

## **Acts 5: THE CHURCH UNSTOPPABLE CONTINUED**

### **Introduction**

Acts Chapter 5 begins with one of the most controversial incidences in the book of Acts. It is hard to understand why Luke included this incident and what he thought his readers would learn from it. Nevertheless, he did, and we must grapple with the lessons God has for us from it. After reading the passage, many questions will come to your mind. What is the actual sin of Ananias and Sapphira? Wasn't the punishment too much for the offense they committed? What was the impact of this on the young church?

Acts Chapter 4 ended on a grand note, an explosion of generosity among the early church members, so much so that people sold properties and gave the proceeds to the church. Luke specifically mentioned a man named Barnabas (who would later play a significant role in the church's future) who sold a field he owned and brought the money to the church. Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, became envious of Barnabas's attention and decided to do something similar to get the same attention while unwilling to emulate his sacrifice. Their worse sin, however, according to Peter, is lying to the Holy Spirit (Vs. 3 and 9) about what happened.

The chapter continues with the account of the apostles performing many signs and wonders among the people, leading to many more people coming to faith. All these led to their arrest, imprisonment, supernatural deliverance, and re-arrest. We also see how God inspired a prominent Pharisee named Gamaliel to make way for their eventual release.

One thing we can conclude from all the accounts in chapter 5 is this; despite the unfortunate death of Ananias and Sapphira, the threat to their lives, and the arrest of the apostles, the church continued to grow in leaps and bounds, with miracles, signs, and wonders, the proclamation of the gospel and many more being added. Hence, the early church continues to fulfill Acts 1:8.

### **Study the Scriptures: Read the Passage Acts 5:1-41**

Note your thoughts as you read:

Write down any questions that come to mind as you read:

**Think Through the Following Questions**

1. What prompted Ananias and his wife, Sapphira to sell their property and give to the community?
2. What was Ananias and Sapphira's sin? Was it because they wanted the attention that would come with giving a large gift to the church or lying to the Holy Spirit?
3. What is lying to the Holy Spirit? Can you give some examples for us today?
4. What lessons can we learn from the story of Ananias and Sapphira?
5. Verse 17 lets us know that the high priest and Sadducees were motivated by jealousy in their persecution of the apostles; what were they jealous of?
6. What is the implication of verse 29, and how does it apply to us today?
7. Who was Gamaliel, what were his arguments, and why do you think his speech persuaded the leaders against executing the apostles?
8. Do you believe, as some people do, that Gamaliel was speaking in prophetic terms without knowing it?

**Lesson Learned: Are there any new things you learned from this passage today?**

**Application: How do you think this will impact your thinking and/or actions going forward?**