



ACTS : Ananias and Sapphira

Acts 4:33b-5:11 | Ryan Pfeiffer | March 8, 2026

INTRO. What is the Church?

We need to see the Church as the Temple of God with two pillars.

The First Pillar is the GRACE OF GOD that shows the world God is LOVING...

- Sharing/selling homes... radical generosity 4v33/34.
- Sharing faith... people coming to faith 5v14.
- Healing and Deliverance... 5v16.

Who wouldn't love to be a part of that church!

But we know there's another side to Church... hypocrisy, cliques, politics...

The Second Pillar is the FEAR OF GOD that shows the world God is HOLY...

Which means God convicts us of sin in order to lead us into Holiness.

For GRACE OF GOD to flourish in a Church/our lives... we need FEAR OF GOD.

FOCUS. How does God cultivate this HOLY FEAR so that GRACE can abound?

FIRST GOD EXPOSES SIN. 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 just to human beings but to God.

Let's be clear... the issue is NOT - they didn't give enough! vs.4 its yours!

1. The issue here is Ananias/ Sapphira pretended to give more than they did.
2. V8 Peter asks Sapphira... is this the price you... got for the land? ... "Yes"

God exposes their hypocrisy... Presumably to gain favor/honor like Barnabas.

Hypocrisy is dangerous for two reasons:

- It is hidden. Intentionally hiding our faults, sins behind a mask of virtue.
- And if its hidden... it's harder to receive conviction and repent.

2. Contagious. Luke 12:1 Beware the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy is not the same as claiming to be a Christian yet being imperfect!

Hypocrisy is actively seeking to deceive, mislead, & manipulate people.

Now Look how God exposes it right there on the spot. Supernatural insight.

1 Cor 4:5 He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart.



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God exposes our sin in two ways:

1. To us... In loving conviction... God does this repeatedly, patiently.
2. To others... allowing the consequence of our sin to come to light.

SECOND. GOD KILLS SIN. 5 When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died... 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.

Why does God kill them instantly in dramatic fashion?

- This is the Church of every church in history... fountainhead...
- God moves to protect the spread of hypocrisy... contagious. Luke 12:1.

It's a judgment miracle... Acts 21:23 Herod. They are rare in Acts.

It's foreshadowing future judgment when God will destroy evil and sin.

Rev 21:27 Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Who doesn't want that! But are we ready for God to confront the evil in us?

Peter asks how is it that Satan has so filled your heart...

Nothing fills immediately... it's a process... of ignoring, denying, hiding sin.

If we don't let God kill our sin our sin kills us.

Romans 8:13: But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live.

1. God is patient... but there will come a time when God will judge.
2. The Church is sacred... warns us to see Church as something holy!
Lev 10:1 Aarons Sons. (Tabernacle) 2 Sam 6:6 Uzzah (The Ark)

Caveat. To protect us from over-rotating.

- It's not about being perfect. It's about humbly responding to Conviction.
- No one will die sinless... we trust in the grace and mercy of God.
- We don't need to go on a search for hidden sins... Spirit will show us.

THIRD. GOD PROTECTS FROM SIN. 5 When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened... 11 Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

It's clear... the result of God's judgment is a great fear.

How can the Church be filled with God's grace and fear at the same time?

Seems contradictory. And yet... if we look at vs 13 we see GRACE abounding!



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- no one dared join them...
- (And yet) more were added to their number...
- So much grace... Peter's shadow healed!

Acts 19:31 Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

This phrase the "fear of the Lord"... is a profound biblical theme.

It is not the same as fearing some evil harming us, or fear of failure, or death.

John Bevere, The Awe of God.— To fear God is to esteem, respect, honor, venerate, and adore Him above anyone or anything else. When we fear God we take on His heart. We love what he loves, we hate what He hates... To fear God is to hate sin. To fear God is to hate injustice... To fear God is to obey him....

When we recognize God in this way... it actually protects us from evil...

Proverbs 16:6 ...by the fear of the Lord one turns away from evil...

ILLUS... 1) area of sin in my 20's... 2) Speaking ill of someone...

I want to list the other benefits of this powerful mindset:

Prov 14:26 In the fear of the Lord a person gains strong confidence...

The fear of the Lord produces confidence, fearlessness, and swallows up other fears, including the fear of man.
John Bevere

Opens our life to wisdom, helps us grow in love, produces true holiness, gives us identity, makes us productive.

INVITE THE WORSHIP TEAM UP.

1 Peter 4:17 "For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?"

Is he—quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion."

"That you will, dearie, and no mistake," said Mrs Beaver. "If there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they're either braver than most or just silly."

"Then he isn't safe?" said Lucy.

"Safe?" said Mr Beaver. "Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."



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John Mark Comer, God has a Name p166

