

The Holiness of God in the New Christian Community

Acts 4:32-5:16

MAIN IDEAS

- Ananias and Sapphira were a threat to the new Christian community
- The wrath of a Holy God is not just an Old Testament idea
- God was doing an amazing work in and through this new community that had far reaching ramifications

Read Acts 4:32-37 and list the characteristics of the growing church community.

Read Acts 5:1-11. Compare and contrast Barnabas' offering and motivation with Ananias and Sapphira's. How do the actions of Ananias and Sapphira threaten the character of the church community?

Read Joshua 1:1-3; 6:1-2, 15-19; and 7:1, 16-21, 24-25. What are the similarities between the story in Acts and the story in Joshua? What is different between them?

How does this story relate to last week's sermon point about expecting opposition?

What was the response of those who witnessed and/or heard of what happened to the couple? What was the result of this great fear and awe in the Lord, Acts 5:12-16?

How does this story point us to the holiness, sovereignty, and care of God?

PERSONAL RESPONSE

Why do you think God included such a difficult story in the Bible? Does it challenge your idea of God's goodness? Why or why not?

Have you ever acted like Ananias and Sapphira by allowing Satan or your own sin nature to influence your actions? How might that action be a detriment to your Christian community and its identity?

What does it mean to “be holy because God is holy” (1 Peter 1:16)?

God doesn’t deal with us as our sins deserve (Psalm 103:10), but sometimes He does discipline us so that we may share in His holiness (Hebrews 12:6-7, 10-11). How does your personal moment of discipline help the growth of both you and the church?

GROUP RESPONSE

How could your particular group imitate the Christian community in Acts 4:32-37?

What are some ways your group can guard against the selfishness and greed of Ananias and Sapphira?

REPRODUCE

Consider sharing a time when God disciplined you in your sin so that others may come to revere the Lord.

KEY VERSES

From the sermon:

- Acts 4:32-5:16

Additional verses from the study:

- Joshua 1:1-3
- Joshua 6:1-2, 15-19
- Joshua 7:1, 16-21,
- 24-25
- 1 Peter 1:16
- Hebrews 12:6-7, 10-11