

Church of God Sunday School

ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA

Acts 4:31-37; 5:1-11

Have you ever told something that was not true? Have you lied to your mother or father? No doubt, when they found out that you were lying, there were consequences (punishment).

When someone tells a lie, they are trying to deceive (or mislead) others to believe something that is not true. How do you think God feels about lying? Proverbs 6:16-17 says that God *hates* a "lying tongue." One story in the Bible tells how a man and his wife were instantly punished for trying to deceive.

Peter and John had been preaching about Jesus and healing people in Jesus' name. They spoke "the word of God with boldness" because God had given them His Spirit. Multitudes of people heard and believed and were saved.

The people "were of one heart and of one soul." There was no division among them. These people came from different cities and different backgrounds, but they were "all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

People began to take care of each other. Many who owned "lands or houses sold them," and they brought the money to the Apostles. They "laid them [the money] down at the apostles' feet," so that the Apostles could give the money to others as they "had need."

One man who sold his land and gave the money to the Apostles was named Barnabas (*BAHR-nuh-buhs*). This was a thoughtful and unselfish gift! Another man and his wife also decided to sell some of their land and give the money to the Apostles. Perhaps they were there when Barnabas gave his money to the Apostles. Perhaps they wanted some praise and honor from the Apostles and the people.

But there was something different about their gift. See if you can tell what the difference was.

The man's name was Ananias (*An-uh-NI-uhs*), and his wife was Sapphira (*Suh-FI-ruh*). They sold some

land but, for some reason, decided to keep part of the money for themselves. Ananias "brought a certain part [not all, but *a part*], and laid it at the apostles' feet." He was pretending that it was the full price of the land, but it wasn't.

Ananias might have expected praise from Peter, but Peter said, "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?" How did Peter know that? It was the

Holy Spirit who told him this, for he could not have known it otherwise.

Peter continued speaking to Ananias: "The property was yours to sell or not sell, as you wished. And after selling it, the money was also yours to give away" (New Living Bible). Ananias did not have to sell his land, nor did he have to give the money away.

Peter asked Ananias, "Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." This was serious. Ananias was trying to lie to God. God must have

been very angry!

As soon as Ananias heard what Peter said, he fell down dead! Great fear came on all the people who "heard these things." Young men, who were there, wrapped Ananias up "and carried him out, and buried him."

About three hours later, Sapphira came to where the Apostles were. She did not know what had happened to her husband. Peter asked her, "Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much?" This was an opportunity for Sapphira to tell the truth. But she did not. She said, "Yea, for so much."

Then Peter said: "How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out."



Primary Education

Sapphira fell dead at Peter's feet, and the young men, returning from burying her husband, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. "And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things."

Do you think Ananias and Sapphira thought they would be caught in their lie? They could not have imagined the consequences of that one lie.

When you are tempted to tell a lie, this is a good story to remember. One lie can get you into so much

trouble! You might not die instantly, as Ananias and Sapphira did. But your soul will die, because lying is a sin (Ezekiel 18:20). If you have trouble with lying, why not ask Jesus to forgive you and to help you to always tell the truth?

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**MEMORY VERSE:**

*" . . . thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."*

—Acts 5:4  
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Ananias and Sapphira kept back part of the _____ for themselves.

(Color the white to find the missing word)



Fill in the Blanks

A certain _____ and his wife sold a piece of _____.



They decided to keep part of the _____ for themselves.



But they wanted _____ to think they gave all the money.



Peter told Ananias and _____ that they had lied to God.



Use These Words

Sapphira **money** **Peter** **man** **land**



Ananias and Sapphira Plan to Deceive