

## Acts 4:32-5:16

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 19 October 2022

Preacher: Pastor Jared Bromka

[ 0 : 00 ] Lord, we just thank you for your word again. We are expecting that. Lord, we don't want our faith to stand in the wisdom of man, but in demonstration of the Spirit and the power.

As we look at the book of Acts, we just see that leaping off the page. So, Lord, here we are. What is it that is in our lives that would prevent us, Lord, from living the type of life we see here among the apostles and disciples in early church?

Lord, I don't think it's anything on your part. You're the same yesterday, today, and forever. So, Lord, show us how, if we are to live in the Spirit, show us how to also walk in the Spirit.

And edify us through your word tonight. In Jesus' name, amen. So, we'd come as far as Acts 5, but we're going to back up a little bit to give some context to Acts 5, back into Acts 4.

So, we've had two main events in Acts after the ascension. We get the ascension a little bit in the beginning. Then we get the Holy Spirit coming. And then the second big event that's put before us by Luke and by the Holy Spirit is Peter and John healing the lame man, right?

[ 1 : 13 ] They go up to the temple to pray and they heal him. And then you have this second big influx of people into the church through this first healing since Jesus healed in his ministry.

It's the first one since the resurrection, the first one since the ascension. And you get this big event. And it seems like the time frame, probably within, I mean, weeks since Pentecost, no more than that, it would seem, that this is all in sequence.

Now, there's definitely some time happening. It's not like Pentecost came and, what was it, 2,000 or 3,000 saved and the next day they went up to pray and then 5,000 more. I mean, there's definitely some progression here.

But it's happening quite quickly in sequence. And we're told a few things along the way about what's happening with the church, that God is adding daily to those that should be saved, that they're continuing steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship and prayer.

And so we kind of get that. But the end of Acts 4 gives us another snapshot of that. They had come back, Peter and John had, with the lame man, right, to their company, to the rest of the disciples in the upper room or wherever they were meeting.

[ 2 : 20 ] It doesn't seem to be all 3,000. And it seems to be more the same people that were there in the upper room. You probably had this group that were a little more mature. They were kind of the leaders of the church at this time.

And they all get together. They tell them what happens. They pray. They're filled with the Holy Spirit. And the place shakes. And they ask that they might speak with all boldness and proclaim the word.

But anyway, and then it gives us, in verse 32 of Acts 4, it says, And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul.

Neither said any of them that all of the things which he possessed was his own. But they had all things common. And so we get this picture of what the church looked like at that time, of the effect on these people.

And I don't think this was anything that was planned. This wasn't a committee. It wasn't a 30-day challenge to be, you know, more hospitable and more giving.

[ 3 : 18 ] This was just the inward work the Holy Spirit was doing in them. We're getting a picture of what that looked like and what that was producing outwardly. And it says they were all with one heart and of one soul.

And so what's the difference? You got the heart and the soul. Why doesn't it just say they were all of one heart? Well, they're two different words. Heart is more the seat of, like, the desire, the emotions, the passions.

And soul would be the eternal essence. And so the world, they can have one heart. You'll see people with a lot of the same desire. It's kind of like the seat of desire. You'll see the world do that. They can get together with one heart, one desire. But what they can't have is this thing, one soul. And so this is the work of the Holy Spirit to bring them together. And I'm sure there were some people that were more or less naturally hospitable, more or less naturally giving. And then there's some that weren't so much. But this is just the fruit of the Spirit and the work of the Spirit that's happening. But they're all coming together. And they're all with this same kind of heart and thought. It says that neither said any of them that all of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.

[ 4 : 27 ] So what were they? Communists? No. Not even close. Right? You hear a lot of times this will be talked about, like, well, like in the hippies movement, in the Jesus movement, you had the communes.

They're trying to live a communal life. No, they're not. This is no attempt on anyone's part to do anything. This is a direct result of the Holy Spirit in their lives, working out in their lives. What would that look like? Well, I think what it looks like is for everyone to have all things common, I can choose to have things, my things common with you. But I can't go to you and tell you to have your things common with me.

Right? And then right in the middle of this, because you could take verse 32 and 34 and put them back to back, and it would make sense. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul.

Neither said any of them that all of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common. 34. Neither was there any among them that lacked. For as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold.

[ 5 : 26 ] It just flows perfectly. But right in the middle of that is 33, and it says, And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

And I think the Holy Spirit's sticking it in there, being like, this is what they were about. This is what their life was about. And since their life was about the idea that they were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, through the great power of the Holy Spirit, God's grace was on them, well then this was the natural outworking of that.

If that's not happening, like if I'm not giving my life to those things, then I'm not going to have that natural outworking of being willing just to let go of those things that I have.

In Ephesians 4, if you remember, it's that Paul tells us that that some were given apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, for the edification of the body.

And then for what purpose? It says that we may all grow up into him, into maturity. And then verse 15 says, It's one of Paul's wonderful run-on sentences with way too many commas.

[ 6 : 50 ] But essentially he's just saying, hey, the point is that as we grow up into Christ, well the whole body then becomes more compacted together. And as we grow closer together, well every joint is supplying.

From one to the other, and back and forth, and back and forth, there's this supply that's happening. According to the effectual working and the measure of every part, then it makes an increase of itself into the edifying of itself, into love.

So as the body is maturing in Christ, there's a closeness that happens. There's a oneness that happens. And there's a supply happening through every joint or through every person that is happening to edify itself in love.

And so you see that here, right in front of us. That nobody said that, which what they had was their own. Now I can't go to Eddie's house and be like, oh, you know, I needed to borrow that. And he comes out and says, hey, where's my hedge trimmers? And then, you know, and I come walking up his driveway, oh, I needed them.

You know, it's like, oh, but we have all things common, remember? Again, I can't choose to tell you your stuff's common with me, but I can be common with my stuff towards you. And that's what we see. You don't see any examples here of anybody going and demanding anything.

[ 7 : 54 ] We're even going to see, as Peter is going to say to Amnius and Sapphira, hey, it was yours to do with what you would, right? But what would they do? Well, again, in Ephesians 4, the beginning of Ephesians 4, it says that one heart, one baptism, one spirit, one God and father of us all, there's a oneness here that's part of the Holy Spirit.

If you remember, that which is of the spirit is spirit, and that which is of the flesh is flesh. The flesh and spirit are mutually exclusive. So, if you're of the spirit, it's one spirit. That spirit's not going to be different in you than it is in me.

Now, we are different, and we're different parts of the body. So, you may be an ear, and I may be a toe, right? So, we have different functions in the body, but it is the same spirit energizing.

It's the same heart and the same soul that's in there. So, if I'm not of the fruit of the spirit, I can't say, well, that's just the Holy Spirit working in me differently, right?

So, someone says, well, I'm not really into being generous and giving. You know, that's not really my thing. Well, it's the Holy Spirit's thing, and it's Jesus' thing. So, it's going to be your thing, right?

[ 9 : 02 ] What happens if it's not? So, some people say are more naturally patient. Some are more, less patient, right? They have more of a temper. Some people, it's more natural for them just to give what they have.

And some, it's more like, well, no, it's just not. So, we pray, and this is where I think we've gotten off the track a little bit with the church today. The natural, our way of doing things today is to say, well, I'm going to pray and say, Lord, would you please give me more patience?

And I expect, then, God to raise my natural patience level up and to give me more of that. But God's never going to work with my natural abilities. He sidesteps those all together.

So, if I need to be more giving because I'm just a selfish, self-centered Scrooge and I don't want to give anything, but I recognize that here the Holy Spirit's telling me and the Word is telling me that should be happening in me.

And I say, okay, Lord, I need to be more giving. Well, I would expect Him to raise my natural giving level with the tolerance I have for that. But He won't do that. Instead, what He does, He says, walk by faith, not by sight.

[ 10 : 05 ] Well, what is sight? sight is the ability to prove and identify something. If I can see the lamp is there, I have proof and I can identify it. If I can't see it, I don't know it's there.

I can't identify it. I can't prove it. But Jesus then says, through His Word, it's there. Act on it as if it's there. Then to walk by faith into what I can't prove, see, or identify. So, when I come up against an opportunity to give, and the Holy Spirit prompts me and says, there's a need, give to that.

Like, well, I don't know. That's right. I don't know if I should, that's not really me. I mean, the Holy Spirit says, yeah, but that's me. So, walk by faith in that.

Don't worry about what you see. Don't worry about if the ability is not there because He said, in verse 33, with great power, that's that dunamis, that's that inward, innate ability that's not of your own.

So, the Holy Spirit says, now walk in that. So, okay, next time I come up against a situation where I might blow my top, the Holy Spirit says, don't get upset over that.

[ 11 : 08 ] Just let that go. Don't try and take care of that. Don't try and step into that. I say, well, that's not who I am. He says, yes, but that's who I am. So, walking by faith is always, consciously on our part, stepping into something that there's no evidence of on our part.

There's no way to identify the outcome except that God's Word says, this will be the outcome. And so, it's the same with gathering. It's the same with giving. As you see these guys having this oneness, the closer they draw to the Lord, the more desire he puts into them for a oneness.

And so then God says, go to that Bible study. Go to that time of fellowship. Go to church. Go to that person's house. Go to that prayer meeting. Prayer meeting. Oh, Lord, a prayer meeting.

What if I have to pray out loud? All I ever pray for is the food. I don't know what to do. You know? He says, go. I will be with you. I'll put words in your mouth. I remember talking to a friend of mine once.

I feel like a hypocrite. I said, because I don't pray this much on my own or for these things on my own. But when I come to a time of prayer with the church, or go, you know, to Wednesday night prayer or whenever, and then I'll pray for these things or things will come up and I'll just think of them or start and it's like, I don't do that on my own.

[ 12 : 18 ] And he's just like, well, it's just you are giving opportunity and the Holy Spirit's using you to pray for those things. It's perfectly normal because as you step in faith in that, oh, okay. You know, so I guess the application would be take more time on my own to pray and let the Holy Spirit do that, not in just those corporate settings.

But anyway, that's what I see here because you have like 8,000 people that have all of a sudden gotten saved. They're not all super generous. Like, man, this is such a coincidence. Everybody who got saved likes to give stuff. This is great. You know, this is a work of the Spirit.

But they had to walk in that. They had to walk by faith in that even when there's no evidence of it. And I think we don't do that as much in the church today. We want evidence, you know. We want to put the thermometer on the wall and we want to then, you know, go canvas the neighborhood and we want to send out flyers to everybody and we want to get them, boom, and we say, praise the Lord, we got the money, he did it.

Did he? You know? Or did I in my own effort? And then what happens? I'm not experiencing this great power not experiencing the great grace that was upon them all because what does God's grace do?

Paul says, your strength is made perfect in weakness. My grace, God says to Paul, is sufficient for you. Well, there has to be a weakness to experience the sufficiency of God's grace. If I'm not willing to step in faith in my weak areas, I may never experience God's sufficient grace than filling that up.

[13:42] I think I've been thinking a lot about these couple verses. It took a long time to get past them. I just kept going back to like, why were they like this? Why are we not like this? What's different? Anyway, in verse 34 says, neither was there any among them that lacked.

Now, eventually, we're going to get to, in Acts, later on, we're going to find out a few things that are happening in the world at this time. But, this is where people will look at this and they'll say, okay, verse 34, neither was there any among them that lacked, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them down at the apostles' feet and distribution was made unto every man according as he has need.

And it was like, well, they're trying to live this communal life and they sold everything and then it didn't work out and so Paul had to go around and take up all these collections because these people now had no, and there's truth to that.

If I sell everything I have and go and give it to the church, say, this is for the needy. Guess who now is needy? Right? So, it's illogical and irrational to think that the Holy Spirit is prompting these people to sell everything laid at the apostles' feet for their neighbor who needs and now their neighbor's got sufficient and now I got nothing.

And it's like, now wait a minute. So, maybe that neighbor then will go give what he has and will come back to me and it doesn't work. And as we see going through with Barnabas and even Ananias and Sapphira, it seems to be, the idea is like there's an extra.

[15:08] Like, okay, I have a surplus. Instead of saving it up, I'm going to give it to the Lord. Right? Instead of, well, you know, 30 years from now I'm going to retire. Well, not anymore. Well, it probably will be that for me.

I'll never retire. But, you know, I got to save up for that. And there seems to be a different idea here. But, there's a couple things that are happening in the world. They're Jews. Right? So, their society, they're not the Gentiles, their society was wrapped up within their religion.

They reject Judaism, their family, and their society rejects them. And then, there's going to happen in Acts 8, we're going to find out that Paul, who was named Saul at the time, he made havoc of the church, verse 3, entering into every house and hailing men and women, committed them to prison.

Therefore, they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. And so, everybody's being scattered at this time. There's great persecution that's eventually going to happen. We found out earlier, I think it was in chapter 2 at the end, it says in verse 47, they were praising God and having favor with all people.

But, at that time, there's like this great goodwill within the church. As the church is birthed, God is so gracious to slowly walk them into the suffering that's coming. Eventually, though, persecution comes through Saul.

[16:23] And he just kind of like, it's rough. So, for those that are left in Jerusalem. And then we're going to find out in Acts 11, there stood up one named Agabus and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great dearth throughout all the world, which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.

Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Jerusalem, which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

So, they find out there's a great famine Paul and Barnabas at that time, they're in Antioch, and they determined we're going to go and collect for Jerusalem. People say, well, it's because they were living this communal life and it sold everything. No, it's because they were in a unique situation where society, they've been cut off from society, there was a lot of them in Jerusalem, there's a famine happening, and there's persecution.

So, this picture we're getting here at the end of Acts 4 is not a result of man's effort, I guess is what I'm trying to get to. This is a result of the Holy Spirit, and this is a picture of what church should be. This is what it should be today. And if it's not, do I just read through this and go, well, that's interesting, that was the early church and I keep going. Or do I say, what is missing today?

[17:32] That there's not this every joint supplying, this compacting of the body, this desire to gather, this desire to support one another. And if we notice in verse 35, it says, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

And then in 36, oh no, in 34, neither was there any among them that lacked. And so the idea was is there was a need and there was a lack. There was a natural response within the body because of the Holy Spirit to go, well, let me make that up for you.

You know, Lily and Keller get married and they have a need. You just go, well, you'll figure it out. Pray, you know. No, it's like, oh, you know, the body, it's wonderful that they have a body to be part of.

When we first moved down here, you know, it was a while before we got involved with the church. And now it's great to have those connections and it's not like the world's connections like name dropping and pulling strings and calling in favors and things like that.

It's that genuine love for one another. And so that's what's happening now. This church is so united, has such a one heart and one soul. And what was that desire of the heart?

[18:42] Was it just make this earth great and be real comfortable? No. It's get the word out. The witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Make more disciples of Jesus.

Verse 36. And Joseph, who by the apostles was named Barnabas, which is being interpreted the son of consolation. That word consolation, the same word that says, when Jesus says, and it's more needful that I go, for when I go, the Father will send the comforter and he'll abide with you forever.

It's the same word for comfort. And that's cool. The son of consolation, the son of the comforter. You know, I want to be the son of the comforter. Son of the Holy Spirit. The same characteristics of the Holy Spirit. A Levite, but of the country of Cyprus.

So he's a Levite, but he's not living in Israel. He's living in Cyprus, which is a little island out in the Mediterranean. And he's here in Jerusalem and he gets saved. And then he, having land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Doesn't say he sold everything he had. It just kind of indicates that, hey, you know what? Man, I got some extra. What better thing to do than invest it in the kingdom? And he comes and he lays it at the apostles' feet.

[19:55] In 2 Corinthians 9, 7, it says, Every man, according as he has purposed in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver. So not grudgingly or of necessity.

So this wasn't because the church was imposing this on them. It was because this was what God was doing in their hearts. And then chapter 5. But, so that's the context of what's happening in the church, of what people are responding, how they're responding in the church, and they're laying at the apostles' feet.

There's a recognition of some kind of authority. Not an authority like we think, right? What do we think of as an authority? Well, I'll tell you what to do, and I'll tell you what to do, and I'll tell you what to do, because I'm an authority. No. Authority, as scripture lays it out, Romans 13, talks about those that are governors and an authority.

Their specific purpose is for protection, to establish boundaries and to protect those boundaries, right? They put down sin and they promote righteousness. So as an authority in my home, I'm the authority, right?

Well, that just means that it's my responsibility to ensure that all those under my authority are thriving and in a safe place where they can do that. It doesn't mean I tell them what to do.

[21:06] It means I set the boundaries as God has established them and say, here they are within these boundaries. I can create for you a place where you can thrive, where you can be safe, and

where you can live life.

Now, last on that list is myself, right? That's what an authority does. He says, okay, those under my care and authority, this is what I can, now you step outside that authority, I have no ability to protect, I have no ability to provide, and I have no ability to help you thrive.

But if you stay within that authority, right? And so when we establish that authority in our homes, our lives, or whatever, and Jesus, he was under a father's authority. Why do you think Jesus made such emphasis constantly to the disciples to tell them, I only do what I see my fathers do.

I only say what I see my fathers say. Because he's gone. And you got a bunch of guys full of their spirit and power, like, whoo! They needed some kind of standard by which they could go, whoo! But Jesus ensured constantly that he wasn't just doing his thing. Because remember, 12 guys, full of themselves, thinking that they're going to be greatest in the kingdom, walking around with Jesus, they're just thinking, I can't wait until it's my turn to step up to the plate when I'm no longer the servant and I'm now the master.

[ 22 : 15 ] And Jesus says, yes, you're ready, go, and then I'm going to do things my way. I got some ideas. No, Jesus says, there's only one way to do this. We do it the Father's way and that's it. Yes, eventually guys, you're essentially going to be in my place and everybody's going to be looking to you, but you do it the Father's way.

And so, chapter five, but a certain man named Ananias and Sapphira, her name means Sapphire, must have been some pretty lady or else you like your jewels.

And his name means whom Jehovah has graciously given. Ouch! Ouch! Ananias with Sapphira, Sapphira his wife, sold a possession and kept back part of the price.

No problem so far. No problem at all. His wife also being privy to it and brought a certain part and laid it to the apostles' feet. That sounds fine. What's the big deal? So, I sold my car, I kept half and I decided to give half to the church and I told my wife about it.

She says, that's a good idea. What's so wrong with that? Well, the word kept back in the Greek is the same word that in Titus, you see it one other time, it means to embezzle and it's where in Titus it says, exhort servants, Titus 2 verse 9, exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters and to please them well in all things, not answering again, not purloining, that's the word, but showing all good fidelity that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

[ 23 : 36 ] Purloining is like embezzling, not to embezzle, which is to take that which was entrusted to you and to use it for your own gain, I think is what it means. And so, a certain man, a man whose name meant Jehovah has graciously given, there's two parts to that.

All that he had was because God graciously gave it to him and yet he took it to himself. And this was a man who should have been a blessing to the church.

God wanted to use him. God graciously gave him to the church. Think of what he could have supplied. He seems to be wealthy, his wife's decked out in sapphires, right? He was meant to be a blessing and instead he decides, did he actually embezzle his own money?

No, what it was was what God had entrusted to him. He then took and said, oh, I'm going to use this for my own gain. I'm going to try and use God's people and God's church for my gain.

And he brought up a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the price of the land?

[ 24 : 42 ] While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not on your own power? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You've not lied unto men, but unto God.

And so Ananias comes and he wants something that he saw happening around him. He wanted a part of that. He wanted a piece of that. I don't think everybody who was coming and laying these things at the apostles' feet was like, well, you gave 500?

You're a deacon. You gave 10,000? Woo! Assistant pastor. I don't think there was some hierarchy from it or I don't think they were putting names up on the wall. But I think what they saw was like, Barnabas, he gets a new name, you know, and like, oh, it's the son of consolation.

I think they're just seeing the reality. And so there was an outward appearance that they wanted but without the inward reality. And as we go through this, that's what's going to jump out here. The contrast between the reality, the substance, and then just the shell and the emptiness.

Because what if Ananias and Sapphira had gotten away with this? What if they laid the money down at Peter's feet and he says, thanks, good Ananias. Thanks, Ananias. Thanks, Sapphira.

That's great. Come on over here and be part of this ministry.

[ 25 : 53 ] What would they have gotten? It would have been so empty. They'd be there in the midst of a reality and they would have nothing but the shell, nothing but the empty shell. And I think that is horrible because the weight and the stress that would put on them to have to keep up that show would have been terrible.

But what's the church today so often? Is it a reality? Is it substance? Or is it, well, this is what that church does. This is what this group of people does. So I'm going to do it too. And then that's what we do. Has the Spirit moved us to do that? And even worse, is there some part that's like, if I do this, I'll gain something for myself. And so Peter, Peter's getting real used to this Holy Spirit kind of just like giving him stuff in the moment and he's just rolling with it. There's, you know, it's not, we don't even get told anymore the Holy Spirit said to him or filled him. It's just, Peter's now in the flow of the Spirit. And he said, Ananias, Satan's filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit.

And Ananias went, oh, Sapphira told, didn't she? But it's interesting because what does it say? Satan filled your heart.

[ 26 : 57 ] And then in verse four, it says, why have you conceived this thing in your heart? So which is it? Did Satan fill his heart to do this? Well, it wasn't me, it was Satan, he filled my heart. Or was it conceived his heart?

Well, there's personal, there's a personal choice because Peter says, while it remained yours, or while it remained, was it not your own? And that personal choice leads to a personal responsibility. Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? So Peter's not saying, this is all God's money. This is all the church's money. He says, it's yours. You know, it's capitalism, baby. What is capitalism? Well, it's just very simply the principle that what is yours, what belongs to you, your capital, is yours to do with what you want.

But any system devoid of the Holy Spirit will be corrupt. It doesn't matter what it is. So if I'm self-centered, self-focused, and self-seeking, then yes, I'm going to use what is mine for my own gain and it's going to create harm.

Not the system, it's the heart of man. And so here, Peter points out that Satan's filled his heart but only after he's first conceived this thing. And it makes me, you know, think of the scripture that says when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin.

[ 28 : 07 ] You know, when desire, remember the first part, but when temptation and lust conceive, it brings forth sin. And so here, Satan is right there as Ananias is thinking these thoughts.

Yeah. And Satan's like, yes, this is a good idea. Let's do this. He's trying to get his man into the church right at the beginning. He says, you've lied not unto men but unto God. He didn't lie unto the church. He didn't lie unto man, right? It wasn't to the church. It was to God. And Ananias, hearing these words, fell down dead. And Peter went, oh shoot. I didn't expect that to happen.

Right? This is not what Peter was thinking was going to happen. Did he have a heart attack? You know, did God zap him? I don't know. Matthew 5, 14 tells us, you are the light of the world.

A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. If you are in Christ, you are a light of the hill. You are a light of the world. A city set on a hill. You don't have a choice. But like Ananias, what kind of witness are you going to be?

[ 29 : 08 ] Ananias was a witness to God's power. He was a witness of God's justice. He was a witness of the truth of God's word. He was a witness to the inside of the Holy Spirit. He was a witness to the authority God gave man in Peter.

He was a witness to the world of all those things and to the church of all those things. But it cost him his life, unfortunately. And Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and gave up the ghost and great fear came upon them all that heard these things.

And the young man arose wound him up and carried him out and buried him. I like that because that's the result of seeking image instead of substance. When you seek image, when you seek the form without the function, it'll wind you up, it'll carry you away, and it'll end up burying you.

That's what happens when we seek an image. That's what happens in the church when the church, instead of seeking life through the Holy Spirit and direction through the Holy Spirit, tries in their own effort and power to create something that has no substance.

What happens? They get all wound up. They get carried away by every wind of doctrine and they end up burying themselves and many others with them. And it was about the space of three hours

afterwards when his wife came, not knowing what was done, came in.

[ 30 : 24 ] And Peter answered and said unto her, Tell me, whether you sold the land for so much? And she said, Oh yeah, for so much. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that you've agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried your husband are at the door.

They shall carry you out. Then she fell down straightway at his feet and yielded up the ghost. And the young men came in and found her dead and carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. I don't know who the young men are, but they had a pretty intense day that day.

What is it put in there is about the space of three hours afterwards, do you think? One, we're seeing God's grace, right? It's an example of God's grace. He gave her space. She could have chosen not to do this.

And then Peter asks her, says, Hey, he didn't just say when she walked in and says, You, wicked woman, Jezebel. And down she goes. But also, I think it shows how fast do you think this news would have traveled?

Right? Those young men who carried him out and buried him, the people who were there, like, Oh my word, I think it would have gone pretty fast. Where was she? I don't think she was in fellowship. She was not around the believers.

[ 31 : 30 ] She was not there with the apostles. She was not in the group of them that would have known about this. This is three hours later. She's not heard a word about this. They weren't keeping it quiet from her. Don't tell Sapphira.

Let's test her. That wasn't going on. So she wasn't there in fellowship. What's the point? Isn't it funny those who seek power and seek position when they get it?

What happens? It's empty. It's not enough. And a lot of times, if you seek something that God isn't placing you, especially within the church, a position God hasn't placed you in, you end up getting there and it's empty.

You have no power. You have, you do not have the calling of the Holy Spirit on your life and you have to try and somehow keep it all up. Oof. That's tough. And so here's this woman that seems like her and her husband want some kind of prestige within the church, but they're not even hanging out with the church.

She's not even there to know what's going on. And so she comes in and we're coming in as they keep talking about this. It's like, I don't know where this is, except it says they're in Solomon's porch daily.

[ 32 : 31 ] So it seems to be, there's a lot of different chambers in the temple, in the surrounding court of the temple, like Solomon's porch. So perhaps they had rented a room and this is where the church is regularly meeting right now.

It seems like that because the Sanhedrin has very quick access to them. They're very quick to get to them when they need to, to take them. So she came into this place and Peter then says, did you sell for so much?

And she said, yes. And Peter said to her, how is it you've agreed together to tempt the spirit of the Lord? They probably didn't even really believe in the spirit. They probably were just thinking like, this is some kind of new movement within Judaism.

There's some power here. There's some authority. There's some prestige. Let's jump on board. And then what do we see? We see that this lack of reality affected the whole family. The entire family was brought down here.

Did they have kids? I hope not. You know, where's mom and dad? They didn't come home tonight. But it affected, it didn't just affect Ananias, it affected his wife and it affected their entire family, this lack of reality.

[ 33 : 35 ] Then she fell down straightway at his feet and yielded up the ghost and the young men came in and found her dead and carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. If there's no substance, if there's no inward reality of the Holy Spirit, this is the ultimate place you'll end up.

That people will eventually find out you're dead. There's nothing in there. There's nothing real there. She was brought out. They were truly exposed. The reality of their situation came out.

She was buried by her husband, the two of them together as they really were. Beginning of chapter five, they walk in with this money, they lay it down. Everybody's like, wow, they're amazing.

I wish I could be more. Wow. And then you find out, and it's so sad because there's so much of that in the church and all it does is just give the Lord a black eye. When that person that you listened to for years and you liked their teaching or whatever and you find out they did what and they fell and oh, and they're just carted off to be laid out and identified with those same other people who'd been carried out, wound up, carried away, buried, and laid out dead.

There's a guy, I loved, Calvary Chapel guy, out west, Midwest. Man, I loved his teaching and stuff. And find out he just kind of disappeared and sure enough he had done something stupid and never heard from again.

[ 34 : 52 ] It's like, ugh. And even now if I hear his voice on YouTube or anywhere like that it's like, it's just like, oh man. So sad. So here's this man. Jehovah has graciously given and he totally missed it because all he cared about was how this would affect his image and his prestige.

And great fear, verse 11, came upon all the church and upon as many as heard these things. I bet it did. God was very particular. Now, why doesn't this happen today?

Okay? I think because this was the only root of the church. This was it. Like, this little root, this shoot that has started to come up and all of a sudden it's being infected.

Remember what Jesus said? That the kingdom of God would be like a mustard seed. It would grow and eventually sprout so big that the beasts of the field would come under it and the birds of the air would nest in it. Birds in scripture always represent evil and the birds of the air would nest in it.

So, eventually it would be this huge thing. Right now it's still the mustard seed that just went, has just come up and the Lord's like, uh-uh, uh-uh, uh-uh. We're not having this yet. We're going to keep this pure. Look at the church today.

[ 36 : 03 ] It's got so many shoots and branches and everything everywhere that there's now room in place, unfortunately, for this kind of thing to take root or roost in it.

But at this time he was making sure his church was going to start off pure. And the result was that fear came upon many people. In verse 12, And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people.

They were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And the rest durst no man join himself to them. But the people magnified them. What does that mean? It just means that nobody wanted to associate themselves with this organization who was not actually a true believer.

They saw what happened. I mean, people are being killed over there. This is not something you really want to just lightly join to. In verse 14, And believers were the more added to the Lord multitudes, both of men and women.

So all of these people all of a sudden as a result of this, even more people are added to the church. You see, we would look at something like that and say, that's so harsh and tragic. Well, from the Lord's side, he looks and says, oh, that's going to have a purifying effect.

[ 37 : 12 ] And that purifying effect is actually going to be what draws. The world, nobody's ever drawn to compromise. The world's never going to be drawn to compromise. Our friends and neighbors, other believers, they're never going to be drawn to compromise.

It's not going to gain us any respect in their eyes. It's purity that draws people. And I'll flip my notes here. So, here we see in verse 12 that says, they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

The word there, one accord, is actually a musical word. It means, it's like harmonizing. It's multiple parts, multiple instruments, multiple noises, all coming together to harmonize into one purpose.

And that's what's happening here. They were all with one accord, all in harmony together. together. The disciples were at church a lot.

In Acts chapter 1, verse 13, it says, and when they were come in, they went up and into the upper room, and these all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women and Mary and the mother of Jesus and with his brethren, all with one accord.

[ 38 : 17 ] Acts 2, verse 1, and when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. Acts 2, verse 46, and they continued daily with one accord in the temple, breaking bread from house to house, that eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

And then in this verse, they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. It's funny, as you'll hear a lot of people talk about how we need to get back to their early church, we need to be in house church, we need to be in small groups.

If you notice, the only time you hear anything about house to house is in 2, verse 46, they continued daily with one accord in the temple, and they broke bread from house to house and did eat their

meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

So it seems like they were in the temple daily, and they were fellowshiping from house to house. There wasn't so much house church until persecution came, which scattered them. At this point, they're in corporate meetings.

As much as they can be together, they're together. And it's in Solomon's porch, it's in the temple, it's in this upper room, they're together in a group. So there doesn't seem to be this great emphasis like, you must have house church, that's how Jesus wanted it, how the apostles did it.

[ 39 : 28 ] That was only a necessity as they were scattered. But at this point, they're all together. So no one else would join themselves to them. And believers, were the more added to the Lord, multitudes, both of men and women.

And this is the result of a Spirit-directed church. When the Spirit is directing, when the Spirit is filling, then multitudes here begin to come. This isn't any program.

Where are we at? Verse 15. In so much that they brought forth the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and couches that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. So here's, who's kind of this figurehead here.

Peter said, silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ, rise up and walk. Peter does that. Peter's the one who says to Ananias and Sapphira, you're smoked. He doesn't actually, but he's talking to them when they fall down.

And you see, the response here is, as the people are hearing about these things, Peter's like, whoa, big in their eyes. Peter never becomes big again in his own eyes.

[ 40 : 36 ] He was cured of that real well when he denied Jesus. He knows who this is doing the work. But what happens now, and this is kind of this picture of what's going on in Jerusalem.

The church is exploding. Remember, at this time, right, these aren't the Gentiles, these are the Jews. So when they go to the Gentiles, there's a whole different way that Paul has to approach them with the gospel.

But this right now, the Jews have history with the scripture, history with the prophets. So when they come and preach Jesus, there's not a lot of background they need to give them. They're all ready for it.

And so this is very much a Jewish movement. It's just kind of a further sect of the Jews, kind of like a furtherance of Judaism. So it's very normal for the people to, when they do embrace this, to just kind of step right into it.

Because all of a sudden, all of their heritage and all of their Judaism and all of the stuff they learned in the Torah and the law and the prophets have true meaning. There's now the Holy Spirit to give it life.

[ 41 : 33 ] And they just kind of step into that and it's like, wow! And then you have all these people. It's like, there has not been this type of healing since Jesus. And you see the same type of response where they're going to bring everybody.

They brought forth the sick in the streets. They laid them on beds and couches that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about bringing sick under Jerusalem bringing sick folk and them which were vexed with unclean spirits and they were healed every one.

Why not today? I mean, this seems pretty standard. It seems like nobody's excited. Like, nobody was shocked by this. Even Peter walking by it says they're bringing him out the shadow could pass by.

I don't think the Holy Spirit's just telling us that and putting this in here just as an, and like, oh, look what people thought of Peter. I think he's putting in here saying this was a type of faith people had at the time in what was taking place.

That if I could just have Peter's shadow pass over me, I'll be healed. And they were healed. Not because of Peter's shadow, but because of their faith. Well, why not today? I think this goes back to Ananias and Sapphira.

[ 42 : 46 ] I think the church today, and I say church, I mean this western church of what church has become, is more interested in their image than they are reality. They're much more interested in the image they're projecting to the world, the people they're trying to bring in through their efforts, than they are a spirit-filled life with substance and reality.

And then just letting the Lord do it, right? We could go out and get a bounce house and put it out in the front yard and get a bunch of flyers and go out and canvas neighborhoods and get on Facebook and all these different things and probably get 20 or 30 more people in this place, right?

But is that the Lord or is that our own efforts? You say, well, it doesn't matter. We're just giving him the gospel. I think it does matter because we're to go and make disciples and people are going to look at us and they're going to, as Paul says, be that an example of the believer in conversation, in spirit, in truth, in purity, in faith.

And so they're going to look at how you're living their life and they're going to copy that and then they're going to pass that on to the next person. And how long can the church be effective in reproducing healthy sheep when it's only concerned about numbers and image?

Well, we're kind of at the end of that, right? We're at the point where the 90s and the 2000s have given way to this, what is the church today? They're more focused on building the kingdom of God on earth than they are getting men and women into the kingdom.

[ 44 : 13 ] It's just, it's kind of nuts if you just think what's happened over the last decade. I think a big part of that was because we said, well, the ends justify the means. It's okay. If we just get the gospel out there, it doesn't matter how.

Well, it does matter because Jesus said, I only do what I see my father do. And they were healed every one. So again, when God does a work, it's not partial.

It's not just a few. It's every one. And I think, I think I'm going to stop there because this is going to go now into the Sanhedrin and if I keep going, I'm going to have to get all the way to 42 to make it make sense.

But I think as we, let's turn real quick to, let's turn to Matthew, 24.

We'll end there. Because we're at a time in the church where substance and a spirit-filled life and the words of Jesus have given way to this image-driven church, this ends justify the means church, this Ananias and Sapphira are quite welcome today.

[ 45 : 38 ] Please come in. Give us your money. We will give you all the prestige you want. You know, can you, can you do a light show too? You got a fog machine? Yes, you're in. Are you charismatic?

Can you say a few buzzwords? You know, and I'm not saying all those things are bad. We went, we went to the Deep South Pastors Conference in Calvary Chapel, Stone Mountain.

That's a fun church. They have, they do it up big when they like do their worship and stuff. It's just so fun, but it's so genuine. It's exactly the heart we just were reading about. One heart and one soul.

They just, they're just having fun and they love Jesus. And it's great. It's not for a show and it's not to try and impress anybody. But Matthew 24, towards the end here, Jesus is telling them what shall be the signs of the end.

And in verse 42, so he's just talked about the rapture right before. And he said in verse 40, then shall two be in the field, the one shall be taken and the other left.

[ 46 : 39 ] Two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken, the other left. And verse 42, watch therefore, for you know not what hour your Lord does come. But know this, that if the good men of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

Therefore, be you also ready, for in such an hour as you think not the Son of Man comes. Who then is a faithful and wise servant whom his Lord has made ruler over his house to give them meat in due season?

Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he comes shall find so doing. A couple things there.

Start with the bottom and work our way up. What has God given us to be a faithful servant?

What's he expecting us to do? Is he expecting us to go out and revive nations and create kingdoms and turn the world around? No. He says, hey, the world's going to hate you and they won't accept you because they have my, they heard my words and my words create light and they reveal and they hate that because they love the darkness.

So they're going to hate you. He says, that's all right. When these things begin to come to pass, look up, your redemption draws nigh. So there's a substance there. There's an expectation that as we abide in the vine, the branch is drawing all of its life.

[ 47 : 51 ] Now we're each different branches, right? You go out in a tree and you look at the tree and it's one tree but there's very different branches. If I grab a branch, look, here's a branch and

then I go and grab another branch, I don't think, well, it's just the same branch because it's just the same tree.

No, they're very different branches but all one tree and it's all one substance flowing into each branch and each branch will produce fruit. Some will produce a lot. We've got a pear tree out there and a couple of the branches are like loaded and then a couple is like, there's nothing really on that one but it's all part of the same tree.

It's seeming the same life and it's not for the branch to decide what fruit is there. So there's a substance and a reality and Jesus then says here, be you also ready?

He expects us to be watching but the basis is, watch therefore, verse 42, for you know not what hour your Lord does come but know this, if the good man of the house had known in what?

Watch, not the hour. You don't know the hour but you should know the watch. The thief would come. If he knew the watch, the thief would come. He would have watched and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

[ 48 : 57 ] If you knew a thief was coming to your house and he said, hey, I know a thief's coming to my house between 5 a.m. and 8 a.m., well, you'd be ready. If you knew he was going to show up between 12 and 3 a.m., you're going to wait up.

You wouldn't go, well, you know what? I don't know the hour. I don't know the exact time. No point. I might as well go to bed. That'd be stupid. Your house would get broken into. But if you knew the watch, and so Jesus is saying here, you don't know the day or the hour.

That's true. But know this, if he had known the watch that the thief would come, he would have watched and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore, be you also ready. For in such an hour as you think not, the Son of Man comes. Be ready. You don't know the hour, but know the watch. Well, guess what? If I'm not filled with the Holy Spirit, if I'm not about the things that are of the reality of this life of faith and with substance, I'm not going to care about any of that because I'm going to be all wrapped up in, wrapped up, bound up, and then buried by the cares of this world that choke out the effectiveness of that fruit, that cause me to look more to image, more to the ends justifying the means, more to what's going to happen in this world.

And there's so many people that when Jesus comes, instead of watching, they're going to be wrapped up in something else, just like Ananias and Sapphira, instead of the reality. And those are, so for us today, we have to be careful that the quote-unquote church, that is the church, which is the big tree, the mustard plant that's grown into the tree, right?

[ 50 : 35 ] Don't get caught up in the birds that are in it, the beasts that are in it, whatever. Don't worry about any of that. Just be about the same things that this early church was about.

They were filled with the Spirit, and the Spirit produced everything then that needed to come out of them, all of the fruit. They didn't have to work it up. So, that's been on my mind and heart a lot as I've been going through this, just, why were they like that, and why are we not like that?

What was so different about them? And again, I think, we've just lost sight a lot of what is the substance? It's the Holy Spirit. And then, He's not any different, because He's one, right?

One Spirit, one hope, one baptism, one Father and Lord of all. Well, that means then the same one that's producing that needs to produce that in my life, and if it's not, then that's where I need to go, Lord, what is it that's plugging this up, that's not allowing this fruit to take place?

Because I can't work it up. I can't fake it. I can't buy it. It has to be something you have to do. I think a big part of that is being about the things Jesus said to be about. He said, watch.

[ 51 : 42 ] He said, be ready. He said, go forth and preach. Go forth and make disciples. Edify one another. Gather together. And I think if we make those priorities, walking by faith, not by sight, then I think we will see more of that.

Great grace will be upon us. We'll experience the power of the Holy Spirit and with great power give witness to the resurrection. So I know I want more of that in my life. I need more of that. And anyway, Lord, we love you so much.

We are, I just love that song. I want to run and green your pastures. I can't wait to be there to see you face to face, Lord. To have every hope and dream fully realized, Lord.

That everything we experience in this world today, everything, the greatness and fullness of the substance of the Holy Spirit, we have all the fullness of the Godhead bodily dwells in Christ Jesus. And he says that you might, Paul says, you might be filled with all the fullness of God. We have all of that and yet then you say, well, it's like a shadow. You see through a glass dimly but then face to

face. And so Lord, I just, I just can't imagine that this, all of this, Lord, is just a shadow and then the substance.

[ 52 : 50 ] What will that be like? So Lord, let us not turn to the lesser things of this world. Let us not, even in the church, get caught up in the, what we think is prestige when in your heart and mind it's just the natural outflowing of the oneness of the body and the Holy Spirit just supposed to be happening.

But to look at that and then think there's something I can gain from that, that if I just put on a good show or if I bring some money or whatever, when Lord, recognizing everything I have is because Jehovah has graciously given.

And then Lord, to realize that how gracious you are also to use us as part of your grace to give back to the body, that we should be part of that. Lord, I pray for everyone here specifically that you would do that work in our hearts, Lord, where the natural love and unity and oneness in the Holy Spirit would happen more, Lord, that we desire to be together with believers and with the body more, we desire to be in the word more, and that we would have an expectation, Lord.

We don't know the hour, but we do know what watch, we do know what time frame, we do know the season, and we can look around and say, look at this globalism, look at the nations clamoring for one man to come on the scene, look at all of this, Lord.

Wickedness is abounding, that sound doctrine, Lord, is being thrown out left and right, and people are running after itching ears, so we know the time is short, Lord. We will be those, Lord, to meet you in the clouds, Lord, we are excited for that, and so we want that hope to purify us, to keep us pure, to keep contaminants out, to keep us from being caught up with the cares of this world, that will make us unfruitful.

[ 54 : 31 ] So, Lord, let us truly abide in the vine, not by our own efforts, but walking by faith, stepping forward into the impossibilities that we would never be able to step in, except the Holy Spirit fills us and enables us.

So, we love you, we trust you, thank you for your word, and in Jesus' name, Amen.