

Acts 4.32 - 5.16

Integrity or Hypocrisy?!?!

Both Gospel of Luke and Acts > BEGINNINGS Great Movement

Gospel > Starts w/ Birth, Life, Ministry of Lord JESUS

Jesus (was)...baptized & was praying, the heavens were opened, & the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; & a voice came from heaven, **“You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”**  
 Luke 3.21,22

Acts > Birth, Life, Ministry of CHURCH of Risen Jesus

Acts 4.33“with great power the Apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all”

OT Glorious History: Tabernacle, Temple, Kings, Priests, Prophets

God-making New Israel – More Glory v. 32 “full number...one heart and soul...no one said any of the things...everything in common”

### 1. Unity of Believers 4.32-37

Baptism HS created One Church: v. 32 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul...they had everything in common

God-given UNITY, Not Man-made Organizational UNIFORMITY

Not COOKIE-Cutter Church > Each Unique Image-bearer of God

a. Testimony v. 33 “testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus”

ON Message: Risen Savior present by Spirit recorded in Scriptures

Message of Church Not Politics, Personality, Programs > Person X

v. 33 And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

Risen Jesus > what Early Church PREACHED and PRACTICED

Sharing GOOD NEWS Not Just work of Professionals > All People

Even Apostles > Ordinary People, Fishermen, Tax Collectors, Farmers

b. Priority v. 32 “they had everything in common” > Most Important!

v. 34,35 not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet...distributed to each as any had need.

ARREST of Apostles was ACCELERANT to Growth / Commitment  
 LEADERS Lay Down their Lives > Followers also ALL-IN  
 Ministry NOT Professional – PASSIONATE > Christ-Exalting  
 UNIFIED in Gospel – MAGNIFIED Christ – MULTIPLIED Members

NOT Communism > FORCE Not Top-Down from Human LEADERS  
 PERSUASION was Power of Christ changing Hearts & PRIORITIES  
 When Spirit working > GIVING is a Blessing NOT a Burden  
 What you CHOOSE to Invest In TEACHES Heart what to LOVE  
 HEART will FOLLOW your GIFT

c. Integrity v. 36,37 Joseph - called by the apostles Barnabas (son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Name: Joseph / Aramaic: Nick-Name Barnabas “Son of Encouragement”

Introduced here by Luke as GIVER – Servant > High Value of Kingdom

Will be mentioned 25 X’s in Acts > 5 X’s in Paul’s Letters

“Integrity: practice of being honest & showing consistent & uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles and values” Wikipedia

When God’s Church had Needs > God’s Spirit touched HEARTS  
 Precious Possessions: Greater Value X’s Hands LIVES Changed Forever  
 Barnabas was STEWARD > All Resources FROM God and FOR God  
 Not MAD, Not SAD but GLAD! > Lord loves Cheerful Giver  
 SYMBOLIC Gesture > Laying at Feet of Apostles > Respect LEADERS  
 Church of Risen Jesus Growing > Hostile Reaction of Jealous Authorities  
 Threats / Imprisonment Followers > OUTWARD Attack BACKFIRES  
 NO Matter what they DO the NUMBER of FOLLOWERS GROWS  
 Ch 5 Satan NEW Tactic > from Hostility to Hypocrisy

## 2. Inward Attack

a. Self Deception 5.<sup>1</sup> But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, <sup>2</sup> and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet.

GIVING in NT Church > TITHING is taught in BOTH Testaments

OUTSIDE Appearances – NO Diff btwn Barnabas & Ananias

v. 7 After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. > lots Happened > Husband DEAD and BURIED

SAPHIRA = lit. BEAUTIFUL > 3 Hours in BEAUTY Parlor

ANANIAS = God is MERCIFUL > NOW NO MORE

HONESTY of LUKE the HISTORIAN > Church's FAILURES

vs. 7,8 Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much." And she said, "Yes, for so much." But Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out."

NOTHING WRONG with NOT GIVING Land > Giving HALF or PART

Deception is Addictive > Tell enuf LIES > You'll BELIEVE Them!

World of SMEAR and SPIN > Promises of Politicians & Advertisers

Roman World > "They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator" Romans 1.25

b. Satan's Distortion v. 3 Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart..."

Paul calls Church the "Pillar & Ground of God's Truth" 1 Timothy 3.15

Satan – whom Jesus calls "Father of Lies" – Comes to DESTROY

Destroy – PRIORITIES, UNITY, TESTIMONY, INTEGRITY of X

Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle which fits them all. Oliver Wendell Holmes

Devil failed to Stop Church – Force from Without > Falsehood Within

The church is safe so long as Satan is attacking from the outside, but when he gets on the inside, the church is in danger. Warren Wiersbe

c. Spirit is Denied v. 3 to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? 4 While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God.”

One of **CLEAREST BIBICAL** Texts that shows **HOLY SPIRIT** is **GOD**

Ananias **UNLIKE** Barnabas > **NO Integrity** > “lies to Holy Spirit”

**WORDS** Conflicted with **ACTIONS** --- **LIED** to **HOLY SPIRIT**

Exciting Night in Jerusalem Church > Ap’s Preaching / Great Music

Last Verse “I Surrender **ALL**” – Ananias & Saphira – Come Forward **TELL** Church > Giving **ALL** of our **LAND SALE!** > Praised by **MEN!**

**LIE** to Holy Spirit > To Spirit-Filled Members of Spirit-Filled Church **SATAN** Inspired **LIE** was **CONTERFEIT** of the **GIFT** of **TONGUES**

\$ 100 bill talking to \$ 1 bill > Do you Know the Places I’ve Seen!?

I go to 5 Star Hotels – Fancy Restaurants – Golf Courses all the Time!!

\$ 1 bill: I’ve never been Such Places ‘but I’m in Church Every Sunday!!’

v. 2 ‘**KEPT BACK**’ same Greek word in **LXX** ref. to **ACHAN** in Joshua

Newly formed People of God > Conquering New Territory: Jericho

All things **DEVOTED** to God > for His **PURPOSES** & His **PEOPLE**

Things **SO** Attractive to **ACHAN** > **SECRETLY**, **STOLE** from **GOD**

God saw into Achan’s Tent > Even what was **BURIED** in the Tent!

Like **A & S** > Achan was Achin’! Swallowed into the **GROUND**

...this new community which takes the place of the Temple of the living God shouldn’t be surprised if the living God takes sin seriously... enough to make clear there is no such thing as cheap grace  
N.T. Wright

d. Disturbs the Saints > Falsehood Ruins Fellowship

vs. 5 And great fear came upon all who heard of it

1<sup>st</sup> Act of **CHURCH DISCIPLINE** > Was **SWIFT** and **SEVERE**

Nobody in that church said, “I like to think of God like I want...!”

God made **CLEAR** Who He was and What He Expected of People

v. 11 great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things.

**The Gospel should disturb the comfortable and comfort the disturbed.**

FIRST Time Luke uses WORD > CHURCH = ASSEMBLY // Synagogue SHARP Line of  
DISTINCTION > Who is IN and Who is OUT

CORPORATE Identity being ESTABLISHED > TRUE PEOPLE of GOD

Surprised by SEVERITY of God? He is GOD: HIS World, His Rules

JUST God wants CHURCH to LAUNCH in RIGHT DIRECTION

Ask 10 People – Why don't go to Church? – 9 Story of HYPOCRISY Hypocrites in the PULPIT  
and even in PEWS > SAD, OFTEN TRUE “TOO Many Hypocrites” >

COME ON! There's ROOM for ONE MORE!

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before  
the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Hebrews 4.13

e. Death too Soon

v. 5 When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. > Lit. Gave up the  
Ghost

Terrible, Sudden, Judicial Death > JUDGMENT of GOD – Not Peter

v. 10 Immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in  
they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband > Both Left  
Church wrapped in Shroud!

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our  
Lord. Romans 6.23

God's COVENANT People BEGAN to MEET Him in Tabernacle

Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they  
offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, contrary to his command. So fire came out from the  
presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD Leviticus 10.1,2

False Worship Not Acceptable even if FATHER is HIGH PRIEST

Not NORMAL in Churches Today > If so, we'd All be DEAD!

But Presence of SAME Holy God – Looks for Integrity – Sees Hypocrisy

These miracles remind us of the pervasive biblical truth that God is not only abundantly gracious  
but also holy. Dennis Johnson

### 3. Outward Advance

3<sup>rd</sup> SUMMARY Description in Acts – 1<sup>st</sup> 2 End of Chs 2 & 4 > CHURCHFOCUS on PEOPLE OUTSIDE the Church & Outside JERUSALEM

a. Danger for Sinners – BOTH Attraction & Revulsion of Living God

v. 13 None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem.

People like JOY & MERCY of Gospel > Not Threatening Holiness

Followers of Jesus called to Take His Truth, Love, Holiness to World

Even a SMALL CANDLE can CHASE Away a GREAT DARKNESS

The idea of going through life fearing both God and the consequences of sin seems unattractive in our age where people are so devoted to good feelings... When we fear the holiness of God and the consequences of sin, we avoid sin. Ajith Fernando

b. Deliverance from Sufferings vs. 12 Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles.

End of Ch 4 Church PRAYED > God to Extend Hand: Healings, Signs

POINT beyond themselves to the MERCY & GRACE of God in Christ

v. 16 The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

Dr. Luke NOT Confuse SICKNESS & Tormented by IMPURE Spirits

CHURCH of Jesus > Shows the Healing COMPASSION of JESUS

c. Delight in the Savior v. 14 And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.

PARADOXICAL Connection vs. 13 AFRAID / v. 14 ADDED

LIKE MOTH drawn to BURNING FLAME > Irresistible Grace of God

v. 15 so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them

Seen Great Emph on Right Doctrine > Gained thru Learning WORD

NOT have to have ALL Theology Straight BEFORE you can COME!

Apostles of Jesus carried His Mantle of Healing Power > TRUTH

Any Question who has TRUTH? Answer seen in POWER of God

Today > NOT Apostles, Fewer Miracles, Same God > SCRIPTURES

Places where GOSPEL goes into New, Bible-less Lands > Miracles!

1<sup>st</sup> Believed was Peter's SHADOW > God straightened their Theology AFTER First Washing in Blood / Filling with Spirit / Healing their Bodies

He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?  
Romans 8.32

DARED to BELIEVE God for their Sickness AND their Salvation

He PAID Infinitely Greater Price > Giving Own Son > Take Away Sin

Bring their SICK > Believe Preaching > Jesus was ALIVE – He Still Is!

Show Christ to World today by OUR Integrity > Love God & Neighbor

Faithful to Families – Work - Church – Community

Stand for God's Principles Not Ideas that are Popular

Mr. Clean in Jackson, MS – 45 yrs Ago: 4 Things God does NOT Know!

1. A Sin He does not Hate / 2. A Sinner He does not Love
3. Any other way of Salvation except through Jesus Cross
4. A better Time to Get Saved than Right Now

Acts 4.32 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. <sup>33</sup>And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. <sup>34</sup>There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold <sup>35</sup>and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. <sup>36</sup>Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, <sup>37</sup>sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. <sup>5</sup><sup>1</sup>But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, <sup>2</sup>and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. <sup>3</sup>But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? <sup>4</sup>While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God." <sup>5</sup>When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it. <sup>6</sup>The young men rose and wrapped him up and carried him out and buried him. <sup>7</sup>After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. <sup>8</sup>And Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much." And she said, "Yes, for so much." <sup>9</sup>But Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." <sup>10</sup>Immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things. <sup>12</sup>Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles & they were all together in Solomon's Portico. <sup>13</sup>None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. <sup>14</sup>And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, <sup>15</sup>so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. <sup>16</sup>The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

### Congregational Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for creating your Church. We rejoice as you take people "from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages" and bind them with "one heart and soul" – while each individual grows into the unique person you made in Your image. Truly we find ourselves when we are found in Christ.

Lord, continue to knit us together in Christ here at Kalahikiola. May we stand in the Risen Jesus, with our feet planted firmly on Your Word, and our hearts filled with your Spirit. May Christ and His Kingdom be our highest priority. Help us to see and respond properly to the needs around us, in our church and our community. May we not be ashamed of the Gospel.

Pray for those in Need



“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.” Thank you, Jesus, for meeting our greatest need through your sufferings on the cross! Thank you for continuing to supply all our needs from your throne. Lord, send us into the world to be people of integrity, not hypocrisy, to the praise of your glory. “Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!”