

UNSTOPPABLE POWER

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

“SIN IN THE CHURCH”

ACTS 4:32 – 5:11

DR. ROBERT JEFFRESS

OCTOBER 31, 2021

Introduction: God takes sin in the church seriously. In today’s passage from the book of Acts, we will examine the first instance of sin in the early church and discover the timeless truths for how God continues to deal with disobedient believers today.

I. Generosity In The Church (Acts 4:32-37)

A. The Motivation for Generosity (Acts 4:32a)

Acts 4:32a “The congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul;”

B. The Evidence of Generosity (Acts 4:32b-35)

Acts 4:32b-35 ^{32b} “Not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them. ³³ And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all. ³⁴ for there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales ³⁵ and lay them at the apostles’ feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need.”

Philippians 4:11-12 ¹¹ “Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstance I am. ¹² I know how to get along with humble means, and I know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.”

James 2:15-16 ¹⁵ “If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,’ and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?”

Matthew 25:35-36, 40 ³⁵ “I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; ³⁶ naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me. ⁴⁰ ...Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the last of them, you did it to Me.”

UNSTOPPABLE POWER

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

“SIN IN THE CHURCH”

ACTS 4:32 – 5:11

DR. ROBERT JEFFRESS | OCTOBER 31, 2021

Recipients of Early Church Charity

1. **Those who couldn't work.** 2 Thessalonians 3:10: “...If anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat either.”
2. **Those who had no family to help them.** 1 Timothy 5:16: “If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, she must assist them and the church must not be burdened so it might assist those who are widows indeed.”

C. The Example of Generosity (Acts 4:36-37)

Acts 4:36-37 ³⁶ “Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement), ³⁷ and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.”

1. **His gift was voluntary** (2 Corinthians 9:7)

2 Corinthians 9:7 “Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

2. **His gift was brought to the church** (Malachi 3:10)

Malachi 3:10a “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse.”

II. Sin In The Church (Acts 5:1-11)

A. The Sin Explained (Acts 5:1-2)

Acts 5:1-2 ¹ “But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, ² and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet.”

UNSTOPPABLE POWER

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

“SIN IN THE CHURCH”

ACTS 4:32 – 5:11

DR. ROBERT JEFFRESS | OCTOBER 31, 2021

B. The Sin Exposed (Acts 5:3-4)

Acts 5: 3-4 ³ “But Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? ⁴ While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.’”

C. The Sin Judged (Acts 5:5-11)

Acts 5:5 “And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; and great fear came over all who heard of it.”

Acts 5:7 “Now there elapsed an interval of about three hours, and his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.”

Acts 5:9-11 ⁹ “Then Peter said to her, ‘Why is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out as well.’ ¹⁰ And immediately she fell at his feet and breathed her last, and the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ And great fear came over the whole church, and over all who heard of these things.”

III. Three Sobering Truths About Secret Sin

A. Secret Sin Is Never Secret (Proverbs 5:21)

Proverbs 5:21 “For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD, and He watches all his paths.”

B. Secret Sin Infects the Church (1 Corinthians 5:6-7)

1 Corinthians 5:6-7 ⁶ “Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? ⁷ Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.”

UNSTOPPABLE POWER

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

“SIN IN THE CHURCH”

ACTS 4:32 – 5:11

DR. ROBERT JEFFRESS | OCTOBER 31, 2021

C. Secret Sin Will Be Eventually Judged by God (Hebrews 12:5-6)

Hebrews 12:5-6 ⁵ “You have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as son, ‘MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; ⁶ FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.’”

Ecclesiastes 8:11 “Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are fully given to do evil.”

1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Conclusion