

Acts #33 “Instantaneous Discipline” Acts 4:33-5:11

Acts is a transitional historical book which begins with Peter as lead apostle and then we meet Saul of Tarsus, church persecutor who’s converted on the road to Damascus in chapter nine.

We’ll see a transition from Peter to Paul, from Jerusalem to Gentile nations, from a Jewish emphasis to a Gentile emphasis.

*All this including Paul’s four missionary journeys that will take us from the birth of the Church throughout her first thirty years.*

We also see in Acts, the transition from the Lord Jesus Christ’s supernatural authority and ministry to the supernatural authority and ministry of the apostles.

Satan is busy at work filling the hearts of Ananias and Saphira to lie which is the direct opposite to what the Holy Spirit of truth is doing.

It always comes down to the Angelic Dispute; good vs evil, truth vs lies and in this case, it’s Satan, the father of lies attempting to destroy the infant church.

*On the day of Pentecost, it started with the Holy Spirit supernaturally empowering the apostles to speak in languages foreign to them as a witness to Israel’s imminent discipline.*

The emphasis was on the Holy Spirit as He arrived with the sound of a tornado and a vision of flames.

At this time, the local church in Jerusalem has great power which began with prayer, the filling of the Holy Spirit and the principle of biblical truth learned and applied, producing highly effective witnessing and giving.

This Jerusalem church did not enjoy good spiritual health for all that long and it declined after being the center of Christianity for about twenty-five years but then it gradually phased out and eventually disappeared in about forty years.

*At this time in the early church, this was practiced locally but eventually, the entire Jerusalem church’s belongings were seized through tremendous persecution.*

In approximately A.D. 60, Paul travelled all over the ancient world collecting money and charitable gifts for the Jerusalem church, so her support became world-wide.

The point here is that Barnabas brought all the money he received in the sale of his property and he didn’t have to; he did it of his own free-will.

There’s nothing in the Word of God that says we have to give everything we have away or we’re not really true disciples.

This was an inner attack on the early church that had to be stopped because the Church will be destroyed from within if lust for attention gains control from the start.

There must be a way to break false motivation and lust for attention and there are two ways of doing it:

1. Maximum divine discipline in the form of the sin unto death which removes the people involved immediately.

2. *The teaching of Bible truth, so that people will understand that lust for attention is a part of the sin nature*

*and that they must be filled with the Spirit to do things as unto the Lord.*

**In his lust for attention, Ananias committed a sin called the filling of the mind by Satan and this doesn't mean that Satan was personally in his mind or indwelling him but it means that motives which originated in Satan are now found to be in Ananias, a believer in Jesus Christ.**

There are 5 sins in the NT against the Holy Spirit:

1. *Resisting the Holy Spirit Acts 7:51*
2. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit Matt 12:31
3. Grieving the Holy Spirit Eph 4:30
4. **Quenching the Holy Spirit 1<sup>st</sup> Thess 5:19**
5. Lying to the Holy Spirit Acts 5:3

**Every local church must have leadership authority and the pastor's authority must be connected with his teaching of the Word of God.**

So, there was great fear in the congregation in the sense that they recognized from the teaching of God's Word that God's Hand was in this church.

*And the local church was therefore saved from destruction from within.*

**The objective of a local church is not to have people frightened of church leadership, other people or even the sin unto death, so there is a principle here that we should note: this is not authorization for bullying anyone.**

This is not a fear in the sense of cowering; it's a respectful recognition that a local church which represents God, must have authority and discipline.

*Discipline is necessary for function in any organization and the local church is an organized organism.*

This fear develops a self-imposed discipline necessary to carry the Church through its early stages of growth.