

Recap of 5/23/21 message (Joe Ricchuiti – Acts 4:32-5:11):

1. The setting: the incident of Acts 4:32-5:11 follow the first incident of persecution of the church.

-The Main point: God is concerned for the purity of His church (1 Corinthians 5:12ffl 1 Peter 4:15-16).

-The real enemy of the church is sin within not enemies/persecution from with without.

-The passage calls us to ask two questions of ourselves:

-How am I using my gifts, talents, and resources to build unity in the Body?

-Am I dealing with sin in my life seen in wrong attitudes and wrong actions?

2. This passage also serves to introduce us to Joseph (known as Barnabas) of Cyprus, who becomes very important to the story of Acts. He's mentioned some 25 times in Acts, and 5 times in the Epistles. He was sent to Antioch by the Jerusalem church in Acts 11 and he accompanied Paul on the first missionary journey in Acts 13. He became so identified with his gift of encouragement that he was called by the name Barnabas, meaning "Son of Encouragement." Stedman said of him: "He was the Barnabas of the open heart and the acceptant spirit...he had the gift of exhortation, of comfort, of encouragement—a wonderful gift—which he used so diligently that everyone began to call him by his gift, the Son of Encouragement."

3. The church was unified ("one in heart and mind") and provided for the material needs of the those believers who were in economic difficulties following the principle later laid out by Paul in Galatians 6:10. The first priority of any benevolence program is the church and its members.

4. Chapter 5 introduces us to Ananias and Sapphira. Spurred on by the positive attention Barnabas received they sold a piece of property but conspired to hold back part of the proceeds (which they had every right to do), but to represent to the church that they had given it all (which they didn't have a right to do). By doing this they were lying to the church, which was ultimately lying to the Holy Spirit who is God (Acts 5:3,40). Their deception, Peter points out was the result of the "control or influence" of Satan. The word for "filled" in 5:3 is the same word used of the "filling of the Spirit" in Ephesians 5:18. It is sobering to note that Satan can gain influence or control over a believer. Satan seeks to control the actions of believers by using different lusts: ego, power, recognition, materialism, and sex. This lie to the church and to God cost both Ananias and Sapphira their lives.

5. One (of several) possible reasons for the severity of this discipline by God is to illustrate that there is to be a radical break with the old life (Ephesians 4:22-32). Believer, unfortunately, may choose to live in the realm of darkness (Satan's domain) (1 John 2:9-11). (Hullinger)