

## Ananias and Sapphira

Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

**Acts 5:1-2.** "But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet."

The story of Ananias and Sapphira is a sad one. It is the tale of two people who wanted to look good in the eyes of man, but with hearts that were not right in the sight of God. It was not something that happened in the heat of the moment, but was planned and executed with purpose. As with Judas, things didn't go as planned, but ended in regret and deep sorrow.

In chapter four we learn that various people who had lands or houses sold them and brought the money and laid it at the apostle's feet. This meant that they were giving it to the Lord. This then was used to help those in need. Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, wanted to look as though they were like the others. They sold a possession of land and gave part of the money to the Lord. That was good, but the problem was that they presented it as though they gave all. In truth they keep back part of the money. If they had

said that the amount that they gave was what they wanted to give without lying about it all would have been well. Trying to look good in the eyes of man was the trouble.

The Lord, by his Spirit, let Peter know that they were lying. As Peter told them, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Yes, sin will find you out as the scriptures say. These two would not receive a pat on the back and the praise of men as they wanted, they would receive something very different. Both Ananias and Sapphira would die for their lies. This may sound harsh, but God was giving an example here that he was not to be taken lightly.

People today should be glad that the Lord doesn't punish the people who lie today as quickly and severely today as he did on that day. Don't folks realize that when they lie today that they are doing the same thing that Ananias and Sapphira did? People will sometimes say, "I can't," when asked to do some service for the Lord. If they spoke the truth they would say, "I don't want to do that." It sounds better, they think, to say that they can't. When a person says "Can't" it carries the thought that they would like to do it, but are not able to.

God sees inside of us and knows the truth of what we say and do. Man

may be fooled but the Lord never is. So many have said that they would put the Lord first and then seem to forget the vow that they made before man and God. Read Ecclesiastes 5: 1-6 where you will find that God takes what we say seriously. Words are easy to say, but are sometimes hard to back up.

Someone has said that man sees what we do, but God sees why we do it. How true this is and man today should realize that he can't deceive God any more than Ananias and Sapphira did.

When we say that we will do something for the Lord, or for someone else, we had better do it. God is serious about his children being truthful as a way of life. And the same goes for the times when we claim that we can't do something, we had better be telling the truth.

Ananias and Sapphira wanted to look good in the eyes of man, and for a time maybe they did. In the end they discovered that it wasn't worth what it cost them. That is the way that sin is, it looks easy, good, and pleasurable, but it is a lie of the devil. Sin will cost you more than you want to pay, and will take you farther than you want to go. How many of us have found that out the hard way? Be honest before God and man, that's the way to live and the way to face death.

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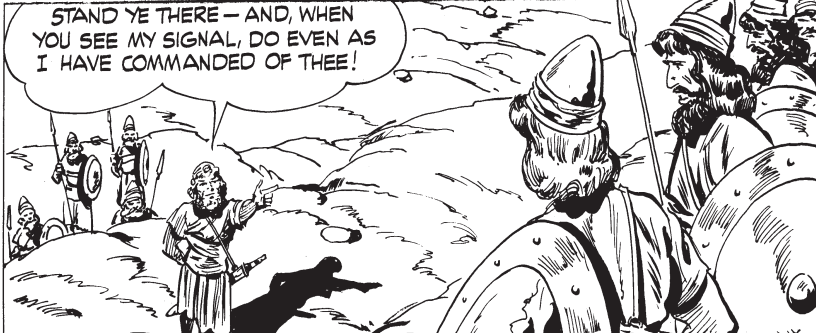
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