

ACTS

Church Unity

The Generosity of Believers

Acts 4:32-35 (NIV) “All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. ³³With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God’s grace was so powerfully at work in them all ³⁴that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales ³⁵and put it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need.”

The Hypocrisy of Ananias and Sapphira

Acts 5:1-6 (NIV) “Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. ²With his wife’s full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles’ feet. ³Then Peter said, ‘Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? ⁴Didn’t it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn’t the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God.’ ⁵When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. ⁶Then some young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him.”

1. Their sin was energized by Satan.

Acts 5:3 (NIV) “Then Peter said, ‘Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?’”

2. Their sin was motivated by pride.

Acts 4:36-37 (NIV) “Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means “son of encouragement”), ³⁷ sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles’ feet”

3. Their sin was directed against God’s church.

Acts 5:7-11 (NIV) “About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸Peter asked her, ‘Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?’ ‘Yes,’ she said, ‘that is the price.’ ⁹Peter said to her, ‘How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also.’ ¹⁰At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.”