#### Lesson 05:

#### Annanias and Sapphira (Sunday); Escape from Prison(Wednesday)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:

Acts 5

MEMORY WORK:

Mark 16:15

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

It is wrong to lie. God expects me to tell the truth.

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| **LESSON STARTS HERE** |

INTRODUCTION:

Two weeks ago, we studied about when the Church first began. Where did the Church begin? When did it begin? Today, we are going to learn about two Christians and how they told a lie and were punished. The Bible teaches that lying is a sin, and we must always tell the truth and not lies!

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Many thousands of people were baptized on the day of Pentecost and during the feast days that followed. Many of those new Christians stayed a long time in Jerusalem, learning more every day from the apostles about Jesus and how they should live as His followers. The Christians ate together, prayed together, studied together, and worshiped together. And they shared what they had with one another, taking care of each other’s needs.
2. Some of the Christians who lived in Jerusalem and in nearby areas sold their land and gave the money to the apostles to be used to help other Christians in need. They did it out of love for the Lord and love for their brothers and sisters in Christ. The Lord’s Church is a family, and members of a family take care of one another.
3. A Christian named Joseph (a Levite, from the island of Cyprus) sold some property that he owned and brought the money to the apostles. This was the first of many times that this special man would help and encourage others. In fact, he became known as Barnabas, which means “Son of Encouragement.”
4. Acts 5 tells us about two other Christians (a man and his wife) in the Jerusalem church who decided to follow Barnabas’ example and sell some property. Their names were Ananias and Sapphira. They sold their land, but, before taking the money to the apostles, decided they would lie about how much profit they had made. There was no reason for them to lie. No one was forcing them to sell their property in the first place, and they did not **have** to give away **all** their profit. Apparently they were jealous of the attention given to others who had sold land and wanted to receive some public recognition for their “generosity.” They wanted to be “seen by men” (an attitude condemned by Jesus in Matthew 5:20 and 6:1-6).
5. When Ananias went to the apostles to give them the money, he told them that the money he was giving was **all** their profit from the sale of their land. But God helped Peter to know Ananias was lying. Peter told Ananias that he was not only lying to the apostles, but more importantly, he was lying to God. Instantly, Ananias fell down dead! Younger men who were there with the apostles carried out the body and buried it.

**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the article “[**Capital Punishment**](http://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=7&amp;article=683&amp;topic=29)[**and the Bible**](http://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=7&amp;article=683&amp;topic=29)” by Dave Miller on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion about what God thinks about capital punishment according to the Bible.

1. About three hours later, Sapphira came to the apostles looking for her husband. Peter asked her, “Tell me if you sold the land for such and such a price” (the price which Ananias told them). She said the same thing as Ananias because they had agreed to lie. Peter said that because she committed the same sin as her husband, she would suffer the same punishment, and immediately, Sapphira fell down dead, too. The younger men returned from burying Ananias just in time to find his wife and take her body out for burial as well. [They apparently owned no family tomb, or perhaps a family tomb was part of the property they had sold.]
2. Acts 5:11 says that “great fear came upon the whole church” when the news spread about this couple’s deaths. Their punishment was an example to all the Christians how important honesty is to God and how important our examples are to others. Ananias and Sapphira were not acting or thinking like Jesus would; they were only pretending to be like Jesus (being hypocrites). Doing what God wanted them to do was not as important to them as doing what they wanted to do.
3. When we lie, people will think we cannot be trusted because we aren’t always honest. When others know we lie sometimes, they cannot know when we are lying and when we are telling the truth at other times. So it makes them not trust us altogether. We can’t be a good example to others (we certainly aren’t acting like Jesus) if we tell lies.
4. When we lie to others, we also lie to God, and that makes Him very sad. God hates lies and has promised to punish liars as severely as murderers (Revelation 21:8). Jesus said that we will answer to God for every word we speak. He knows when we lie, even if no one else does. Sometimes telling the truth may mean we get into trouble, but we should never lie just to stay out of trouble.

**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the article “[**Political Correctness**](http://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=7&amp;article=4722)[**and ‘Bashing’**](http://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=7&amp;article=4722)” by Dave Miller on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion of the importance of confronting sin, even publically when necessary, and even when it is not “politically correct.”

1. Remind the children that Jesus called the devil “the father of lies” (John 8:44) because he was the first liar. He told Eve that she would not die by eating the forbidden fruit. He encouraged Eve to disobey God (to sin) and then to try to escape the consequences. He has been doing the same thing to people ever since.
2. Discuss briefly the numerous Bible characters who lied and the consequences of their lies.

Examples:

* + Jewish leaders told Roman guards to lie about Jesus’ body “disappearing” (Matthew

28:11-15). Many Jews believed that lie for a long time.

* + Peter lied three times about knowing Jesus (Matthew 26:69-75). He was terribly sad about his lies and would never forget them. (1 Peter 2:1).
  + Jacob lied to his father Isaac, saying he was Esau (Genesis 27). The descendants of

the two brothers were at war for centuries.

* + Laban lied to Jacob, giving him Leah as wife instead of Rachel (Genesis 29). Jacob had to work for Laban 14 years in all to have Rachel.

1. Jacob’s 10 sons led him to believe that Joseph was dead, and Jacob mourned for Joseph for many years and never went to rescue him, not knowing he was alive (Genesis 37). This can lead into a discussion that even when we don’t actually **tell** a lie, if we let someone believe what is untrue, it can be just as bad as lying (e.g., Abraham and Abimelech; Genesis 20).

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL VISUALS (note disclaimers):

##### Betty Lukens’ felt pieces

* ABeka Flash-a-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, not the lesson book;)
* Free Bible Images – Saved on flash drive. Can be presented on classroom tv. Script included in lesson file.

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS:

### SUNDAY

LEARNING CENTERS AND ACTIVITIES:

* Explain how we are transparent to God. He knows everything, including what we are thinking. Pass out 3x5 white cards. Have each child write his name and draw a heart with a white crayon. Mix up the cards. Discuss how we can’t see which card is which, but God can. Take a marker and color over each of the cards. Each name will show up. Explain that God can see what we can’t.
* Salty ice cream: You need a tray of goodies for this object lesson. Include ice cream, a bowl, scoop, chocolate syrup, sprinkles, salt and a spoon. Scoop out some ice cream in a bowl and talk about how delicious it is. Ask kids what their favorite toppings are. Ask them if salt would be a good topping. Accidentally, (on purpose) sprinkle salt on the ice cream, lots of salt. Try to convince kids they can cover the salt with chocolate syrup and sprinkles. Ask the kids if they think the toppings will cover the salty flavor; you could let them taste it using plastic spoons. Discuss how covering something up with a lie doesn’t really make things better. Note: many students dress up for Sunday School. Be aware of using things that are too messy. Be prepared with baby wipes, paper towels, Clorox wipes, etc.

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT

### Note: The Wed. Lesson will introduce new content not covered on Sunday

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

People may make fun of me or dislike me because I go to church, won’t use bad language, etc., but I will do what God wants me to do anyway.

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| **LESSON STARTS HERE** |

INTRODUCTION:

Review highlights from Sunday’s lesson (Ananias and Sapphira)

What do you think you would do if someone called you names or made fun of you because you believe in Jesus? That would make you sad, wouldn’t it? In the book of Acts, Peter and John and the other apostles were even put in jail and mistreated because they wouldn’t stop teaching about Jesus. But that didn’t stop them! Let’s see what happened to Peter and John in Acts chapter 5.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Review: “A” is for **ascension** of Jesus and a new **apostle** chosen. “B” is for **beginning** of the church and **baptism** of 3,000. “C” is for **cripple cured** and **crowd** taught about Jesus. “D” is for **disciples in jail** and **disciples share**. “E” is for **escape** from prison and **no escape** from lying.
2. In chapter 4 we learned that Peter and John were put in jail after God healed a crippled man through them. They were released from jail the next day, however, and the Jewish leaders told them to stop preaching about Jesus. But Peter and John did not stop preaching and performing miracles. The Christians continued to worship on Solomon’s porch at the Temple, trying to teach Jews who came to worship there. The Jewish leaders became more and more angry that the followers of Jesus would not be quiet. The leaders were also jealous because of the crowds that were listening to the apostles.
3. The high priest ordered that the apostles be arrested and put in jail again. But during the night, an angel of the Lord opened the prison gates and helped them escape. The angel told them to go back to the Temple and continue to tell people about living for Jesus.
4. The next morning, the Jewish leaders sent soldiers to bring the apostles to them from jail. The soldiers returned with bad news: the prison doors were locked and the guards at their posts, but the apostles were not in the jail. They were at the Temple preaching again. The Jewish leaders were surprised and very angry! They sent soldiers to arrest them and bring them before the Council again

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**NOTE:** Peter’s statement (verse 31) that Jesus was at God’s right hand would have been another way to remind the Jews about Jesus’ resurrection.

1. Peter and the apostles were not afraid of anything the Jewish Council might decide to do to them. Peter spoke for the group, saying, “We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29, ESV). He told the Jews again that they were responsible for killing God’s Son, Jesus (the long- awaited Messiah), and they needed to **repent**.

**Repent:** To change your mind or the way you think about the things God says are wrong and choose not to do those things anymore. Repentance is turning around your life and going in another direction.

1. The Jews became very angry and wanted to kill these “troublemakers.” But a wise teacher of the Law named Gamaliel persuaded them not to. [Note what Gamaliel says in verses 38-39: “If this plan...is [the work] of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it—lest you even be found to fight against God.”] The Jewish leaders listened to Gamaliel and decided to let the apostles go—after having them severely beaten and ordering them again not to teach any more about Jesus.
2. But once again, the apostles did not stop preaching and teaching. The same men who fled for their lives when the Jews came to arrest Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:56) had learned to trust God and be willing to suffer persecution for following God. Jesus had warned them that they would be persecuted for teaching others about Him (John 15:20-21; 16:1-3). They were prepared to suffer if it meant that many more would learn about Jesus. They did not let the beatings stop them, and they rejoiced that they were “counted worthy to suffer shame” for Jesus (Acts 5:41).
3. If others make fun of you or mistreat you because you believe in God or because you don’t make bad choices (follow the crowd), or because you go to church, what should you do or say? (Pray, ask for support from friends and family, read God’s Word) [Talk with the children about other people mentioned in the Bible who were not afraid when they were persecuted for believing in and obeying God, such as Daniel and his three friends, Esther, Joshua, Moses, and Joseph. Encourage them to pray for our missionaries who endure a great deal of persecution and hardship in order to teach others about Jesus.]

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** The Council was the “Greater Sanhedrin,” a Jewish court designed to settle disagreements between Jews and to hand down judgments about the Mosaic Law. But the Council’s most important job was to investigate alleged disobedience to the Law, including blasphemy against the Law or against God, Himself. The Council had 71 members and two presidents. The two presidents were the high priest (who was over religious matters), and the head of the tribe of Judah (who was over secular matters). The Sanhedrin could punish Jews with fines, imprisonment, or beatings. But the Romans would not allow the Council to carry out capital punishment, i.e., the death penalty, which is why they sought Pilate’s help in killing Jesus. (Stephen’s martyrdom was the result of an out-of-control mob.)

LEARNING CENTERS AND ACTIVITIES:

* Make up any missed pages or do coloring pages for NT Binder
* General Bible Review Games

### Review Questions (Sunday)

1. What did many of the early Christians who stayed in Jerusalem do with their property?
   1. They sold it and gave the money to the apostles to help those from out of town.
2. When Joseph participated in this good work, what was his name changed to?
   1. Barnabas
3. What are the names of the husband and wife who decided to sell their land also and give the money to the apostles?
   1. Ananias and Sapphira
4. Did they give all of the money they earned from the selling of their land?
   1. No, they decided to keep some for themselves.
5. What did Ananias tell Peter when he brought the money?
   1. He told Peter it was all of their profit from the sale.
6. Who helped Peter know that he was lying?
   1. God
7. What happened to Ananias?
   1. He instantly fell dead.
8. What happened when Sapphira came looking for her husband about three hours later?
   1. Peter asked her if the money Ananias had brought was all of the profit from the sale; she said it was.
9. What happened to Sapphira?
   1. She also fell dead instantly.

### Review Questions (Wednesday)

1. How did the Christians react after the imprisonment of Peter and John?
   1. They continued worshiping at the Temple and trying to teach the Jews who came to worship there.
2. When the Christians continued to preach and teach Jesus, how did the Jewish leaders react?
   1. They became more and more angry, and they were jealous because the crowds were listening to the apostles.
3. What was the order of the high priest?
   1. That the apostles be arrested and put in jail again
4. While the apostles were in prison, what happened during the night?
   1. An angel of the Lord opened the prison gates and helped them escape.
5. What did the angel of the Lord tell the apostles?
   1. To go back to the Temple and to continue to tell people about the living Jesus
6. What did the Jewish leaders do when they found out that the apostles were missing from the jail?
   1. They sent soldiers to arrest them and bring them before the Council.
7. What did Peter say to the Jewish Council?
   1. He again told them that they were responsible for killing God’s Son and that they needed to repent.
8. Who persuaded the Jews not to kill the apostles?
   1. A wise teacher of the law named Gamaliel
9. Before letting them go, what did the Jewish leaders do to the apostles?
   1. They had them severely beaten and ordered them not to teach any more about Jesus.
10. After leaving the Jewish Council and being severely beaten, did the apostles stop preaching and teaching about Jesus?
    1. No
11. Why did the apostles rejoice?
    1. Because they were “counted worthy to suffer shame for His name”

Additional Notes / Activities Performed & Curriculum Feed Back

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