

Holy Spirit, Part 11- The Fear of the Lord
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June 16, 2019

Introduction

Today we are going to look at one of the most intriguing stories of the New Testament. It's the story about Ananias and Shaphira.

Acts 5:1-16 [NKJV]

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.

Ananias and Shaphira story is about:

- 1. The dangers of lying-** the Bible says that all liars will have their part in the lake of fire.

2. **Hypocrisy**- the word hypocrite means a stage actor. They were acting like they were giving a certain amount for men to applaud them. But the truth is that they were holding back what they were supposed to be giving.
3. **The dangers of greed.** They said, that other people around them were giving, but greed had filled their hearts. They were holding back from what they were supposed to do because of greed.
4. **Hermeneutics** – the theory & methodology of interpretation of scripture. It is a theology term that simply speaks to the practice of looking at the whole counsel of scripture and read things in proper context when coming to a conclusion. Which is to view what God does thorough the lenses of the cross, to know the nature of God and who he is.

The cross shows God as loving, gracious willing to give his best for his enemies.

God is perfect Holiness

- Sin is just our decision to say we don't want Gods involvement
- If God ever decides to step away from us He takes his protecting nature of grace and mercy with him where we the enemy is left to steal kill and destroy

It is believed that this was not a one-time lie

- This was the ending of a conspiracy where this married couple had made up their mind that they would no longer live for God
- God decided to step back
- When he removed his grace, and protection the enemy was there to steal kill and destroy

The miracles of this story is not that they died suddenly

- It's that we are alive every single day even though we have sinned ourselves.
- The miracles of this story is that we have lied, been greedy in some instances, but God has decided to keep us covered by his grace

This perspectives takes the attention off of what we don't understand

- And it places it on his amazing grace
- Because of Gods holiness and our sinful nature, the wages of sin is death
- But every single day is a gift from God and an illustration of his protection on us because of his love and his protection

There may be things that happen in life and in the Bible that we do not fully understand today, but we may later on. There are somethings we might not ever fully understand, but we have to be okay with that, we are called to trust him. When we come across something that we don't understand, God wants to see we trust him anyway.

A healthy perspective on this is that God is good and just, he is a healer and a way maker. He is all powerful, faithful and trustworthy.

The Fear of the Lord

- *After this story belief in the church exploded*

- *Multitudes were added to the church*
- *Peter's shadow was healing people*
- *They were even respected by the priests*

Why?

Acts 5:11 [NIV]

¹¹ Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

- What is the fear of the Lord? *It's a Reverence for Him*
- There is a good and a bad fear- There is a healthy fear and an unhealthy fear
 - Unhealthy fear is where we are scared of something
 - God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power of love and sound mind
 - Overcome that fear as you put God first, we should allow Gods words in our heart and mind
 - The fear in this passage is a healthy fear
 - The fear of the Lord is not us being afraid of God, it is our obedience to God
 - It is our revering, honoring, respecting, and having obedience to God
 - It is when we hold God up as higher above anything else in our lives, knowing that he is all powerful and all mighty

What does the fear of the Lord look like? It's when we stand in AWE of Him, when we look at him as all powerful, when we honor his presence, when we honor his word, when we honor his house, and when we place no other God before him.

What else does the bible say about the fear of the Lord?

Ecclesiastes 12:3 [ESV]

¹³ The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

Some of the greatest evidence when we fear the Lord is obedience.

Psalms 33:8 [NKJV]

⁸ Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

We can't be casual in our approach to God

2 Corinthians 7:1 [NIV]

¹ Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

Our desire to live a Holy life stems from a healthy fear of God or reverence for God.

Proverbs 31:30 [NIV]

³⁰ Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

Acts 9:31 [NIV]

³¹ Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

Live in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit.

Discussion Questions

1. Sin shows God what? [we don't want his involvement in our lives]
2. What does the fear of the Lord look like? [It's when we stand in AWE of Him, when we look at him as all powerful, when we honor his presence, when we honor his word, when we honor his house, and when we place no other God before him.]
3. What is an example of unhealthy fear? [scared of something]
4. Example of healthy fear? [fear of the Lord and our obedience to God]

Tips for reading the Bible

If you are newer to studying the bible one recommendation is SOAPs, an easy way to study the Bible goes like this.

SOAP	Example
S - Scripture	S - Acts 17
O - Observation	O - What do you understand from this scripture? What stands out to you? What did you learn?
A - Application	A - How can this scripture be applied to your life? How can it be lived out?
P - Prayer	P - What is your prayer? Ask God to help you to apply it to your life and / or understand it more.