

# The Marriage of Speaking God's Word and Meeting People's Needs

Acts 4:31-5:21 / March 4, 2023

**INTRODUCTION: What Happened after the Apostles Were Arrested, Threatened, and Commanded to Remain Silent about Jesus? (4:31, ESV)**

**AND** when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to **speak the word of God with boldness.**

**MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE THROUGH GENEROUS GIVING (4:32-37, ESV)**

Unity: **NOW** the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.

Testimony: And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

Generosity There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. Thus Joseph,

- who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement),
- a Levite,
- a native of Cyprus,
- sold a field that belonged to him and
- brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

## **Grace Giving: Fulfills the Three O. T. Tithes and Special Offerings**

We want you to know, brothers, about the **grace of God** that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a **wealth of generosity** on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and **beyond their means**, of **their own accord**, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints— and this, not as we expected, but **they gave themselves first to the Lord** and then by the will of God to us. Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this **act of grace**. But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this **act of grace** also. I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. For you know **the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ**, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. (2 Corinthians 8:1-9, ESV)

**MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE BY ADDRESSING HYPOCRISY/DECEPTION (5:1-11 ESV)**

## **The Husband: Ananias (God is Generous)**

Deception: **BUT** a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, and with his wife's knowledge he kept back (*misappropriate, embezzle*) for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Revelation: But Peter said,

1. *"Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land?"*
2. *While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own?"*
3. *And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal?"*
4. *Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God."*

Judgement: When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last.

Outcome: And great fear came upon all who heard of it.  
The young men rose and wrapped him up and carried him out and buried him.

#### **The Wife: Sapphira (*Beautiful*)**

Confrontation: After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. And Peter said to her, *"Tell me whether you sold the land for so much."*

Lie: And she said, *"Yes, for so much."*

Revelation: But Peter said to her,  
*"How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord?  
Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out."*

Judgement: Immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last.

Outcome: When the young men came in they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband.  
And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things.

#### **MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE THROUGH HEALINGS (5:12-16, ESV)**

Miracles: **NOW** many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. (East end of the Temple by the court of the Gentiles; Peter healed the lame man at this location and preached his second sermon)

Response: None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,

Healings: so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them.  
The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

#### **MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE APOSTLES THROUGH DELIVERANCE (5:17-20, ESV)**

Arrest: **BUT** the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison.

Deliverance: But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said,

Purpose: *"Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."*

#### **CONCLUSION: What Happened after the Apostles Were Arrested, Threatened, and Commanded to Remain Silent about Jesus a Second Time? (5:21, ESV)**

**AND** when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and **began to teach.**