

II. The Jealous Couple: Acts 5:1-4 Message 2

The Joyous Church – Unity The Jealous Couple – Jealousy The Judicial Consequences- Death

Presumptuous Sin: *JEALOUSY!*

Romans 13:13

Intro: Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering (Sexual immorality) and wantonness (Debauchery), not in strife and **envying** –

2667 “Grinch” Do you know One?

One of Dr. Seuss’ children’s book creatures is “Grinch,” who is a creature who can’t bear the sight of anyone enjoying themselves without getting so mad he bites himself. I know Baptists like this.

2668 – Praying for G. Campbell Morgan

F. B. Meyer told the following experience to a few personal friends: “It was easy,” he said, ‘to pray for the success of **G. Campbell Morgan** when he was in America. But when he came back to England and took a church near to mine, it was something different. The old Adam in me was inclined to jealousy, but I got my heel upon his head, and whether I felt right toward my friend. I determined to act right.

“My church gave a reception for him, and I acknowledged that if it was not necessary for me to preach Sunday evenings I would dearly love to go and hear him myself. Well, that made me feel right toward him. But just see how the dear Lord helped me out of my difficulty.

There was Charles Spurgeon preaching wonderfully on the other side of me. He and Mr. Morgan were so popular, and drew such crowds, that our church caught the overflow, and we had all we could accommodate.”

Ministers’ Research Service

Acts 5:1-4 **Premeditated Sin**

We are introduced to Ananias (Heb.- God is Merciful) and Sapphira (Mrs. Good or beautiful). With full knowledge, they tried to fool the Apostles and they lied to the Holy Spirit. They allowed Satan to put a wicked plan into place so they would look great in front of all the church as Barnabas did. **What we see is presumptuous sin due to jealousy.** Many have asked me did I think God was too harsh with Ananias and Sapphira. I will show you the reason momentarily. We must understand the nature of worship and that they broke one of the Ten Commands. You may also thank God for the grace you have that comes with your relationship with Jesus Christ.

Failing God through errors and mistakes is wrong, but quite normal for sinful beings, but premeditated, presumptuous sin is egregious. **Philipps** says that, **“Satan could not conquer the church so he tried to corrupt it”** (In Loc, p. 92).

Ps 19:13

13 Keep back thy servant also from **presumptuous sins**; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the **great transgression.**

KJV

Prov 14:12

12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

KJV

1 John 5:16-17

16 If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. **There is a sin unto death:** I do not say that he shall pray for it.

17 All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.
KJV

“The sin unto death is tied to stealing God’s glory, presumptuous sin, and rejection of the Holy Spirit’s calling,” JRG.

Verse 1 – The couple had seen what Barnabas had done and wanted to be recognized. Self-recognition is dangerous and it is a devilish attempt at stealing God’s glory. Make certain that you never take God’s glory! Barnabas didn’t ask to be recognized, Luke simply uses the recognition to tell us what happened. What happens when a person steals God’s glory?

Acts 12:19-24

Then Herod went from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there a while. 20 He had been quarreling with the people of Tyre and Sidon; they now joined together and sought an audience with him. Having secured the support of Blastus, a trusted personal servant of the king, they asked for peace, because they depended on the king’s country for their food supply.

21 On the appointed day Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. 22 **They shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man."** 23 **Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.**

24 But the word of God continued to increase and spread.

NIV

Note also Acts 14:8-19

If you think this doesn’t apply to you, then let me ask you how you feel if you get missed or overlooked when others are being praised or thanked for a job well done? The pastor’s greatest fear is leaving someone out when he is thanking people for their service. If our work is done for Christ it is seen in heaven. You need no

mortal words to improve your standing in glory. You can't believe how hurt people get when they get overlooked by the pastor.

Matt 6:1-6

"Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no **reward** from your Father in heaven.

2 "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their **reward** in full. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will **reward** you.

5 "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their **reward** in full. 6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will **reward** you.

NIV

Quote: "No man is a complete failure until he begins disliking men who succeed." Chuck Colson

Verse 2 - Kept back – wrongfully keep back. The Greek word **nosphizomai**, which means **keep back**, **purloin** and can be translated as **embezzle**. Used here in the middle voice to show it is used in a clandestine way. His wife also knew the plan and was in on it.

I do not know what is in us that makes us so selfish. Could the Holy Spirit have told Ananias to give all the money to the Apostles, maybe so. Did the Holy Spirit just reveal all the truth to Peter? Did Ananias just lie to Peter when he brought the money to Peter? ***Jealousy or greed always lead to lying.***

Illustrations: A little boy that was 6 went to the train station with his mother. In those days a 5 year old traveled for free. The mother told the boy to tell the conductor he was 5. The boy did so when asked how old he was. Later on the conductor came by again and started to talk with the little boy. "Well, how you getting along lil fellow?" The boy said, "really good." He then asked the

little fellow when he would be 6 years old. The boy said, “About the time I get off this train I’m gonna be 6” (Swindoll, p. 344)

Mark Twain said that, *“the difference between a person that tells the truth and a liar is that the liar must have a better memory”* (Sweeting, s.v. lie).

Issac Watts said, *“He who does one fault and tries to hide it will make a second fault”* (Sweeting).

Cicero: *“So near is falsehood to truth that a wise man would do well not to trust himself on the narrow edge”* (Sweeting).

A mother asked her little boy what a lie was. He said, “Mother, a lie is an abomination to the Lord, but a very present help in time of need” (Swindoll, p.343, s.v, Lie. Ultimate Illustrations).

Verse 3 – The first time the word Satan is used by Luke is in Acts” (**Satanas- accuser, the devil**).

“To lie to,” should say “to deceive.” The Greek word is **pseudomai**. Satan wanted to deceive even the Holy Spirit; that cannot be done. This is a falsehood, a lie.

When we lie, we pass the buck. We do not want to take responsibility for our actions. When we lie, we avoid conflict that the truth brings. Yet, the consequences of putting off conflict today will only increase the conflict for another day.

We all have lied and no one likes to be lied to. How do you feel when someone lies to you? How do you feel about their character when they lie and you find out? Do you still trust liars?

Prov 12:17

17 A truthful witness gives honest testimony,
but a false witness tells lies.

NIV

Prov 16:11-13

11 Honest scales and balances are from the Lord;
all the weights in the bag are of his making.

12 Kings detest wrongdoing,
for a throne is established through righteousness.

13 Kings take pleasure in honest lips;
magic arts, the idolaters and all liars — their place will be in the
fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second they value a man
who speaks the truth.

NIV

Rev 21:7-8

7 He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and
he will be my son. 8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile,
the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic
arts, the idolaters and all liars — their place will be in the fiery
lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

NIV

What is the greatest lie a person can tell? ***“Yes, I am saved
when they are not!!!”***

Verse 4 The sad thing was they did not have to lie. They could
have just kept what they wanted. They conceived this plan with
the influence of Satan in their lives. ***Never be the person that
Satan uses to destroy the kingdom.***

Quote: “Envy shoots at others but wounds herself.”

They planned this thing in their hearts- HCSB. “You
think,” “fixed,” or “conceived” of this in your heart. The
Greek word is **ethou** from **tithemi**, which translates to
conceived, purposed, ordained, or settled. They conceived this
sin. What makes it worse is that **tithemi** is translated as kneel
down, ordain, appoint, bow, or commit. ***This was a false act of
worship.*** This is the same word in verse 4:35 referring to what
the other people and Barnabas were doing.

Luke is literally saying that this couple was guilty of jealousy and
wanted to be like Barnabas. Peter asked them, using the same word,

“Why have you allowed “Satan” to use your heart to lie and try to deceive the Holy Spirit. In other words, why are you creating false worship when you have no need to do that? I never want to allow my mind to be used by Satan. We must stay in the truth to keep ourselves safe. Tell yourself the truth.

If our worship is for the purpose of drawing attention to ourselves, hiding presumptuous sin, or stealing God’s glory, it is false worship.

Word Up – That’s preaching the truth. When we lie – when we are jealous, when we conceive in our hearts these sins – we have turned our hearts over to Satan to use them. This is false worship (**pseudomai**).

III. The Judicial Consequences: Acts 5:5-11- Death Message #3

Verse 5 – The Soul that Sinneth – It Will Die

Holy Spirit has a sense of humor – *“and great fear seized all the people.”* I guess it did. Note verse 13. People were cautious about joining the group. Now that’s a holy church.

Illustration: Boice tells the story of a sermon that he heard preached by Donald Gray Barnhouse. It was entitled, “Men Whom God Struck Dead.” It included the story of Ananias and Sapphira but also of others in the Bible who lost their lives due to sin. It included the Old Testament story of Nadab and Abihu who offered improper fire upon God’s altar and were struck dead, and the story of Uzza who reached out and touched God’s ark when it was being transported to Jerusalem and he was struck dead. I’m also reminded of how Moses almost lost his life in Exodus 4:24ff.

Ex 4:24-26

24 At a lodging place on the way, the Lord met [Moses] and was about to kill him. 25 But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her

son's foreskin and touched [Moses'] feet with it. "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me," she said. 26 So the Lord let him alone. (At that time she said "bridegroom of blood," referring to circumcision.)

NIV

Num 3:2-4

2 The names of the sons of Aaron were Nadab the firstborn and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. 3 Those were the names of Aaron's sons, the anointed priests, who were ordained to serve as priests. 4 Nadab and Abihu, however, fell dead before the Lord when they made an offering with unauthorized fire before him in the Desert of Sinai. They had no sons; so only Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests during the lifetime of their father Aaron.

NIV

2 Sam 6:6-8

6 When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. 7 The Lord's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down and he died there beside the ark of God.

8 Then David was angry because the Lord's wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah.

NIV

So here is Ananias lying to the Holy Spirit, being jealous, and allowing Satan to use his mind to disrupt the unity of the church. Satan was literally using the oldest trick in the book. This was just like the first lie told in the bible. "Did God really say that?" Satan is the Father of lies. He put a lie into their hearts. In each one of these illustrations, the people that died were guilty because they had been given instructions as to how to perform their duties before the Lord. They violated those instructions and lost their lives. ***This would be a good place for you to praise God***

for his grace and mercy in the New Testament Covenant.

Verse 6: “Wound him up”- **sustello** (like using a drawstring). This is a vivid picture. No funeral. Didn’t wait for his wife. Just buried him. Do you think that Ananias had any thought that he was living his last day?

Prov 29:1

A man who remains stiff-necked after many rebukes
will suddenly be destroyed — without remedy.

NIV

Rom 2:5-6

5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. 6 God "will give to each person according to what he has done."

NIV

Eph 2:3-6

Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. 4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions — it is by grace you have been saved.

NIV

Verse 7: As verse 1 tells us, Ananias, with his wife’s knowledge, brought a portion of the money to Peter. The fact that they both came at different times shows us that their intent was to draw attention to their gift. Why didn't they just come together to lay their gift at the disciples feet? Just like Judas, she was given an opportunity to come clean. She was asked one more time about the price of the land.

Verse 8: Likewise, three hours later Sapphira comes with her portion of the money or at least to get her praise. The text doesn’t

say she brought money but she goes to Peter to get thanked. She also gets the same result, death.

Verse 9: Do not “**test**” the Spirit – To **test** means to **try** and **prove** goodness.

Verse 10: As Boice says, for what seems like a **trivial** offense to us was very significant in the eyes of the Holy Spirit. I, like Boice, hate to use the word **trivial**, but from a human perspective, this seems to be excess. However, we must understand that sin is serious and that any form of disobedience is wrong. ***This particular sin disrupted the unity of the early church.***

This should make us all aware of the great mercy and grace that we all experience every day of our journey with Jesus. How much must God be winking at or overlooking each moment because of the atonement and redemption Christ has provided for us? I stand amazed! Thank God that He sees Jesus when He looks at me.

The Lord told Adam and Eve that if they sinned that they would die. They died spiritually first, and then they died physically at a later date. Ananias and Sapphira did not have that luxury. They literally dropped dead on the spot after their sin.

Prov 6:12-15

A scoundrel and villain,
 who goes about with a corrupt mouth,
 13 who winks with his eye,
 signals with his feet
 and motions with his fingers,
 14 who plots evil with deceit in his heart —
 he always stirs up dissension.
 15 Therefore disaster will overtake him **in an instant**;
 he will suddenly be destroyed — without remedy.

NIV

Prov 29:1

A man who remains stiff-necked after many rebukes
will suddenly be destroyed — without remedy.

NIV

2 Chron 36:16 (During Zedekiah's Reign)

16 But they mocked God's messengers, despised his words and
scoffed at his prophets until the wrath of the Lord was aroused
against his people and there was no remedy.

NIV

Verse 11: I am often confronted by church members when we have to discipline another church member. Most pastors don't even exercise church discipline anymore due to the many problems that it causes. But you will see in verse 11, that due to the discipline of those who had lied, that fear came upon the whole church (Many believe this is the first reference to the word church **[ekklesia]** in context of the new believers) and a healthy fear of the Lord began to flourish. Also see Acts 2:47 for the actual first use of church.

Great fear (megas phobos) fell upon the people. This was **mega fear**. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. What follows this cleansing of the church is nothing less than miraculous. When the church is cleansed revival breaks out. I hope you will also see that individual sin is not individual; sin effects the entire body of believers. I want you to also see that if you plan presumptuous sin in your heart (No matter how small) that Satan will be more than generous in helping you succeed in the task.

Closing: Recap.

The Joyous Church – Unity
The Jealous Couple – Jealousy
The Judicial Consequences- Death

Quotes:

“For one man who sincerely pities our misfortunes, there are a thousand who sincerely hate our successes.”

-Charles C. Colton

“The man who keeps busy helping the man below him won’t have time to envy the man above him – and there may not be anybody above him anyway.”

-Henrietta C. Mears

Spurgeon said, “A lie can get half way round the world before the truth can get its boots on.”

2267: Down in Mississippi, three young boys came into school late. They had been fishing, but when they came into the classroom they told the teacher that they had had a flat tire, which was a lie. Upon hearing the story, the teacher simply asked each boy separately, which tire?

One big difference that seminary classes had from my days at Augusta College was that the professors brought in the tests on test days and then left. With 35 preachers in the room, no one dared to cheat. We were self-monitored. Why can’t we just be that honest all the time?

Closing Illustrations:

Picture the people coming in and getting these two and taking them out. What a vivid picture and awful scene. It’s almost more than you can take. How would you feel if this happened at WBC one Sunday morning?

Think of what this couple missed out on because of jealousy and lying.

Same thing is going on right now! People are rejecting Jesus and missing fellowship in many good churches; Some people are looking for a perfect church.

Illustration and Quote: Someone once told Charles Spurgeon that they were leaving his church because they were going to find a perfect church. Spurgeon, who had a great deal of wit, and sometimes was more forthright than people dare to be today, said to them, “when you find it please don't join it because you'll ruining it (Quoted by Boice, p. 97).

Question? Who in their right mind would have left Charles Spurgeon's church? Makes me feel a lot better when people leave Woodlake because they're so righteous and picky and then they end up in a liberal church somewhere enjoying the social gospel. If you are not growing, tithing, attending, or witnessing at WBC, ***no need to leave just so you can be disobedient somewhere else.*** You can do that right here and we're already used to your disobedience. Do not test God on this.

Some people are never satisfied. They can be in as close to perfect church as possible on earth and still jealously want what others have. Lying is a direct result of seeking self-glory and recognition. Give God all the glory.