

First Mt. Olive Freewill Baptist Church

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Mid-Week Worship and Study HANDOUT

Theme: Faith Under Fire

Topic: The Book of Acts

The Early Days of the Christian Church

We have covered:

- the preparation of the Disciples

- the Birth of the Church/Pentecost

- the preaching of Peter and the winning of Souls

- the Church's ministry in Jerusalem/healing of the lame man

- the empowerment of the Church

These next sections deal with the backdrop to the church's spiritual operation.

D. _____

Our study of the church is not just to cover spiritual history, it is to show how the church is reflected in the lives of those who are connected to her.

The church under fire is also Christians under fire. Everything that has a birth is confronted by internal and external pressures.

We must remove the _____ that if it is of God, then it will come without some type of pressure/problem. The expectation that church is _____ only sets the church up for greater negative issues.

The birth of newborns faces two types of pressures:

- _____ complications; sickness

- _____ complications; actions or destruction

Acts 5

I. The Deception of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)

Chapter 4 ends with a great sense of _____ - fellowships among the saints:

- They were of one heart and soul.
- All their needs were met.
- The Apostles with great witness reflected the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Great grace was upon them.
- Persons gave freely of their possessions.
- The Apostles distributed to every person according to their needs.
- Barnabas sold his land and gave it to the Apostles or laid it at their feet.

Ananias and Sapphira tried to copy Barnabas' efforts by selling their land. Instead of them giving everything to the Apostles, they held back some of the money for themselves.

Peter confronted Ananias as he brought the offering. Peter asked Ananias why did he lie about his offering? Ananias died on the spot.

Three hours later, Sapphira came looking for her husband. Peter asked, tell me whether you sold the land for this much? And she said, yes.

Peter confronted her and said, how is it that you both have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?

The consequence that came upon Ananias was the same consequence that came upon Sapphira.

Why such harsh consequences?

1. _____ is unacceptable in the fellowship of God.

The lie was agreed upon by both parties. They plotted or planned to hold back some of the money.

Peter made it plain that they could have retained the entire amount for themselves, but they chose to deceive the Apostles.

2. _____ is unhealthy in the fellowship.

The fact that Ananias and Sapphira were inspired by Barnabas was good. Going beyond being inspired opens the door for competition.

There is no room for Competition in the body of Christ. Each and every believer has a particular grace on his or her life.

_____ means consolation or encourager.

_____ - favor

_____ - a gem - sapphire

When we understand the grace that is upon our lives, then we do not fall into the trap of competing with others. We are unsure if the property of Ananias and Sapphira was more than Barnabas'. Some suggest that it was more. So, what they gave matched Ananias's offering.

The gifts would never match in amount because of the unclean motives.

3. The _____ is in charge of the fellowship.

Peter made it clear that they both lied to the Holy Ghost and not to men.

The Apostles' feet represented the presence of the Holy One. The consequences were issued by the Holy Spirit. Nowhere in the text did we see that Peter called for consequences upon them.

The consequences were designed to bring fear among the church. Fear here means reverence or respect and not to be afraid. The work of the Holy Spirit is to be our Comforter. Evoking fear or intimidation would be counter-productive for the Holy Spirit.

II. The Sanhedrin and the Apostles (Acts 5:12-42)

A. The Apostles Were Respected by the People. (Acts 5:12-16)

The Apostles were sent to do a work for the Kingdom of God:

- By the Apostles were many signs and _____ done.
- The Apostles were not common _____ but were respected among the people.
- The Apostles added _____ to the Lord.
- The Apostles _____ the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The work of any Kingdom worker is to keep, make or _____ the Body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-12

Purpose of Spiritual leaders:

- _____ the saints
- _____ the Body of Christ
- _____ unity of Faith
- _____ the Statutes of Christ
- _____ for stability

When the Apostles did their job, multitudes came out of the city to experience the miraculous power of God: verse 16

- The sick were healed.
- Unclean spirits were cleansed.

**B. The _____ of the Leaders
(Acts 5:17-42)**

The Jewish leaders became filled with indignation because of the work of the Apostles.

The Apostles were:

- Apprehended
- Put in a common prison

The Apostles were delivered by an Angel for the purpose of:

- _____ them;
- _____ – to the temple;
- _____ – as free men; and
- _____ – speak the words of life.

The attack continued by the Jewish leaders. The attack moved from an overt _____ operation to a covert operation _____.

The Question: Did we not straitly command you that you should not teach in this name?

The Name of Jesus offered a new teaching _____.

The Apostles' response: We must obey God rather than men.

Why obey God?

1. The _____ of Jesus (verse 30)
2. The _____ of Jesus (verse 31)
3. The _____ of Jesus – (verse 32)
4. The _____ of the Holy Spirit

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1. They were cut in their hearts.
 2. They took counsel to kill the Apostles.
 3. Gamaliel, a doctor of the law's suggestion:
 - based upon past history, let these men alone
 - time will tell if they be of God or not.
 4. They agreed.
 5. They beat the Apostles and let them go.

The Apostles' responses:

1. They _____ – the beating did not impede their ability to walk.

2. They _____ that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name.

3. They _____ to teach and preach about Jesus on a daily basis.

The pressure of the early church leaders developed them into strong witnesses for the Kingdom of God.