



## Main Passage: Acts 5:1-11

### Theological Theme

People cannot fool God. God is holy and just, and we must remember that He cannot act contrary to His character. If we attempt to take advantage of His grace and mercy, there will be consequences.

### Introduction

- ? When have you had an experience with buying a knock-off brand?
- ? What were some differences between the version you bought or saw and the real thing?

### 1. Holding Back (Acts 5:1-2)

The early church believers were gathered for worship and prayer after the events of Pentecost. Just prior to today's passage of study, Barnabas sold some land and brought the money as a gift (Acts 4:36-37). This sincere act of generosity drew attention and impressed the others. Ananias and Sapphira decided to do something similar but with the wrong motivation—they were looking for personal recognition, not to honor the Lord.

- ? What are some ways people today might seek recognition in the same way Ananias and Sapphira did?
- ? When have you been guilty of misappropriation in some way when it comes to giving to the Lord? How have you overcome these deceptive practices?
- ? Application: Where might you be in danger of honoring God on the surface but not in your heart?

### 2. Honest Confrontation (Acts 5:3-4)

At times, a leader needs to confront ungodly behavior or attitudes. Peter is the one who called out the problem with Ananias and Sapphira. The Holy Spirit gave Peter the insight He needed to call out Ananias for his deception.

- ? Why is a loving confrontation a good thing? Why is it often difficult?
- ? Why did Peter accuse Ananias of lying to the Holy Spirit and not merely to people?
- ? Application: What practices do you do to help you stay focused on practicing living under the power of the Holy Spirit?

### 3. Hard Consequences (Acts 5:5-11)

Sin always has consequences. When Peter confronted Ananias for his sin and deception, he did not strike him dead. That was a consequence from the Lord. Though some might consider it to be a harsh punishment, this is an important reminder that God always takes sin seriously. This sin was insulting to the Lord and hurtful to the body of Christ. God deserves our respect, love, and admiration. Our focus needs to be on Him and living for Him daily, not on lifting ourselves up or seeking to impress others.

- ❓ Consider: how has God given you grace when you deserved punishment for your sin?
- ❓ What inspires your awe toward the Lord? How is this stirred in you through His mighty works and through His grace?
- ❓ Application: Unlike Ananias and Sapphira, how can you persuade your friends and neighbors in a positive way?

### Questions to Guide Your Group's Discussion

1. What does this passage say?
2. What did this passage mean to its original audience?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about man?
5. What does this passage demand of me?
6. How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)
7. How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

\*Adapted from Seven Arrows by Matt Rogers pastor of The Church at Cherrydale, Greenville, SC

### Call to Action

Challenge your group to never take for granted the grace and mercy of the Lord.

Challenge them to meet by gender in groups of 3-5 weekly/biweekly or consider attending MIT or Brentwood Women Midweek.