

# Day 33, Acts 5

by David Servant

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*David Servant's sermon explores the consequences of hypocrisy in the church, the importance of truthfulness, and the role of miracles and suffering in the Christian faith.*

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 11:27

**Topics:** "Hypocrisy And Sin", "Repentance And Forgiveness"

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## Description

David Servant preaches on the consequences of hypocrisy as seen in the sudden deaths of Ananias and Sapphira, highlighting God's disapproval of sin and the importance of genuine devotion. He emphasizes the need for self-examination, repentance, and the inclusion of key elements like repentance and forgiveness of sins in the gospel message. The sermon also touches on divine discipline, the manifestation of spiritual gifts like the word of knowledge, and the power of healing in the church through God's supernatural intervention.

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## Transcript

We are told that the sudden deaths of Ananias and Sapphira brought fear upon the church and everyone else (5:11). Clearly, that was God's intention. There was such an obvious cause-and-effect relationship between Ananias' and Sapphira's hypocrisy and their demise that the divine message was unmistakable.

God's disapproval of sin isn't always so obvious because He generally chooses to be more merciful with people than He was with Ananias and Sapphira. Yet we are informed by Paul that, even within the church, divine discipline by means of death is not as rare as some might suppose (see 1 Cor. 11:27-32). However, as Paul also points out, discipline by death is often not sudden, but preceded by sickness, which serves as a merciful warning and provides opportunity for repentance and healing (see also Jas. 5:14-15). Serious sickness has a way of motivating us to examine ourselves, and so we should. (It is not our responsibility, however, to pass judgment on other Christians who are suffering sickness.) To enjoy God's fullest blessing in our lives, we must give Him our fullest devotion (see 1 Pet. 3:10-12).

The sin of Ananias and Sapphira was hypocrisy. They attempted to appear to be what they were not. They wanted everyone to believe that they were giving the full sale price of their land to benefit the poor. God, however, was not fooled. We should keep that in mind whenever we are tempted to appear to be what we are not. If Ananias and Sapphira had simply told the truth that they were giving only a portion of the proceeds, they would not have died. But they "lied to the Holy Spirit" (5:3).

Peter's knowledge of their hypocrisy was a manifestation of the gift of the "word of knowledge" (1 Cor. 12:1-11), a sudden revelation of a little bit of what God knows.

I'm going to have to say it again today: If we removed all the miracles and their effects from the book of Acts, there would be no book of Acts. In a single chapter we've read about Peter being given supernatural knowledge, hypocrites falling dead, signs and wonders taking place at the hands of the apostles, multitudes of people being healed, unclean spirits being cast out, and angels releasing apostles from prison. Lord, grant us more of you and less of us!

It is obvious that the revival in Jerusalem revolved around the healings that were taking place, particularly through Peter's ministry (5:12-16). Healing of the sick is part and parcel of the church of Jesus Christ. Where divine healing is emphasized, the church is growing. For example, when I was in Nepal last year, I heard from several reliable sources that the amazing growth of Christianity in that Hindu nation has been, in large part, due to believers healing the sick. It has become common belief among non-Christians in Nepal that, if you, or even one of your animals, is sick, the thing to do is call for a Christian to come and pray. God has honored His promise to those who have taken Him at His Word.

Peter's defense before the Sanhedrin was another Holy Spirit-inspired word. Notice how he, in just four sentences, once again mentioned the key elements of the gospel: Jesus' death on the cross, His resurrection, the need for repentance, and the primary benefit being the forgiveness of sins (5:30-32). Those elements should always be included in the gospel. Jesus commanded His disciples to preach "repentance for forgiveness of sins...in His name to all the nations" (Luke 24:47). If you haven't heard about repentance and forgiveness of sins, you haven't heard the gospel.

Grumps take note! After the apostles were flogged, it didn't dishearten them but rather caused them to rejoice! They were sincerely glad to be considered worthy to suffer for Jesus' cause. Counterfeit Christians can't understand that because their "relationship" with Jesus is one-sided. In their minds Jesus exists only to serve them. The truth is, Jesus has served us by dying for our sins, and those who believe in Him now live to serve Him!

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-servant/day-33-acts-5/>

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