

I. REVIVAL AND GOD'S LOVE DISPLAYED IN THE CHURCH (ACTS 2-4)

The context of Acts 5 is a regional revival that is manifest in salvations, signs and wonders, and unity in the Church. There was mutual sharing (not communism – man's counterfeit to Spiritual unity) voluntary acts, supernatural love that was manifest. Barnabas sells land and gives it to the apostles to distribute (4:37).

II. ANANIAS & SAPPHIRA (ACTS 5:1-16)

vs. 3 Satan filled Ananias' heart.

vs. 4 Ananias conceived this plan in his heart.

vs. 4 Ananias lied to God.

vs. 5-10 Jews did not embalm but buried the dead on the same day. This would be especially true of someone who died by divine judgment (Deut. 21:22, 23).

vs. 9 Ananias & Sapphira agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord. They both agreed with each other to lie about the amount when they presented only a portion to the apostles.

III. THE FEAR OF THE LORD RESULTS IN INCREASE OF SALVATIONS, SIGNS, WONDERS, AND MIRACLES.

Vs. 13-14 Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly.¹⁴ And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,

Vs. 15-16 extraordinary miracles occur and they were all healed. This is in answer to the prayer in the previous chapter (Acts 4:29-30)

Acts 4:29-30 "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word,³⁰ by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus."

IV. GOD'S HOLINESS AND JUDGMENT AGAINST SIN IS DISPLAYED

A. Vs. 5 does not say that Ananias and Sapphira were directly killed by God but that they fell down and breathed his last. Did God directly kill them? It could have been a heart attack from shock or it could have been God's direct action. Either ways, it is obvious that this is connected to God's judgment upon them.

B. The wrath of God is the most talked about emotion of God because it reveals God's perfect hatred for sin. There is no fellowship with darkness in Him. There is no darkness in Him.

Deut 4:24 For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God (c.f. Heb. 10:26-31)

Prov. 6:34 For jealousy is a husband's fury; Therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

Heb. 9:27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment (c.f. John 5:28)

- C. The topic of God's wrath and eternal punishment is troubling and somewhat unsettling for many people. Many do not know what to do with the fierceness of the Judge and the subject of the wrath of God (Rom. 1:16-18; Rom 11:22)

Rom 1:16-18 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." ¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

Rom 11:22 Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

- D. When God's judgment and wrath is manifest, it either results in the fear of the Lord or in an offended heart. This can be. E.g. People are offended when God does not execute judgment: "If God is loving why does He allow evil in the world? How come He doesn't do anything about it?" At times, when God does execute judgment, when He displays His justice and brings judgment, people get offended. Conclusion: People are offended at God.

Matt. 11:6 "And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."

Matt. 24:10, 12 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

- E. Understanding God's judgments helps people overcome offense and anger towards God. We must live free from fear and confusion about what will happen in life. We must also know God deeply and truly so that we will not be offended at God and His activity at the end of this age.
- F. God is love. But He is not weak. He is just and He is patient.

2 Pet. 3:3-9 Knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."... ⁸ But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

- G. At the end, the fact that God executes judgment bothers us because our view of God is small. We've put Him in a box - *our* box. We have made Him as a god after our own desires. A god who blesses, makes life easier, and makes us wealthy and healthy. The God of the Bible is a holy God, a jealous God, and He is coming to rule the nations. This leads to a reverential, godly fear of the Lord.

Heb. 12:28-29 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. ²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire.