

THE HONEYMOON IS OVER

Summer 2021, Acts 4:32-5:16

July 18, 2021

*Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events
Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord
and were added to their number.*

Acts 5:11-14

What “one heart and mind” looks like

¹ ³² *All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had.* ³³ *With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.* ³⁴ *There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales* ³⁵ *and put it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.*

³⁶ *Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement),* ³⁷ *sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles’ feet.*

Acts 4:32-37 (review Acts 2:42-47)

- 1) This is both descriptive and prescriptive
- 2) Barnabas’ integrity sets the stage for the rest of Acts (9:27; 11:22,30; 13:2,13; 15:37)

Stealing from God

¹ *Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property.* ² *With his wife’s full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles’ feet.*

Acts 5:1-2 (see Joshua 7 for the parallel in Achan’s sin)

- 1) Motives matter when providing for the kingdom
- 2) Unlike Barnabas, Ananias and Sapphira are concerned about appearances
- 3) Like Achan, Ananias and Sapphira have stolen from God

God's "One Time Rule"

³ Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? ⁴ Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God."

⁵ When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. ⁶ Then the young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him.

⁷ About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?"

"Yes," she said, "that is the price."

⁹ Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also."

¹⁰ At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

Acts 5:1-11 (see Joshua 7)

- 1) Peter identifies the sin: Ananias and Sapphira loved money and lied to God
- 2) Maturity in the church requires "speaking the truth in love" (see Ephesians 5:
- 3) Agreeing together to steal from God is the opposite of being of one mind and soul to serve
- 4) Discipleship principle: Great power and great grace still require great fear

As a result

¹¹ Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

¹² The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade. ¹³ No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. ¹⁵ As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. ¹⁶ Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.

Acts 5:11-16

- 1) For the first time, Luke describes the gathered believers as "church"
- 2) Great fear is the starting point for God to work

More Pentecost lessons for the church today

1) A growing church is a disciplined church

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Acts 5:11-14

2) How are we discrediting the Holy Spirit today? (See Piper's "Be Like Barnabas" sermon)

⁹ Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also."

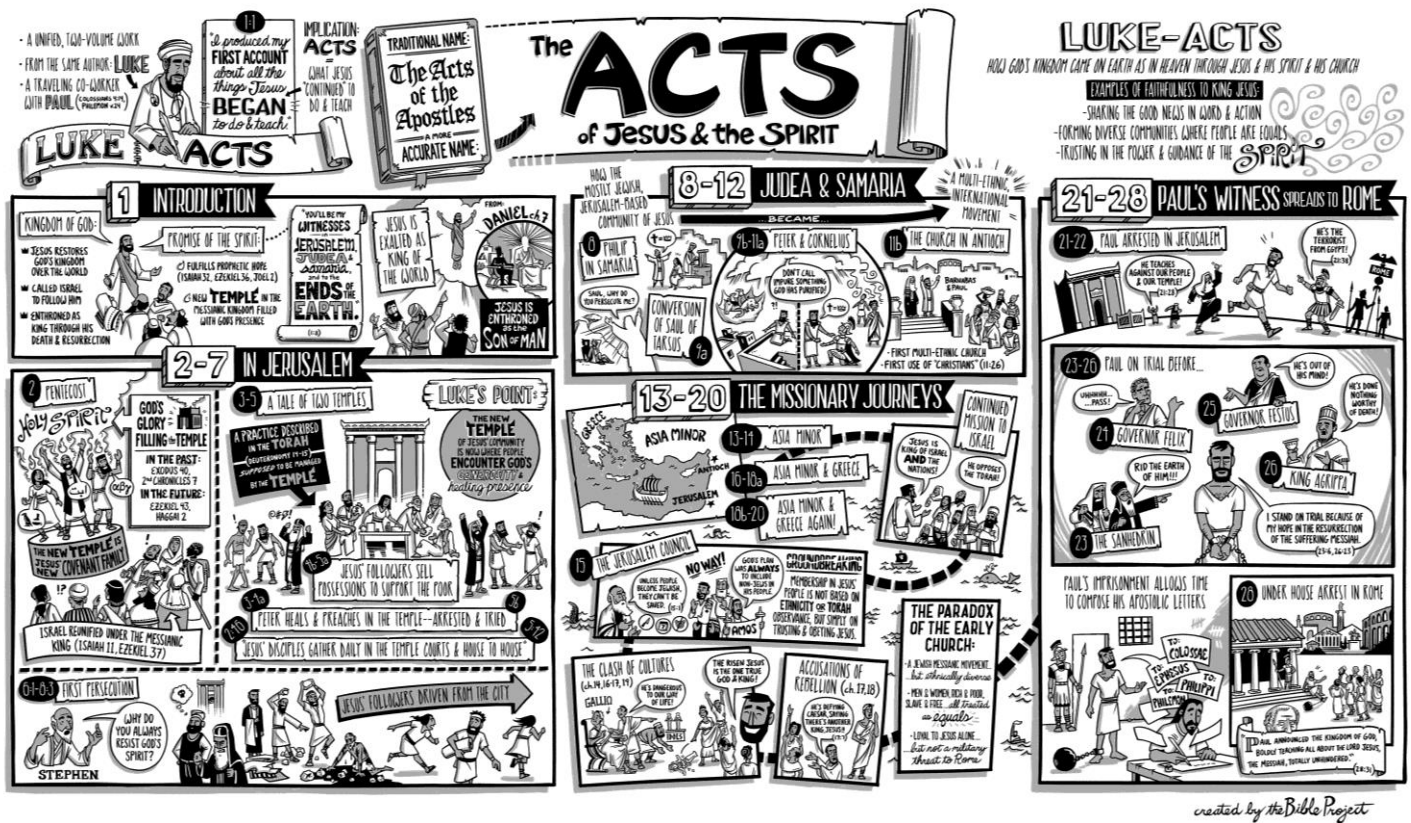
Acts 5:9

3) check the fruit of repentance and conversion

Are you converted? It is no answer to tell me that you go to church or chapel, and have been baptized and admitted to the Table of the Lord. All this proves little--I could say as much for Judas Iscariot, Demas, Simon Magus, Ananias, and Sapphira. The question is still not answered. Is your heart changed? Are you really converted to God . . . ?

(d) Do you think you are converted? Then show the value you place on conversion by your diligence in trying to do good to others. Do you really believe it is a dreadful thing to be an unconverted man? Do you really think that conversion is an unspeakable blessing? Then prove it, prove it, prove it, by constant zealous efforts to promote the conversion of others. Look around the neighborhood in which you live--have compassion on the multitudes who are yet unconverted. Be not content with getting them to come to your church or chapel; aim at nothing less than their entire conversion to God. Speak to them, read to them, pray for them, stir up others to help them. But never, never--if you are a converted man, never be content to go to heaven alone!

Ryle's "Conversion"



Resources for further studies in Acts

The Bible Project team has great stuff on Acts at <https://open.life.church/items/179224-poster-jpg>

Spurgeon has sermons on this text at <http://www.spurgeongems.org/vols4-6/chs209.pdf> and, on repentance in Peter's sermon, at <http://www.spurgeongems.org/vols13-15/chs804.pdf>

I really appreciate J.C. Ryle's essay on conversion in Acts: <https://www.monergism.com/conversion-j-c-ryle>

Jonathan Edwards has a wonderful essay on Acts at <https://www.monergism.com/unbelievers-despise-glory-and-excellency-christ>

Deffinbaugh has a helpful introduction at <https://bible.org/seriespage/unique-contribution-book-acts>
 His Acts series is at <https://bible.org/series/studies-book-acts> His sermon on this text is at <https://bible.org/seriespage/9-subtraction-leads-multiplication-first-instance-church-discipline-acts-432-511>

Tim Keller has a wonderful sermon at <https://www.monergism.com/signs-king-%E2%80%93-acts-237-47>

John Piper has an interesting take on this passage at <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/be-like-barnabas-not-like-ananias>

I have really appreciated John Stott's *The Spirit, The Church and the World: The Message of Acts* (IVP, 1990) and F. F. Bruce's work: *New Testament History* (Doubleday, 1980) and *The Book of the Acts* (Eerdmans, 1984).

Carl Trueman's conclusion in *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self* (Crossway, 2020) influenced my thinking on the church. His third point, the importance of proper natural law thinking, is reflected in Kevin DeYoung's blog at <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/gods-good-gift-in-making-us-men-and-women/>

