

To the Ends of the Earth: Session 8
Acts 4:36-5:11
Giving

Questions:

1. Who are we introduced to in verse 36, and what do we learn about him?

Acts 4:36 introduces us to Barnabas. Barnabas was a Levite from Cyprus.

2. Acts 4:34-35 emphasizes the generosity of the early church. In Barnabas, we have one example of generosity from the early church. What generous act does Barnabas perform in verse 37?

He sold land and brought the proceeds of the sale to the Apostles.

3. What do we learn about giving from Barnabas?

His motives were pure. He gave sacrificially to the Lord.

4. What is the difference between a tithe and sacrificial giving?

A tithe comes from the Old Testament and has to do with giving 10%. Sacrificial giving is anything beyond a tithe. In Barnabas' case, it was 100%.

Adrian Rogers: Tithing is under the law. We are not under the law; we are under grace. Here is the point that really caught my attention. Grace also requires more than the law. We are to go beyond a tithe and give sacrificially.

5. Remember the name Barnabas. Barnabas will play a prominent role in the mission of the early church. The opening event of chapter 5 stands in stark contrast to the sacrificial gift of Barnabas.

6. What happens with Ananias and Sapphira in verses 1-2 of chapter 5?

They also sold a piece of land but held back some for themselves. But they gave with the pretense that they had given all just like Barnabas.

MacArthur: The beauty of the sacrificial, selfless giving of the early church was marred by the ugly sins of deceit and self-glory.

MacArthur: They saw an opportunity to make a double profit: They would gain spiritual prestige and still make some money on the side.

We see hypocrisy in their giving.

7. In verses 3-4, Peter confronts Ananias about his motives. Based on Peter's statement, were Ananias and Sapphires required to give 100% of the proceeds to the church?

No

See 2 Corinthians 9:7

8. What happens to Ananias in verse 5?

Fell dead

9. Three hours later, what happens in verses 7-10?

Sapphires shows up not knowing what had happened to her husband. She suffered the same fate.

10. What does the story with Ananias and Sapphires reveal about the church?

There is no perfect church.

Someone once told Charles Spurgeon that they were leaving his church because they were going to find a perfect church. Spurgeon, who had a great deal of wit and sometimes was more forthright than people dare to be today, said, "When you find it, please don't join it, because you'll ruin it."

11. What does this story in Acts 5 reveal about God?

God is serious about sin.