

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

By Rev. JP Lim | Acts 5:1-11

DISCUSS

When we look around us, most people no longer think that lying is a big deal. It is not hard to see that many have become numbed in one's conscience with regards to this. Sadly, even among believers and in the church. For sure we all would say and still believe that to be truthful is always the right thing. But why is it that many of us tend to fail in this pursuit? How much of a deal is it to God when we lie? Read Acts 5:1-11 and see in this narrative the inner motives that we need to caution ourselves, as well as the principles we need to keep in mind so we would not compromise the truth.

Desire for Selfish Gain (v. 1-6)

- Who were Ananias and Sapphira? What motivated them to sell their land and donate it to the church? What did they do with part of the proceeds from selling their land?
- Was it wrong that they kept part of the money? Why or why not?
- What was the sin that Ananias and Sapphira did that cost them their life? What do you think motivated them to lie or deceive?
- Give examples of how desire for selfish gain led people to compromise the truth.
- Why is compromising truth a major offense against God (Proverbs 12:22).

Pressure to Conform

- Was Sapphira aware of what her husband was planning to do, which was to sell the land and let everyone know that they were giving to the church the whole proceeds from the sale? Do you think she was pressured to lie by her husband?
- Have you ever been in a situation when you were influenced or pressured to lie? How did it happen and how did you respond?
- Would you rather choose to honor God than to give in to pressure?

The Need to Cover Up (v. 7-11)

- How did the apostle Peter confront Sapphira? She probably didn't know yet what happened to her husband, and could have told the truth. But what did she tell Peter?
- Why do people cover the truth with a lie instead of just telling the truth?
- Why is compromising the truth never a solution?
- When do Christians put the Spirit of the Lord to test? Why is it risky?
- What serious consequence happens when we compromise the truth?

REFLECT

We may not necessarily die a sudden death such as with Ananias and Sapphira, but God's discipline can come in the area of our reputation, integrity, credibility, and opportunities. How are you living out truthfulness to demonstrate Christlikeness in your Christian life? How are you guarding yourself so that the desire for selfish gain cannot lure you? How are you keeping your convictions so that the pressure to conform will not consume you? Do you give in where there is a need to cover up your sin?

PRAY

Heavenly Father, thank You for reminding me that when I compromise the truth, I lie to none other than to You. Give me the courage and conviction to stand and speak truthfulness no matter what the situation is. Help me to demonstrate Christlikeness in my daily life whether I am at home, at work, or at church. Thank You, Father, that it is possible because the Holy Spirit is always there to help me. In Jesus' name. Amen.