

Readings

Scripture

¹ But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, ² and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³ But Peter said, "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? ⁴ While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God." ⁵ When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it. ⁶ The young men rose and wrapped him up and carried him out and buried him.

⁷ After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ And Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much." And she said, "Yes, for so much." ⁹ 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." ¹⁰ Immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things.

¹² 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. ¹³ None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. ¹⁴ And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

- Acts 5:1-16 (English Standard Version)

Sermon Outline

The 3rd Mark of the Church: Discipline that Produces Fruitfulness
Acts 5:1-16 Stephen Baldwin

The Holy Spirit disciplines his church in love

How does he discipline?

The Holy Spirit disciplines the church to give us true integrity. (Acts 5:1-6)

The Holy Spirit disciplines the church to give us true reverence. (Acts 5:7-11)

The Holy Spirit disciplines the church to give us true awakening. (Acts 5:12-16)

Reflection Questions (taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)

- Why do you believe that the Spirit's discipline and judgment of Ananias and Sapphira was immediate and ultimate?
- Are there any other examples in scripture of such an extreme response on God's part?
- True or False: Immediate, ultimate discipline is an Old Testament phenomenon.
- What is the danger of hypocrisy of the sort Ananias and Sapphira practiced?
- Where do you think the greatest dangers facing the church today come from - inside or outside?
- In what ways does the Holy Spirit discipline the church today...or does he?
- Can you find similar occurrences in scripture of what you observed in Q6?
- In view of verses 12-16 is the Spirit's discipline a good thing or a bad thing?