



Integrity and Hypocrisy

Acts 4:32-5:16

A. Integrity - Authenticity (4:32-37)

1. The Church (32-35)
2. Barnabas (36-37)

B. Hypocrisy - Deceit/Lies (5:1-11)

1. Ananias and Sapphira - Collusion
 - a. Premeditated (made a plan)
 - b. Motivated by Pride

C. Three Responses to Recent Events (5:12-16)

(Warning from the Sanhedrin/The Fate of Ananias/Sapphira)

1. Believers continued meeting together in Solomon's Colonnade (12)
2. The Resistant Jews ("none of the rest") were reluctant to associate too closely with the believers (13a)
3. The Receptive Jews ("the people") - "held the believers in high esteem," and the Christians many men and women from this group came to believe in the Lord and were added to the number of believers. (13b)

Discussion Questions

1. Read Acts 4:32-35. What were some primary characteristics of the early church mentioned in these verses? How can we practice these components as 21st-century believers?
2. Read Acts 5:1-11. When Ananias lied to Peter, who were they really lying to (see v. 4)? Why would Ananias and Sapphira lie about the price they paid for their land? How did the tragic event with Ananias and Sapphira affect the church (see 5:11)? (Abide Bible)
3. What was the potential risk of allowing Ananias and Sapphira's deception to go un-punished? What does this tell you about the importance of authenticity in the church? Why is authenticity so important in our interaction with those who do not yet believe?
4. Pray together asking God to give you compassion for others, initiative to share the gospel with those who do not know Jesus yet, and vulnerability to admit your own inadequacies and needs as you seek help from others).

Acts 4:32-37 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. ³³ And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴ There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold ³⁵ and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

³⁶ Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, ³⁷ sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Acts 5:1-16 But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, ² and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it 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 to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? ⁴ While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God." ⁵ When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it. ⁶ The young men rose and wrapped him up and carried him out and buried him.

⁷ After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ And Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much." And she said, "Yes, for so much." ⁹ But Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." ¹⁰ Immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ And great fear came upon the whole church (first time the word *ekklesia* is used in the bible) and upon all who heard of these things.

¹² Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. ¹³ None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. ¹⁴ And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, ¹⁵ so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. ¹⁶ The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

God designed this community called the church to be a system of mutual support. So when one person puts on a mask and pretends to have it all together, we all suffer. - Swindoll



L.I.F.E. Group Leader's Guide

Main Idea: Representing Christ as an authentic community by resisting pride and choosing to embrace authenticity through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Looking Back: Did you take advantage an opportunity to share about what Christ has done in your life?

Ice breaker question: Have you ever avoided telling the truth or told a lie because you were afraid of what others would think about you? What were the consequences? (Abide Bible- AB)

Study Question #1: Read Acts 4:32-35. What were some primary characteristics of the early church mentioned in these verses? How can we practice these components as 21st century believers?

Study Question #2: Read Acts 5:1-11. When Ananias lied to Peter, who were they really lying to (see v. 4)? Why would Ananias and Sapphira lie about the price they paid for their land? How did the tragic event with Ananias and Sapphira affect the church (see 5:11)? (Abide Bible)

Study Question #3: What was the potential risk of allowing Ananias and Sapphira's deception to go un-punished? What does this tell you about the importance of authenticity in the church? Why is authenticity so important in our interaction with those who do not yet believe?

Pray Together: Pray together asking God to give you compassion for others, the initiative to share the gospel with those who do not know Jesus yet, and vulnerability to admit your own inadequacies and needs as you seek help from others.

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS (CRU)

- 1) What does this passage tell you about God and His Character?
- 2) What does this passage tell you about People?
- 3) What does this passage tell you about His relationship with people?
- 4) How might the Holy Spirit be prompting you to live differently?

