

Acts: Generosity & Fear

Acts 4:32-5:11

Generosity as a Declaration of the Gospel (4:32-27)

- The boldness that the Church had prayed for was shown in the continued proclamation of the Gospel (v. 33)
- And was lived out in their generosity toward one another
 - To the point that no one was in need
- One way this was expressed was through the selling of property and possessions and giving the money to the Apostles so that it could be given to those in need
- Thus we are introduced to Barnabus (Joseph)
 - Known for his encouragement
 - Later a missionary with Saul/Paul
 - Here, shown as an example of generosity

The Foils (5:1-11)

- Luke then gives an example of some who did not have a heart of generosity: Ananias & Sapphira
- They also sold property, but lied about giving the all proceeds to the Apostles to meet needs
 - They held some back
- Peter, led by the Spirit, confronts first Ananias and then Sapphira about their deed
- The issue was not that they didn't give it all
- The issue was that they lied by saying they had
 - They lied to God and the Church to try to make themselves look better
 - An issue of pride
 - Giving to the needs of others out of genuine love is an act of humility
 - An expression of our desire to be used by God
 - A declaration of God's ownership of all we have
- God struck them both dead as a warning to the Church
- A great fear struck the Church as a result of their deaths
 - A reminder of God's holiness
 - A reminder that God's people are to be known for their devotion to:
 - God
 - One another
 - The truth

So What?

- Are we being honest with God and one another?
- Are we more concerned about looking good or loving others?
- Do we have the same devotion that the early Church had?

Meditation Verse: *Acts 4:32*