

“LIAR, LIAR, PANTS ON FIRE!”

TEXT: Acts 5:1-14

- INTRO:**
- A. The sin of lying is almost as old as the earth.
 - 1. In Genesis 3:1-5 we read of the first lie ever told by Satan himself.
 - 2. Jesus said that the devil is a liar and the father of lies, John 8:44.
 - 3. In contrast to Satan, the Bible says that God “**cannot lie**,” Titus 1:2.
 - B. I remember as a boy, when someone at school would tell a lie, someone would say, “*Liar, liar pants on fire!*”
 - 1. Most people are taught as children that it is wrong to lie.
 - 2. Why is it when we “grow up” lying becomes acceptable?
 - 3. A few years ago a survey was taken in which 40,000 Americans were asked if they ever told lies. 93% of those polled said they lied regularly.
 - a. People lie at their job, on their income tax return, to their spouse, children lie to parents, and politicians lie to their constituents.
 - b. Whatever happened to good old fashioned honesty and integrity?
 - C. The Bible has a lot to say about lying.
 - 1. Under the Law Moses, one of the Ten Commandments was, “**Thou shalt not bear false witness**,” Exodus 20:16. Simply put, don’t tell lies!
 - 2. Among the seven things God hates is “**a lying tongue**,” Pro. 6:16-17.
 - 3. The apostle Paul wrote extensively about lying.
 - a. “**Thou shalt not bear false witness**,” Rom. 13:9.
 - b. **We are to provide “for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men,”** 2 Cor. 8:21.
 - c. Put “**away lying, speak every man truth . . .**” Eph. 4:25.
 - d. “**Lie not one to another, seeing you have put off the old man with his deeds**,” Col. 3:9.
 - D. Satan, “**that old serpent**,” Rev. 12:9 is still a liar and the father of lies.
 - 1. He deceives the whole world by his lies.
 - 2. He seeks to ensnare and enslave the children of God today.
 - 3. Christians are not immune to the temptations of Satan.
 - a. In our study we will look at a Bible account of two Christians who decided together to tell a lie, Acts 5:1-14.
 - b. Examples like this are recorded in God’s Word to warn us not to do the same, but to “**take heed lest**” we “**fall**,” 1 Cor. 10:12.

I. WHO WERE ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA?

- A. They were members of the church in Jerusalem.
 - 1. The church began in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2.
 - 2. At that time the church was no where else in the world.
 - 3. Ananias and Sapphira had heard and obeyed the gospel, Acts 2:38 and had been added to the church by the Lord, Acts 2:47.
- B. Ananias and Sapphira were actively involved in the church.
 - 1. No doubt they attended worship services.

2. They heard the preaching and teaching of the apostles, Acts 2:42.
3. They had witnessed the miracles worked by the apostles thru the power of the Holy Spirit, Acts 2:43.

II. WHAT DID ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA DO?

- A. In the Jerusalem church, many of the saints, because of their zeal and dedication, sold property and houses and gave the money to the Lord for the needs of the church.
 1. Giving to the Lord is a part of worship as New Testament Christians, 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-8.
 2. Brethren gave money from the sale of houses and land to the apostles to distribute to those who were in need, Acts 4:34-35.
 3. Joses sold land and donated the money to the apostles to be used for the church.
 - a. Translated as Joseph. He was a Levite, originally from Cyprus.
 - b. Apostles named him, “**Barnabas**” – meaning, “**son of encouragement.**”

- B. Ananias and Sapphira had a piece of land they sold, Acts 5:1-2, 8.
 1. They sold it for a certain amount, gave part of the money to the church, and kept part of it for themselves.
 2. Was there anything wrong with what they did at this point? NO!
 3. They didn’t have to sell it; they didn’t have to give all of the money; it belonged to them to do with as they saw fit, Acts 5:4.

- C. What was the problem then?
 1. They conspired together to lie about the money they received from the sale and how much of it they gave to the church.
 2. They tried to deceive the apostles and the church into thinking that what they had given was what the property had sold for, Acts 5:3-4, 8.
 3. They lied about their giving, not just to men, but unto God! Acts 5:4.

- D. Why did they decide together to lie about what they had done?
 1. Perhaps they wanted to be praised about their sacrifice.
 2. False pride led to their downfall, Prov. 16:18.
 3. They were tempted by the devil to lie and they fell into the trap.
 4. Perhaps the love of money led them to sin, 1 Tim. 6:10.
 5. They were being hypocritical – pretending to be that which they were not.
 6. They had forgotten that God knows what we think, say, and do, Heb. 4:13.

III. WHAT HAPPENED TO ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA?

- A. Peter pronounced the inspired judgment of God upon them, Acts 5:4-10.
 1. Peter confronted Ananias with the truth. Upon hearing the words, Ananias “fell down, and gave up the ghost,” Acts 5:5.
 2. The young men wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him, Acts 5:6.
 3. Three hours later, Sapphira came in, not knowing what had happened, Acts 5:7.
 4. Peter confronted Sapphira with the truth and she lied, Acts 5:8.
 5. They had tested the Spirit of the Lord with their lie; the young men who buried Ananias were at the door to carry her out, Acts 5:9.
 6. Sapphira fell down immediately and gave up the ghost; the young men carried her out and buried her by her husband, Acts 5:10.

- B. Why did God punish Ananias and Sapphira so severely?
1. They sinned. It was God's justice upon them as penalty, Rom. 6:23.
 2. To prevent their sinful influence from damaging the church, 1 Cor. 5:6.
 3. It would help those inside and outside the church to understand that being a Christian is serious business.
 4. Even the children of God cannot escape the judgment of God for sinful conduct.
- C. What effects did their punishment have upon others?
1. **“Great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things,”** Acts 5:11.
 2. It made each church member keenly aware of the need for honesty, truthfulness, sincerity.
 3. It taught the sobering lesson of not being hypocritical.
 4. It sounded the warning against the sin of greed and covetousness.
 5. It caused the church to grow numerically and spiritually. “And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women,” Acts 5:14.

III. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE LESSONS WE CAN LEARN?

- A. **“Lying lips are abomination to the Lord . . .”** Prov. 12:22.
1. We must not lie, Col. 3:9. We must tell the truth to everyone, Eph. 4:25.
 2. As Christians, of all people, we must be the most honest, Rom. 12:17.
 3. *“Honest is what you are in the dark!”*
 4. **“All liars, shall have their part in the lake of fire,”** Rev. 21:8; 20:15.
- B. **“The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil,”** 1 Tim. 6:10.
1. Money is not the root of all evil; it is the love of money that will lead to sin.
 2. We must not be greedy/covetous because that is idolatry, Col. 3:5.
 3. The love of money will lead us astray from the faith,. 1 Tim. 6:10.
 4. Life does not consist of things, Luke 12:15.
 5. **“We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out,”** 1 Tim. 6:7.
 6. **“Godliness with contentment is great gain,”** 1 Tim. 6:6, 8.
- C. We must love **“the praise of God”** more than **“the praise of men,”** John 12:42-43.
1. We must realize why we are here: **“Fear God and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man,”** Eccl. 12:13.
 2. We must live our lives in accordance with God's Word to please Him! 2 Cor. 5:15; Rev. 2:10.
 3. If we compromise the truth to receive the praise of men, we are not the servant of Christ! Gal. 1:10.
- D. **“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,”** Gal. 6:10.
1. We cannot fool God! God sees, hears, and knows all! Heb. 4:13.
 2. We will reap what we have sown – this is a law of life physically and spiritually!
 3. There are consequences to our choices – good and bad!
 4. *“We cannot sow our wild oats and then pray for a crop failure!”*
- E. **“For we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ,”** 2 Cor. 5:10.

1. We all will have to answer to the judgment of God, the day appointed by Him, Rom. 14: 10-12; Acts 17:30-31.
2. What we have done in our body, good or bad, will be revealed, 2 Cor. 5:10.
3. **“Be sure your sin will find you out!”** Num. 32:23.
4. Eternal sentences will be given out, Matt. 25:31-33.
 - a. To the faithful, obedient child of God, **“Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord,”** Matt. 25:21, 34; Heb. 5:9.
 - b. To the unfaithful and disobedient, “Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire,” Matt. 25:41; 2 Thess. 1:8-9; Matt. 7:21-23.
5. Eternal rewards of heaven or hell will be ours for eternity! Matt. 25:46.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Ananias & Sapphira serve as examples of those who lied and suffered the consequences.
 1. We must not follow that which is evil, but that which is good, Rom. 12:21.
 2. Whether we will be saved eternally, or lost forever is up to us! We choose where we want to go, Heaven or Hell, thru our obedience or lack thereof.
 3. **“Choose ye this day whom you will serve . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord,”** Josh. 24:15.
- B. **“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation,”** 2 Cor. 6:2.
 1. The invitation of Christ is extended to everyone, Matt. 11:28-30.
 2. Obey the gospel of Christ, Gal. 3:26-37; John 3:5; Mark 16:16.
 3. If you are not a faithful Christian, repent, confess it to God, and He will forgive you! 1 John 1:9; James 5:16.