

Sermon Discussion Questions

"A GENUINE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE VS. A COUNTERFEIT SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE"

Discuss

As described at the end of Acts 4 (a passage that echoes and expands the description given at the end of Acts 2), the early church sounds close to perfect. There was no discord and no unmet needs, and the peace and unity enjoyed by everyone was coupled with powerful preaching and much grace. If ever there was a genuine kumbaya moment in the church, this seems to have been it.

Luke doesn't allow his readers much time to hum in happiness, however. The description of generosity and boldness in word and deed is quickly followed by the stark and fearful story of Ananias and Sapphira. What are we to learn from this contrast between true spirit-filled life and the spurious sacrificial giving made by one couple in this community?

- 1) All of the believers, we are told, "were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had." (4:32-33)
 - At LMPC, we often refer to our mission of growing in grace and giving our lives away on the mountain, in the city, and around the world. How can we be united to believers in each of these locations, not just theoretically, but practically? How can we be united with other believers beyond sharing common experiences (i.e., growing up together, sending children to the same school, working in the same field, etc.)?
 - What tends to cause division in the church? What prevents it? (If time, see 1 Cor. 1:10-17, James 3:13-18, and Eph. 4:29-32.)
- 2) The kind of no-strings-attached giving that Barnabus and other early Christians did can seem breathtakingly care-free to anyone who tries to budget carefully and plan financially for the future.
 - What enabled the believers to give so generously? What can enable us to do likewise?
 - How should we view and value our possessions? (If time, read the story of David and his men following the battle with the Amalekites in 1 Sam. 30:1-25 to consider another biblical narrative with a lot to say about property.)
- 3) What do you find shocking in the story of Ananias and Sapphira?
 - What was their sin and why was it judged so severely? (See 5:4 and 5:9)
 - What does this story teach us about God?
 - What does this story teach us about the church and God's relationship to it? (See also Ephesians 2:19-22.)
 - Should this story make us fearful? Fearful of what?



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

DATE: October 13, 2019

SPEAKER: Frank

SERIES: Acts

PASSAGE: Acts 4:32-5:11

Pray

O GOD,

Have mercy on us, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out our transgressions.

We know our transgressions. Against you, you only, have we sinned and done what is evil in your sight. You are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.

Cleanse us, and we will be whiter than snow. Restore to us the joy of our salvation and grant us a willing spirit, to sustain us.

Open our lips, and our mouths will declare your praise. A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

In the name of our Savior Jesus, who will present us before you one day without fault and with great joy. Amen.

– based on Ps. 51 and Jude 24

PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Every Valley Leadership Academy

PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Strategic Network Ministry in Turkey