



# Harvest Growing Deeper

Evangelical Free Church

A Disciplemaking Tool of Harvest Evangelical Free Church  
(for personal and/or small group study)

Week of June 21, 2020

Acts 4:32-5:16

*God's church will be attacked by persecution from the outside, or hypocrisy on the inside. Both are orchestrated by Satan to try to stop God's church from growing in the power of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 3, Peter, empowered by the Holy Spirit, heals a man, and then shares the hope of Christ with the gathered crowds. He and John are thrown in jail and become a bold witness for Christ. When released, they return to the church, who prays for more **Holy Spirit boldness** in proclaiming God's Word. God answers their prayer! A unified church that humbly and sincerely prays for Holy Spirit boldness to be witnesses of Christ's work and to spread His Word, is a mighty force in God's hand!*

Q: Many believe Ananias & Sapphira were true Christians but gave into their pride, their selfish desires and believing Satan's destructive lies (John 8:44). They wanted to appear holy and righteous on the outside but still keep the earthly rewards for themselves, thus robbing God of the glory. This is called hypocrisy. In what ways do you fall into hypocrisy when gathered in church, singing worship, or in our day to day life, and interactions, etc. What do we need to do *immediately* when we realize this, in order to not give Satan a foothold in our lives?

Q: (vv.12-16) How did the church continue to grow (in spite of Satan's attempts to corrupt it from inside)?

*PRAY: Lord forgive me of my hypocrisy in wanting to appear more godly than I truly am. Forgive me for wanting to take glory upon my self that is due to You alone. Fill me with your Holy Spirit and lead me to humbly learn from your Word, apply it to my daily life, and serve the needs of others in the church and community. May You receive all honor, praise and glory, in Jesus name, Amen!*

Q: Describe a time that you were a part of a team that worked well together? (sports, work, school, etc.) What made that team work well together?

Q: (vv.32-37) How is the early church described?

Q: In what way does this unity tie into their answered prayer (4:24-31) for Holy Spirit boldness in witness and speaking God's Word? Coincidence?

Q: (vv.32-37) The church (filled with the Spirit) *willingly* gave to those in need among them. This was not communism—they were not forced to give). In what ways do you see Harvest (or your local church) similar in believers’ willingness to give? In what ways do we still need improvement?

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Q: The church, made up of a diverse group of people, was unified around Christ. In what ways does disunity hamper what God wants to do in and through His church?

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Q: Barnabas (“son of encouragement”) would play a major role in the life of the early church. He helped the skeptical Apostles believe Paul’s true conversion to Christ (Acts 9:27). Acts 11:19-25 describe him as full of the Holy Spirit, bringing Paul to teach in Antioch. When he and Paul had a sharp disagreement over Mark (Acts 15:39), Barnabas took Mark under his wing. When Paul wrote his final letter from a prison cell (2 Tim 4:11), he asked Timothy to “get Mark, and bring him with you. He is very useful to me in ministry.” Barnabas had encouraged Mark along the way and helped him see his mission and purpose again. Who is a “Barnabas” in your life, someone who encouraged you when you didn’t think so highly of yourself or your work?

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Q: Who can you be a “Barnabas” to right now? Reach out today!

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Q: (5:1-2) Ananias and his wife Sapphira sold some property. They didn’t have to sell their land. They didn’t even have to give any funds to the church. But what was so troubling about what they actually did? How does this contrast sharply with (v.37) Barnabas selling his property and willingly giving it all to the church?

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Q: (vv.3-4) Given the Holy Spirit’s insight, how did Peter respond?

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Q: Who did they really lie too (v.3 & v.4)? How is this another Biblical proof of the Trinity?

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Q: (vv.5-10) What was God’s judgment on Ananias and Sapphira? What may have been the reason God’s judgement was so quick and harsh? (see v.5 “great *fear* fell upon all who heard it” and v.11 “great *fear* fell upon the whole church and upon all who heard it.”)

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Q: Some say their immediate deaths were both God’s punishment for sin, but also His mercy to keep them from further sinning, and from further contaminating the young, growing Spirit-empowered church. It also put the fear of the Lord into both believers and non-believers to remind all of God’s holiness, the seriousness of sin and the need to turn to God for His forgiveness, mercy and grace. Obviously, God doesn’t strike everyone dead like this today when we think, speak or act hypocritically (praise God!! - we all are guilty in need of His grace!). We have selfish ambitions we are aware of and those we are not. How should this act as a warning for us to pursue a Holy Spirit-led life for His glory?