The Strange Case of Ananias and Sapphira October 18, 2026 Pastor Kevin S Lucas
Acts 5:1-11
Grace and Truth Bible Church

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Our Outline

I. **The Plan for Spiritual Deception (vv. 1-2)**
II. **Peter's Spiritual Detection and Diagnosis (vv. 2-4)**
III. **The Practice of Spiritual Discipline (vv. 5-6)**
IV. **The Problem of Sapphira's Duplicity (vv.7-10)**
V. **The Powerful Spiritual Direction (v. 11)**

I. The Plan for Spiritual _____ v.v.1-2 Before we examine the details of their sin, we must address a question that has divided interpreters: Were Ananias and Sapphira genuine _____?

- The text presents them as _____ of the early church community
- The sin they committed can only be committed by someone who knows what _____ care looks like.
- Peter does _____ question their salvation.
- Their sin is compared to Achan's sin. _____ was an Israelite, a member of the covenant community.

The early church was characterized by a remarkable spirit of selflessness—a Holy Spirit-driven _____ that flowed from hearts transformed by the _____.

Ananias and Sapphira _____ this spirit. They admired it—or at least they _____ the reputation it brought.

Ananias is a Hebrew _____, the Hellenized form of Hananiah, meaning "Yahweh has graciously _____."

His wife's name was Sapphira, which means "_____" in Aramaic, related to the word for sapphire stone—a _____ associated with beauty and value.

Notice the sequence of their actions, for the text is remarkably precise.

- First, they _____ a possession.
- The Scripture says they kept back _____ of the proceeds. See Joshua 1:7 LXX
- They brought a certain part and _____ it at the Apostles' feet.
- The problem was that they presented the partial amount as if it were the _____ amount.

II. Peter's Spiritual _____ and Diagnosis (vv. 2-4)

Key Words: Image, Integrity, Deception, Selfish, Lying, Grieving the Spirit, Purity, Judgment
Key Verses: Acts 4:32-37; Joshua 7:1; 2 Timothy 3:5; James 4:7; I Thessalonians 5:19; Matthew 13:24-30;

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Peter's _____ with Ananias is remarkable for its theological _____ and its pastoral courage.

Ananias has _____ to the Holy Spirit.

The very Spirit whom Ananias thought he could _____ was the One who exposed him.

Ananias did not stumble into this sin. He _____ it. He deliberated. He made a calculated _____ in his heart to deceive the Apostles and the _____ community of the church.

They were _____ Christians, governed by the _____ rather than by the Spirit, and their carnality made them vulnerable to the enemy's _____.

III. The Practice of Spiritual _____ (vv. 5-6)

The response is immediate and _____.

The severity of the _____ has troubled many readers across the centuries.

If hypocrisy were _____ at this critical juncture, the entire mission could be compromised. The church would become what _____ had often become: a community of _____ religion masking internal _____.

God's judgment was not arbitrary—it was _____.

- Numbers 15:32-36 Man gathering sticks
- Leviticus 10:1-2 Nadab and Abihu
- 2 Samuel 6:6-7 Uzzah and the Ark

In each case, the judgment seems _____ to modern sensibilities. But in each case, God was establishing a _____: holiness is not optional. The sacred is not to be treated with casual _____. And the presence of God among His people demands reverence, obedience, and _____.

As a grace-oriented church, we are sometimes _____ of being soft on sin. Nothing could be farther from the truth. We should not understand this _____ as mere terror. It is the _____, appropriate response of sinful creatures in the _____ of a holy God.

IV. The _____ of Sapphira's Duplicity (vv.7-10)

_____ hours later, Sapphira arrives. The interval is notable. Three hours is a significant period of _____.

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Perhaps she walks in smiling, expecting _____ for their generous gift. She expects to _____ in the approbation that her husband's offering was meant to secure.

Peter is asking for the _____ amount of the sale. He already knows the _____. The Holy Spirit has revealed it to him, just as He revealed the truth about Ananias. Peter is not fishing for _____. He is giving Sapphira a chance to come clean, to separate herself from the conspiracy, to _____, change her mind, before it is too late.

God graciously gives _____ for repentance before judgment falls.

- He warned _____ before Cain murdered Abel.
- He sent _____ as a preacher of righteousness for 120 years before the flood.
- He sent prophet after prophet to _____ before the exile.
- And here, He gives Sapphira one _____ opportunity to tell the truth.

Her response is damning: "Yes, for so much." She _____ the lie. She corroborates the deception. She had the opportunity to repent, to _____, to separate herself from her husband's sin. Instead, she _____ down. She compounds the original offense with her own _____ participation.

Ananias and Sapphira were in perfect _____ in their deception. They had conspired together to test God. They had _____ this together, discussed it together, _____ on the amount to conceal, and coordinated their presentation to the Apostles. This was _____ one spouse deceiving the other. This was a joint operation of _____ and hypocrisy. It was a symphony of _____.

Ananias and Sapphira were doing what _____ does—testing God, challenging His knowledge, His _____, His holiness. They were asking, in effect, "Will God really _____? Will He really care? Can we get away with _____?" They were putting God to the test, _____ Him to respond. And respond He did.

The parallel with _____ is again instructive. In Joshua 7 after Achan's sin was exposed, he and his _____ were stoned and burned in the Valley of Achor. The _____ was corporate because the _____ was corporate.

The complicity of Sapphira reminds us that sin is rarely a _____ endeavor. We influence those _____ to us. We either encourage them toward _____ or enable them in _____. Husbands and wives, parents and children, close friends, business partners—we must ask ourselves if we are encouraging _____ in our closest relationships or if we are enabling each other's _____.

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VI. **The Powerful Spiritual _____** (v. 11)

Luke writes, "So great fear came upon all the _____." The word ekklēsia (ἐκκλησία) appears here in Acts 5:11. While some _____ exists regarding its use in Acts 2:47, here in Acts 5:11 there is no ambiguity. Luke uses ekklēsia explicitly to _____ to the community of believers in Jerusalem.

There is a position known as hyper-dispensationalism—sometimes called “Mid-Acts” or “_____ dispensationalism”—that argues the church did not come into existence until either the _____ of Paul in Acts 9 or the final _____ of the Gospel by the Jews at the end of Acts 28. According to this view, the believers in the early chapters of Acts were _____ yet the church. They were a _____ remnant, a transitional community that did not yet constitute the Body of Christ.

But the use of ekklēsia in Acts 5:11 collapses this _____. Here, well before Paul's conversion in Acts 9 and decades before the Jewish rejection in Acts 28, Luke calls the community of believers "the _____." The term is applied to the _____ community formed at Pentecost, the same community that shared their possessions, the same community that witnessed the judgment of Ananias and Sapphira. If this community is not the church, then the word ekklēsia has _____ its meaning.

The church began at _____ when the Holy Spirit baptized believers into _____ body (1 Corinthians 12:13), and it is here in Acts 5:11, bearing that _____ in unmistakable clarity.

The incident also produced a profound _____ in the church's spiritual atmosphere. Fear—deep, abiding _____—gripped both believers and outsiders. Luke tells us in Acts 5:13-14 that "none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. And believers were increasingly added to the Lord." The judgment did not _____ the church—it purified it and _____ it.

They were _____ that God was not distant or disinterested. He was _____, He was watching, and He was _____.

What kind of _____ do we want to be? Do we want to be a church that seeks growth in _____ regardless of their reality? Do we want to be a church that values and prioritizes numbers over _____, that prioritizes silly sermonettes and emotional shows and skits over genuine Bible _____?

The _____ declares that we do not need to manage our image before God. He _____ us completely—every thought, every motive, every hidden sin—and He _____ us still. Christ

did not come to make _____ people better, but He came to make _____ men and women _____. Salvation is not a _____ for the worthy, but a _____ for the guilty.

The strange _____ of Ananias and Sapphira is not merely a historical curiosity. It is a divine object _____, preserved in Scripture for our _____.