5:16 | 01/22/2017
NEW LIFE FELLOWSHIP
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Links to Our Current Teaching Series and Previous Teachings:

Current Series: Church, The Beginnings → NLFJI.org/ACTS

Sections in Acts up to this point (similar to “episodes”):

Acts 1 → Transition from the Gospels to just before the day of Pentecost

Acts 2 → The Day of Pentecost, Peter’s Preaching, and the forming of the first church of Jesus Christ

Acts 3:1 – 4:31 → The Healing in the Temple (Miracles), More Gospel Preaching, More folks saved, Persecution and More Preaching of the Gospel

Acts 4:32 – 5:42 → Community of Faith, Finances, God’s Judgment against Ananias & Sapphira, Gospel Preaching, Miracles, Persecution, More Preaching, Community of Faith

1. The Community of Faith – it was not communism – but possessions were to be used for the common purpose of loving one another and spreading the gospel of Christ not for self-indulgence, etc. (see Luke 12:15; 14:33; Acts 2:44-45) – taking care of all those folks who would’ve gone home to their home countries after Pentecost – were still there.
2. The Preaching of the Gospel and the Teaching of God’s Word continued Publicly in the Temple at Solomon’s Porch (Solomon’s Portico). This is Central to being a Community of Faith. The Word of God Proclaimed, Trusted, Obeyed, and Lived-Out in the church and publicly in the sight of the lost around us. The Apostles were the only leaders at this point, and God’s Miraculous powers were very strong in and through them, to CONFIRM God’s Word to bring the Lost to Salvation and to BOLSTER the FAITH of those already saved.
3. Finances, Possessions, etc. – Grace Giving unto God for His Kingdom Purposes
Facts about this Historical Account (Acts 4:32 – 5:16)
 - a. This was VOLUNTARY and was INITIATED by the people, not the apostles
- it was inspired by God’s Spirit according to God’s Word (see Exodus 35:1 – 36:7)
 - b. This was to meet present needs
 - c. It was NOT a continuous, ongoing “collection” of money
 - d. It was publicly laid at the feet of the Apostles -
Conclusion: the Apostles must’ve been Trustworthy with Finances

4. Why did Ananias and Sapphira die? (Acts 5:1-11)

Simple Answer (surface answer): They Lied to God, the Holy Spirit.

What or Who filled their hearts? See Acts 5:3

More Questions: Haven’t folks lied to God, after being saved, and not been killed by God?

Answer: Yes, of course

Big Picture Answer: God made an **EXAMPLE** of them.

It is the Beginning, the Foundational Period of Laying the Foundations of the Church -

Read Exodus through Joshua ... notice how God greatly and powerfully intervened at the beginning – at Mount Horeb / Sinai ... and then later on He worked through the leader(s) – such as through Moses ... and then through Joshua. By the time of Joshua we saw less miraculous and more requirement of obedience. **That is just the way God is.** Laying a foundation with Power and the Miraculous and then folks must Obey God or suffer the consequences as they come, etc. Ananias and Sapphira became **EXAMPLES** and folks Feared God, again.

The Fear of the LORD is very Healthy for Church Growth and Evangelism.

Once folks Feared, Trusted, and Obeyed God, He provided the Miraculous →

Confirming His Word

Acts 4:32 – 5:16

Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but **they had all things in common.** ³³ And with **great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.** And **great grace** was upon them all. ³⁴ Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, ³⁵ and **laid them at the apostles' feet**; and they distributed to each **as anyone had need.**

³⁶ And **Joses**, who was also named **Barnabas** by the apostles (which is translated **Son of Encouragement**), a Levite of the country of **Cyprus**, ³⁷ having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

5:1 - But a certain man named **Ananias, with Sapphira** his wife, sold a possession. ² And **he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it**, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³ But Peter said, "Ananias, why has **Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit** and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? ⁴ While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? **You have not lied to men but to God.**"

⁵ Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So, **great fear** came upon all those who heard these things. ⁶ And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him.

⁷ Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you **sold the land for so much?**" She said, "Yes, for so much."

⁹ Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to **test the Spirit of the Lord?** Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and **they will carry you out.**" ¹⁰ Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband. ¹¹ **So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.**

¹² And **through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders** were done among the people. And they were all with **one accord in Solomon's Porch.** ¹³ Yet none of the rest **dared join** them, but the people esteemed them highly. ¹⁴ And **believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,** ¹⁵ so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. ¹⁶ Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and **they were all healed.**