

**Honest to God:**  
***Navigating by the Spirit the "Danger" of a Spirit-filled Church***  
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2022.04.03 Morning Sermon in **Acts 4:36–5:11**

**Main idea:** The Holy Spirit, God Himself, is present and at work in His church. This means that a true congregation of the church is a “dangerous” place in which we are especially tasting of the presence of God. But it also means that a true congregation of the church is a place of “deliverance” from these and all dangers.

<sup>36</sup> And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, <sup>37</sup> having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles’ feet.

<sup>5:1</sup> But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession.

<sup>2</sup> And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles’ feet. <sup>3</sup> But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? <sup>4</sup> While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.”

<sup>5</sup> Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. <sup>6</sup> And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him.

<sup>7</sup> Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. <sup>8</sup> And Peter answered her, “Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?”

She said, “Yes, for so much.”

<sup>9</sup> Then Peter said to her, “How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.” <sup>10</sup> Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband. <sup>11</sup> So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

**Introduction:** Would you like to be able to pray, or bring offerings to the deacons, or take the Lord’s Supper without getting executed? Death isn’t nearly as big a problem as sin!

## 1. Presence of the Spirit

- The Holy Spirit as Person**, v3, 9. Impersonal powers are not lied to. Impersonal powers are not tested like at Massa and Meribah (cf. Ex 17:17, Deu 6:16, Ps 95:9, Luk 4:12, Heb 3:9–12)
- The Holy Spirit as God**, cp. v3, 4. In the parallel between the statements, “Holy Spirit” in v3 is identified with “God” in v4.
- The Holy Spirit as Christ’s**, v9. “the Lord” in the church is, of course, Yahweh. But ever since the conclusion to Peter’s sermon in Ac 2:36, the phrase means especially the Lord Jesus as Yahweh’s great and full communication of Himself (cf. Jn 1:18).

## 2. “Danger” of the Spirit (or, rather, of missing/denying Him)

- Envy**, v36–37. Joses becomes Barnabas. Forgetfulness of the Spirit deprives us of joy over others’ graces. We think that the praise is theirs, so we envy it.
- Pride**. Love of praise, v3a, 4c. “filled your heart” ... “conceived this thing in your heart” ... it starts in the heart. Begrudging the praise given to another becomes coveting that praise for yourself. And if you miss the Spirit, then you will seek not the pleasing of the Triune God but the praise of men.
- Greed/covetousness**. Love of possessions, v3b, 4a–b. If the Spirit and His fruit, and therefore God Himself and His glory, are not your treasure, something else will be. And “stuff” or “wealth” is a strong candidate.

- d. **Unbelief/lying**, v4d. Forgetting that you are dealing with God leads to the stupid and great wickedness of pretending to be better than you are. Stupid, because it is impossible. Greatly wicked because of against Whom it is that you sin. Those who taste of His gifts, enjoying some of the benefits of being in a true congregation of the church, but fail to recognize Him Himself are in danger of a hardening that cannot be undone (cf. Heb 6:4–7).
  - e. **Hate/mutual-corruption**, v9. Ananias and his wife couldn't have hated each other more if he tried (and hopefully they were not trying). If we forget the Spirit, and that we are assigned our family and our church by the Spirit in His providence, so that we may be used by the Spirit in His power, then those whom we are supposed to be instruments for building up into Christ, we become instruments of making them even more slaves of sin and Satan.
  - f. **Satanic attack**, v3a. With the rest of the dangers highlighted, we are prepared to see what Peter saw. Satan hates the work of the Spirit and took an opportunity.
3. **“Deliverance” of the Spirit** (He Himself is our help against these dangers)
- a. He gave the grace to Josés. **He gives grace to all believers** (cf. 5:32; Rom 5:5, 7:6, 8:1–27)
  - b. **He purifies His church by discipline** (v5a, 10). He doesn't always do it so immediately. Sometimes He uses obedience to Matt 18, 1Cor 5–6, etc. Sometimes He uses slower providence (1Cor 11, Jam 5, etc.). Or even different providence altogether (people moving, etc.).
  - c. **He sanctifies His church as a fruit of that discipline** (v5b, 11a). “Great fear” was the separate result of each execution. It is good for us to have great fear, if it is great fear of God and drives us to Him. e.g. Executing Corinthians was to produce eagerly correct participation in taking the Lord's Supper, not hesitation from taking it altogether.
  - d. **He multiplies His church as a fruit of that discipline** (v5b, 11b). Not just “all the church” but an additional “and all who heard” ... it was not just the apostolic signs that were producing the multiplication in v14.

**Conclusion:** So that we might escape the dangers, and know the Spirit's true deliverance from them, let us seek not only to use His means but to know Him Himself in His means as He ever points us to God as our Father and Christ as our life.

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**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)**

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Acts chapter 4 beginning in verse 36. And going through verse 11 of chapter 5. These are God's words and Joseph's who was also named Barnabas by the Apostles which is translated son of encouragement. A Levite of the country of Cyprus Having land sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

But a certain man named Ananias with Saphira, his wife, sold a possession, and he kept back part of the proceeds. His wife also being aware of it and brought to certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself.

While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, Was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God, then Ananias hearing these words fell down and breathed his last. So great, fear came upon all, those who heard these things, And the young men arose, and wrapped them up, carried him out, and buried him.

Now, it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. And Peter answered her Tell me whether you sold the land for so much. She said, yes for so much and then Peter said to her, How is it that you have agreed together To test the spirit of the Lord?

Look the feet of those who have buried? Your husband are at the door and they will carry you out. Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out buried her by her husband.

So great, fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things So far. The reading of God's inspired and inerrant word. We rejoice that the very Holy Spirit whom we have just heard mentioned in the scripture is among us with his power to bless to us the preaching of it.

Please be seated.

Would you like to be able to pray without being executed?

Now, we have just heard and God's good providence to us coming to the portion of the hymnal, in which we have the Lord's Prayer, and therefore opening Matthew 6 5 through 15 beforehand, so that we would sing God's thoughts after him. And yet, in those first few verses of the call to worship today, we were reminded that those who come and pray in the wrong way for the eyes of men, and the ears of men rather than the eyes and ears as it were of God.

They already have their reward, which is a frightful thing because that matches what was said. After the Lord, gave the Lord's Prayer that if you are not one of these forgiving types of people that the Lord has made new in Christ in order to be able to forgive, neither, will your sins be forgiven?

You, We don't want to pray as those who already have our reward. We don't want to offer up, incense, that is not that which the Lord has commanded. You remember Nate Ab in a Bahu and yes, they are a lesson to us that you only offer unto God. What he has required in worship.

But they are specifically a lesson about prayer because the Scripture also tells us that the incense, which is pictured in the ceremonial law corresponds to the prayers of the saints and prayer. That is not offered in Christ and prayer. That is not offered according to Christ receives, it's reward in this life and the reward of the fiery wrath of God forever.

Thank God that Christ died. Even for our prayers. Would you like to bring offerings to the deacons without being executed In another chapter's time? It won't be apostles, whose feet those who sell lands and bring the proceeds. It won't be apostles. Whose feet. Those proceeds are laid, It'll be deacons.

They'll offload that portion of the work in chapter 6 So we don't have apostles to whom to bring the proceeds. But we do have deacons and it would be very good if when you shot and email to the deacons to let them know what you were transferring. Or if you wrote a check you wouldn't be executed as you put it in the box You know, the deacons don't have somewhere where they hang out and you can visit their, their hangout and bring the proceeds in.

We don't want to be executed. When we give, Would you like to be able to take the Lord's supper without being executed. However, slowly by long painful or maybe shortened painful doesn't tell us how long the illness was just that. They were very ill, weak and ill, and some dead or asleep, as it's put in chapter 11 of 1st Corinthians.

The Lord was killing Corinthians because they were taking the Lord's, Supper in the wrong way.

Well, you are probably sitting there thinking. Now, the pastors being kind of silly no one in the history of this church. Well, as far as I know, there's a lot of history. I don't know. And YouTube has been struck dead for the heart with which they were praying at the time that they were praying.

And we have not had as far as we know, although this would be a lot less certain a plague or pandemic in the church as a result of offending God. In the way that we were taking the Lord's Supper. And yet, the reason that the Lord has done these things in his church in Scripture is to remind us that there's something much worse than death and that's sin.

Just because the Lord has not struck us dead for the way that we have worshiped for worshiping more with a heart of Ananias or Sapphira than with a heart. Like that of Joseph, who gets the nickname Barnabas, just because the Lord is not actually done that to us while we were worshiping or in our lives.

Because of the way we worshiped, doesn't mean that his holiness and his wrath were not offended with the way that we worshiped. And it does not mean that there isn't the danger of hell for those who worship among us. And yet our self-deceived.

Death is not the problem sin is and the great problem for Ananias and Sapphira. Here is They just didn't recognize the personal presence of the Holy Spirit. God himself and the worship and work and fellowship of the church. And so they thought much about what others think and see and say and they planned what to do in order to interact with other people.

But they thought little or perhaps not at all of how they were interacting with God and how God would respond to what they planned and what they did. And so the Lord gives us a passage here that we might recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit among us. That we might recognize the danger that, that presence poses to us because of our sin, when we miss or deny him and his presence among us.

And also then in this passage we'll work harder to get it but the scriptures will help us the deliverance that the Holy Spirit gives us from that danger that he who himself, who is present among us to apply Christ to us. Is our hope for being delivered, for the danger from the danger that our sin poses First.

Then the presence of the Holy Spirit among us. The Holy Spirit is a person, There are times in the waxing, the increase and waning decrease of the knowledge of God in his church. Where the doctrine of the Trinity is more and less precisely or accurately confessed. When there are times in God's in Inscrutable impossible for us to peer into and understand and God's providence, in his church in which not just the the doctrine, the theology about the Holy Spirit is more accurately confessed or less accurately confessed.

But in which the Holy Spirit himself is more known and less known we live in an age in which as we've been hearing about the Holy Spirit and what his work looks like and who he is and how he is, how his power is expressed in the church, in which the doctrine is not well confessed.

And yet, even among those who confess who he is, and what his work looks like. Well, where in my personal experience and others to whom I have ministered at least. Let's narrow it that far his presence and his fellowship is not known and treasured. His love to us, not none, and love to him hardly ever expressed.

In fact, I have very often sadly even in Reformed circles, were they know better with their heads observed that we have treated the Holy Spirit more of a pow as more of a power than a person in our hearts and in our interaction. So, it's important for us to know that the Holy Spirit is a person.

He can be grieved. One of the reasons to walk in love with one another is that we would not grieve the Holy Spirit, but more specific in our specifically in our passage, he can be lied to. When you You cannot lie to electricity, You cannot lie to an impersonal force verse 3.

Peter said to Ananiaswise, Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit. Not only can he be lied to but he can be put to the test. Then Peter said to her? How is it that you have agreed together to test the spirit of the Lord? And he's using the the word for putting to the test or or tempting which in God's marvelous providence to you dear?

Hopewell congregation you've just heard in last Lord's Day, evenings evening. Sermon putting the Lord to the test at Massa and Mariba. So that when Jesus in his temptation in Luke 4, verse 12 is tempted by Satan to put the Lord to the test by throwing himself off of the temple.

He quotes Deuteronomy 6 verse 16, in which Moses at the end of the world's at the end of the wilderness wanderings is warning Israel. As they go into the land, that they are not to put the Lord, their God to the test, the way that they had done at Massa and Maraba.

And then in Psalm, 95 God, even at the time of David and we find out from Hebrews that it was David. The title is not given in Psalm, the superscript does not given in Psalm 95. Even in the time of David, God was still warning. His people that when they hear his voice and the public worship of God, as you, by God's Spirit, we pray our hearing His voice in the public worship of God.

Even now that you are not to hear with wandering hearts parts that go astray and end up putting the Holy Spirit, putting the Lord, your God to the test. And then Hebrews three and four opening up Psalm, 95 bringing that application to hearing the Word of God preached in the public worship and the absolute necessity of having our hearing mixed with faith so that it would profit us.

So that when we finish our work in this world as Mr. Jim is teaching us about last week, or just this morning. And next week that when we finish that our work in this world that we will enter the rest of God and that just hearing God's word. Doesn't mean, you're going to enter that rest that hearing must be mixed with faith.

Lest you put the Holy Spirit to the test. You cannot lie to impersonal forces, and you cannot put to the test impersonal forces in the way Peter tells Sapphira that she had agreed with her husband to do. The Holy Spirit, is a person. The Holy Spirit is also God the scripture before us points that out in the parallel between verse 3 and verse 4, In verse 3, Peter said Ananias, Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?

And then in verse 4, in the parallel, you have not lied to men, but to God, The Holy Spirit is not just a person, He is. God use described by his person. In verse 3, the Holy Spirit, His described by his substance in verse 4, God, you have not lied.

Why have Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit person? You have not lied to men, but to God substance, God is one substance. If we can use that word, It's not a Bible word. But it's a way it's a word of understanding that God presents himself as one and yet he presents himself with in three persons with personal properties.

And the third person of the Trinity is the one here that is most in focus. So the Holy Spirit is a person in the Holy Spirit is God. And also the Holy Spirit is Christ's We see that in verse 9. Whereas, in verse 3, he was called the Holy Spirit.

And in verse 4, he was called God. Here in verse 9, He is called the Spirit of the Lord. Then Peter said to her, How is it that you have agreed together to test the spirit of the Lord? He is the Spirit who proceeds from eternally the second person of the Trinity, but he is also the spirit whom Jesus has poured out on his church.

This is a reference back to his sermon on Joel, chapter 2, in Acts chapter 2, that we have heard not too long ago that Yahweh had promised that he would pour out his spirit on all flesh in the last days. And Peter opens up that sermon in chapter in Acts chapter 2, and he says this Jesus, whom you crucified, God has declared him both, Lord and Christ.

He has poured out this And so when ever since Acts 2 verse 36, when Peter makes up marvelous declaration, both Lord and Christ. You always, who would pour out his spirit and Yahweh upon whose name he would call to be saved Joel chapter 2, verse 28, through 32. This Lord is the Lord Jesus.

He is the one who support out his spirit. He is the one upon whose name you call to be saved. He is Christ's and so when he says, how is it that you have greed together to test the spirit of the Lord? It's cutting two different ways. The spirit who is God himself, and proceeds eternally from the Sun, and the Father, from the Father, and the Son, but also, the spirit whom the Lord, as our Redeemer upon whose name, we call to be saved.

Has given us for our redemption. And so, you cannot sin against the Holy Spirit without sitting directly against the Lord. Jesus Christ. You cannot sin against the Holy Spirit without putting at risk your salvation because he's the one who convinces you that Christ is Lord. He is the one who works in works faith in you in the Lord Jesus so that you can say lots of wrong things about the Lord Jesus.

But blasphemy against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven, not so much that you said something badly about the Holy Spirit. One day I am preaching about the Holy Spirit as an imperfect man. There is sin in my heart and there has been sin even in how my words. Fall short.

And yet by God's grace, I pray that what the Scripture calls blasphemy against the Holy Spirit that final abandoning and sinning against him. And not just grieving as we heard earlier, but quenching refusing to hear that the Lord has kept me from it.

Ever since the conclusion to Peter's, sermon the Lord Jesus, The word, the Lord has meant, especially the Lord. Jesus, as Yahweh is greatest and full communication of himself, John 1:18. No one has seen God at any time. He said, well, what about Moses? Well, His comparing him to Moses right there in John.

Chapter 1. He says, no one has seen God at any time, but the only begotten of the Father, he has fully revealed him. He is executed him John 1 verse 18 and so it becomes common, doesn't it to refer to Jesus as the Lord in the New Testament to the New Testament church So much.

So that even the gospel writers, as they wrote to a church, who knew the Lord Jesus often just referred to him as the Lord and they're not just saying master, when they use the word kurios. So the, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the church, is one of the first things that this scripture and the Holy Spirit by this Scripture wants us to see and hear this morning.

He is a person. He is God's Spirit, he has got himself and he is. Sorry, the Lord's spirit the Spirit of the Lord's. Lord Jesus. He is Christ's, But this presents a danger to us When you get there. Eventually in the fourth sub point under danger, We'll make reference to it now.

Hebrews 6 verses 4 through 7, a text that has bothered and troubled many people who come into the Reformed faith and they say, how can someone be saved and still be subject to a hardening? That cannot be undone. He was six versus four through seven isn't talking about someone who would saved.

It's talking about someone who is in a true church actually not in danger not as much danger. Not in this particular. Danger. When you go to a false church where the heavenly gift is not known and expressed and experienced And you're you're not partaking of the benefits of being in a place where the Holy Spirit is working week by week savingly.

And this word is being preached faithfully and we're praying according to the Word of God and dependence upon the spirit of God, through the mediation of the Son of God unto. God. Our Father enjoying partaking of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. You go to a church where the prayers are easy breezy.

Now, many of you remember a commercial from the 80s, or you go to a place where it's just vain repetitions, then you're not in as much danger or the preaching isn't The word of God received as the written words that were breathed out, spirited out by God and proclaimed and dependence upon their Holy Spirit and looking to him.

And he using them in the congregation with such convictions to actually convert and to sanctify preserve and protect. If it's just Ted talk self-help. God loves you. God loves me, God loves everybody in the same way, he doesn't care that your sinful. He's not as mad at you as you think and he just wants you to stop being mad at yourself to.

If you're using the name of Jesus but the God is Barney, you're not in danger of sinning against the present working of the Holy Spirit of the congregate. What that means for you. Dear Hopewellians by the mercy of God, to us and his presence among us and his spirits.

Genuine work among us is that we are in a danger that this passage is describing.

That each of us should be paying careful. Attention. What are some of those dangers? First envy. Probably Chapter 5 and verses 1 and 2. Don't happen if you don't have chapter 4 and verses 36 and 37 And Joseph who was also named Barnabas by the Apostles, which is translated son of encouragement.

A Levite of the country of Cyprus having land sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostle's feet. There were many people selling possessions and bringing and laying at the apostles feet. We heard about that in the portion that we heard preached last Lord's day and yet Joseph's is the one who as they as he comes and.

Does it the apostles? Give him a new name or a nickname. His son of encouragement. Why? Well he was a Levite first of all and he was a Levite he didn't grow up in Israel. He was a Levite that reminded them that God's people under the administration of Moses and under the administration of Sinai, they had sinned against God and even the covenant promises that were made to David in second, Samuel chapter

7 and included covenant warnings in curses about what this would be like under sinful king, descendants of David, they had received those curses as well.

And so, they had been exiled from the land as God had warned and Deuteronomy. And they had not had a righteous king at all. Yet, not a perfectly righteous one. And for some time, they hadn't had a son of David sitting on the throne right now. They had a man named Herod whom had put onto the throne And so where did this Levite grow up?

He didn't grow up in the land, He grew up on an island. I forgot to look up how long it would take by boat. It's half an hour flight West of the land. Yeah. You spend more time taxing than you do in the air. But he'd grown up in in Cyprus and he possessed land.

Why is that a big get? Well, Levites aren't supposed to possess land. Levites were supposed to be supported By the ties of the people and they were supposed to be the ones who were the distributors And so Joseph comes. And he's a Levite and he's from Cypress and he reminds them that with the coming of the Lord, Jesus, the keeper of the covenant.

The true servant in that wonderful full arc of Isaiah where the people that God saved out of Egypt, had never been what they were supposed to be. But had been that wild vine that produced the bad grapes. There was the servant who would come in, whom the Lord takes pleasure and in Him, his people would be what they always should have been.

And he actually would be a light to the nations of the nations, actually would come to him and to his church and say, can we be a part of you? Please, If even, we could just be your slaves, God is among you. And now the Lord is about to do that in his church.

The church is in Jesus Christ. What it was commanded to be but never had been in Moses and from Sinai. So this Levite from the country of Cyprus sells the land that he doesn't need or want anymore. Never should have had if Covenant curses hadn't. Come He lays it at the apostle's feet and they say a whole lot of Israelites named Joseph or Joseph.

It's due versions of the same thing but you are no longer just as you are Barnabas to us Son of encouragement. Now, When the Lord works in other people in the church and especially when the Lord gives to others to be encouraged by his work. And then, there is the danger of envy.

There is the danger of missing that it was the spirit who provided that. And if we are forgetful of the Spirit, if we see it as a transaction, merely between the humans involved, a guy who did good and other people who say you've done good, rather than a man in whom the Spirit has worked and others, whom the spirit has encouraged and gladdened by seeing that the Spirit has worked, That's what's happening between Barnabas and the apostles.

But you can see the way Ananias and Sapphira respond. That's not what they saw. Would you believe it Sapphira that Joseph guy. He went and he actually renamed him, son of encouragement.

There ought not be envy in the church, but if we think that the praise for the fruit of what's happening, belongs to the people who are praised, We will envy it. We need to know the personal presence of the Holy Spirit working among us, not just as an abstract doctrine, but as something that we are recognizing and interacting with, as someone with whom we are interacting, Someone whom we are recognizing.

So that when we see others praised and recognized, we will rejoice over the Holy Spirit's work with the others who are praising and recognizing because envy fuels pride a desire, not just that they would get praise. But that we would get praise pride is another danger in a true congregation of Christ's church where the Holy Spirit is genuinely working because there's all kinds of phrasing going around.

And there must be The fruit of the Spirit is love and the second place joy And it's wrong to see him doing things and not give him. Thanks to stand up in a pulpit or to write little tweets. That make it sound like those inside. The church are just like those outside the church.

And there's no difference between the two, except that the one have just been forgiven, It's wrong. Not to recognize that. God, who saves us converts us brings us to faith and repentance. Just the way we were, doesn't leave us the way we were.

And so we give thanksgiving and praise to God. But if we're missing the presence and the work of the Holy Spirit and our thanksgiving and praise is just lip service, then we will want others to praise us, the sin of the lying of the false presentation as if it was the whole price that they had gotten began in the heart and we will deal with the other part of this in a moment.

In verse 3, Satan filled your heart, verse 3 and then verse 4 conceived. This thing in your heart You see begrudging the praise that has given to another becomes coveting that praise for yourself and if we are missing the Holy Spirit, we will forget that. He sees our hearts that we don't just sin against him and we sin against others and we make that presentation of ourselves as if we're better than we were that sin begins in the heart in the pride.

That wants the praise of men wants to be exalted instead of God being exalted. And so we not only miss that, he sees our hearts. But we want what? Really doesn't belong to the other person. It belongs to him. It belongs to God. That's why the Scripture says humble yourself in the sight of the Lord.

Don't you realize that all of the praise and the honor and the glory belonged to him and that whatever work he does in us. So that we are commendable and praiseworthy and it's not wrong to acknowledge one another. But that ultimately, that glory and praise were downs to God.

So that when we want the praise of men, We want not what belongs to others, but belongs to the living God. And so there's a great danger of pride in the heart or the love of the praise of men in the heart. If you're in a church where people are praising God for the work that he's doing, There's the danger.

Didn't make it into the outline. Did it Self-reliance? The idea that I can produce that which will get me, that praise, there's the danger of greed and covetousness love of possessions. Verse 3, the kept back part of the price of the land. For themselves verse 4, A and B, the first half of verse 4, while it remained, was it not your own?

And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? You see they wanted credit for what the Holy Spirit had done in Barnabas, but they couldn't reproduce it. Because if we think that we can produce better spirituality in ourselves, Then what will produce is a fake spirituality.

We can't kill our remaining sin except by the Spirit If you walk, according to the flesh you will die. If by the Spirit you put to death, the deeds of the body, you will live. And so they wanted to look like they had been made generous, but they didn't have the Holy Spirit killing the greed and the covetousness And so, they loved that money, and they wanted a little bit of it for themselves, or maybe a lot, we don't know the percentages, right?

They didn't even love the praise of men, well enough to follow through with the whole act. Why? Because in addition to loving praise, they love possessions. And they want to both And so they figured they could get both if they're just lied about how much it was then they could keep the possessions and get the praise greed and covetousness the danger of unbelief and lying forgetting that you are dealing with God leads to the stupid and great.

Wickedness of pretending to be better than you are. The stupid and great wickedness. A pretending to be better than you are stupid because the one whose opinion actually matters can see exactly what we are. It really is stupid to try to pretend that we're better than we are. Isn't it?

Because who is the one before whose eyes, how good we are actually matters. It's God. Children. Can you pretend well enough that you can fool God? You might be able to fool mom and dad for a while. It might be able to fool other people at the church. You might be able to fool yourself.

In fact you do, but you can never fool God. But if it's stupid it's even more. Greatly wicked because of whom. It is that you are really trying to fool because you're forgetting God and you're not lying to men as we heard when we were thinking about the Holy Spirit as a person.



And the Holy Spirit is God. Relying to God himself. That's the way. Hebrews 6:4 through 7 is talking is talking about those whose sin is stupid because they don't realize it's the Holy Spirit that they're rejecting and is greatly wicked. They don't realize. It's God himself. The Holy Spirit whom they are rejecting.

There's the danger of hatred. Now, you might not have thought or said that Ananias and his wife hated each other and hopefully they didn't know that they were hating each other, But can you think of anything more hateful, then helping people forget about God and lighter themselves, and encouraging pride, and covetousness encouraging that self-reliance, and that unbelief and that lying acting?

As of God, isn't there.

We don't mean to hate each other. God helping us. I hope but there's really strong application. Isn't there. When marriages and families, where the marriage is a miserable war at home, and they come to the church and it smiles and eyelashes, and yes, dear and no deer and sweet little kisses and scratches on the backs and the clause come out later.

Why? So that everyone will think we're better Christians than we really are. I'll help you lie to the Holy Spirit. You help me lie to the Holy Spirit and then people won't think so badly about us and forget about God. You don't think it out loud that way. Do you and God helped parents who in culturature that this and still this into their children?

Nothing at home says a thing about the knowledge of God There's no family worship at all or if there is family worship. It's just theological discussion, never mom and dad and children who are sinners rejoicing that they can come again through the blood of Christ, to the God who gave Christ for them, because he's the one who kept them through the nighter.

He's the one who helped them through the day and rejoicing to bless his name because we've been forgiven and we have access together. That's never not one Monday through Saturday but the family comes to the Reformed Church of the Lord's day and everybody smiles and even learns as they get older to say how marvelous that we could come through the blood of Christ, how wonderful.

Oh God, that you receive us Now. There are mixtures of these things. The the sin doesn't all there or not at all there. It's going to be present. You're going to be convicted of these things. God helping us. You come to the Holy Spirit and you ask Him for help.

So, we're going to hear in the next point.

It is astonishing to Peter and verse 9. Not just that they lied to the Spirit. But how is it that you have agreed together to test the spirit of the Lord? Husbands wives, fathers mothers, you are in your homes, those who God has assigned to your spouse to your children.

Children, the Lord has assigned you to your parents to help them walk with God. So that if you know you ought to be something and you're not in the home, You can say with reference please. Daddy. Let's worship God. Yes, I wanted to ask, Yes, I want to act at church as I love the worship of God and I want God to help me actually to love him but I want it to be at home too.

Can we worship God? Which one of you fathers wouldn't be first melted with shame because your child had to ask. And yet by God's Spirit, we pray melted with repentance and eager to do as such a childhood ask. And if a child, then how much moral wife

God help us not to be those who live one sort of life when we're off and then come and present ourselves as better than we are at the church. And not realize that we are agreeing together to put the spirit of the Lord to the test. And yet, the reason it's so hard to preach this.

And the reason it's so hard for you to hear this is that this is actually the common condition of almost every household of every evangelical church in our nation. Because with the the loss of family worship, We have lost living together as Christians in between the times of family worship.

And there has just been a pretended spirituality before God at the churches and then lesson incentive, even to pretend at the home for consciences sake. There are things, we don't say and things. We don't do and God and His mercy. Restrains, the sin to some extent but there's no sense that the home is a church.

There's no sense that we live out of the grace of Christ. There's no sense of His pleasure and how we live together. So that what you hear about, how you do your homeschool with Mr. Jim teaching, the serving God at work class, corresponds to how you transition into the home school from the morning.

Worship time into, not just offering your spirits to God as living sacrifice and in morning, family worship, but now offering our bodies to God in our chores and in our schooling and and our labor at the office or whatever it is, that we go to. And we hate one another if we fake it.

Ananias and Sapphira were one another's. Murderers. By faking it church that they were better than they were at home. God have mercy and even more so because there is one who hates you and he's looking for openings for speed or 5 tells us that the devil prowls about like a roaring lion seeking whom he made of our.

And if we are forgetful of or ignorant of the presence and work of the Holy Spirit, like Ananias was, than we leave ourselves open to the same attack with which Ananias was attacked. It ought to make us shudder. When we read in verse 3, Ananias was filled with Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit.

You notice, the passage doesn't tell us whether at an anion's a fire went to hell. We actually don't know if they were converted. It doesn't say that. Satan entered their hearts. This isn't the Judas situation. This isn't a demonic possession situation and we know that Satan tempted, the hearts of believers.

If you're a believer, you know that personally don't you

I think the question is left unanswered by the passage. Not just because we don't need to know but because we need to not know. So that even if we have assurance of our faith, we will realize that not walking according to the knowledge of God the Holy Spirit. The way we ought to leaves us open to such an attack that whereas we ought to have been filling the heart with the love of God.

By the Holy Spirit, Romans chapter 5, Satan has opportunity to fill our hearts with temptation.

And that if you leave yourself open to such attack and you give in to such attack, How can, you know, that you're converted? How can you have a certain of faith? Because you're not able to say the spirit is the one who gave me, these things that are mine and increasing the way you want to come out of second.

Peter 1 saying You don't have things that are yours and they're certainly not increasing. He is seeking to murder us. Satan is seeking to murder us. He hates the actual work of the Spirit and he is the great counterfeiter and all that he does. And there's a stroke of satanic genius to counterfeit in Ananias and Sapphira the work that the Spirit had actually done in Barnab.

Well, if that's the danger then, what's the deliverance? Well, the deliverance, first of all, is to know the Spirit and have him work in us, as He had worked in in the Barnabas Joseph Joseph's. He is the one who gives grace to all believers. The apostles are going to be on trial again by the end of the chapter and well in the next couple of verses actually, but in verse 32, they say, we are his witnesses to these things, talking about Jesus.

And so also is the Holy Spirit. Whom God has given to those who obey Him. Notice that those who preached, that Jesus was the one who poured. The Spirit also says God has given the Spirit But everyone Everyone who comes to faith in Jesus Christ. Everyone who is counted righteous in Jesus Christ has the Holy Spirit.

As many as are led by the Spirit of God. Are the sons of God says Romans chapter 8. He's the one that convinces us that we have peace with God through Jesus Christ. Our Lord, He is the one who makes sure that even in our trials, we can rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

Why Romans 5? And that little section ends in verse 5, the the hope doesn't disappoint us. Why? Because the Holy Spirit has spread poured out the word there pushed into every corner. Some of you old trick translation, people, praise God, for all Translation, shut up. Broad in our hearts.

The love of God you say which love of God God's love for us, are our love for him. And the answer of course is yes because it is knowing his love for us, that produces our love for him. And all of this is the work of the Holy Spirit to make you, to be able to call upon him who ought to have been you're destroyer and wrath.

Instead as your Abba, your daddy and heaven, that you would know his love for you, but that you would do so full of that. Childlike love of one who says Abba and love him because you first loved you and the Holy Spirit gave both of those and that's what produces actual righteousness.

The Apostle will pick back up the doctrine of the Holy Spirit when he starts talking about battling sin and he hints at it at the beginning of Romans, 7 or towards the beginning and in verse 6, where he talks about obeying, not in the letter, but in the spirit, Why?

Because the letter on the page can't give you love. But the Holy Spirit in his fellowship with you, He can give you love. He can give you obedience obedience from the heart that gets worked out into the life so that when he comes to the end of Romans 7 and he says, who will save me from the body of this death and he says, thanks be to God through Jesus Christ.

Our Lord, he launches in and verses 1 through 27 of Romans chapter 8. He launches into one of the great theological sections in all of Scripture on God, the Holy Spirit.

A section of Scripture that we cannot now take the time to go through but give it to you as an assignment that you read through Romans chapter 8 and you notice every place that the Spirit is mentioned because the law cannot kill you. Again, If you have died in Jesus Christ, It is not for you.

A law of death and it is not to be unto you a law of sin that provokes you. But in Jesus Christ, it is a law of life. And so you walk according to the law as a Christian, Lots of problems, for those who don't like the commandments and the law in the first half of Romans 8, because Christians are clearly described in that portion of Scripture as those who walk according to the law.

But the point throughout the entire section that we're not taking the time to show from the text right now, is that it is now the law of the Spirit of life, that the Spirit who gave the law on the page is not just writing it on our hearts, but making our hearts produce obedience out of love.

So if you've heard the danger that we have of being in the presence of the work of the Holy Spirit, and the sin, the danger that our sin poses in such circumstances, know that the Spirit himself is your hope for deliverance and see him having done that and Barnabas as taking Romans as an explanation of how Joseph's the Levite became Barnabas the Christian.

But we also see the spirit doing that in his church. He purifies his church by discipline verse 5. Then Ananias hearing these words fell down, and breathed his last. So great, fear came upon all these things. And And then in verse 11. So great, fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

The Holy Spirit. Oh sorry. That was the sanctifies. The purifies the church by discipline. The spirit that killed Ananias in Sapphira. The Jerusalem church was too faking. It Christians less than it was before and I'm sorry, not sorry to put it. So bluntly Every time the Holy Spirit killed a false communicant and Corinth or a falsely communicating and they were converted in Corinth because he said the Holy Spirit was doing that.

God was disciplining them so that they would not be judged with the world. But every time one of those people who thought about themselves and their bellies at the Lord's table, instead of their Lord and their brother at the Lord's table everyone every time the Holy Spirit killed, one of them.

They become one, the Church, of course, was one falsely taking the Lord's, Supper, partaking of the Lord's, Supper person member less

Sometimes God doesn't do it immediately. Sometimes he uses the proper following of Matthew 18, or 1st Corinthians 5 and 6. And the use of formal church discipline as we follow the Word of God, and he exposes those who are gospel. Hypocrites, false believers who can't be brought to repentance are called to repentance because God hasn't given them repentance.

He takes them out of the church. Sometimes there are those in the church who are backsliding and weak in their faith and about to make shipwreck and they're put out of the church for a time, but God has given them repentance and being put out and the loss of Christ.

And the the partaking of the gifts of the Spirit, It drives them to that repentance. And so he takes them out week and he brings them back strong and he strengthens the whole church.

The Spirit purifies his church here To some extent, just by killing in a nice and Sapphire. But he also sanctifies the church by this great fear that comes upon the others. It wasn't just great fear in the world. It was great fear in the church verse 11. And so there were those in the church who grew in their faith as a result of what God did to Ananias and Sapphira.

And then there were those who were not in the church. According to verse 11, great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things using the phrase again from verse 5. So that when verse 14 talks about and believers, we're increasingly added to the Lord multitudes of both men and women.

One of the preparatory works that God the Holy Spirit had given to some of these multitudes who were increasingly added. In verse 14 was that they had heard what had happened to Ananiason Sapphira And they came perhaps out of curiosity from that to hear what the apostles were preaching in the temple courts and they saw God the Holy Spirit producing.

Not just the death of Wayward Church members but the miracles by the hands of the apostles a church in which There's not just life. But also real discipline because one of the methods by which the Holy Spirit multiplies, this church he shows forth the reality of the gospel, the faithfulness of Christ, among his people search discipline.

As a mark of the church, has not just been lost as a doctrine. It's just been lost.

But here, the spirit is the one who gives grace to all believers. He's the one who purifies his church and he uses those purifications to increase our knowledge. And our sense of the fact that he is the one who is working among us. And he shows that even to those whom he has not yet, brought in and multiplies us.

And so that we might escape the dangers against which we are warned in this passage God presents to us. Also the Holy Spirit who is at working at work in his church so that we may know him as a person and God and as the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And that independence upon and fellowship. With the Holy Spirit, We may be delivered from the dangers and give him praise as he grows us. Amen.

Oh, Holy Spirit how we thank you. That it is. You gave the word who uses not just the reading, but the preaching of it not only to give repentance and faith in the first place but ongoing repentance and ongoing believing and sanctification. And so we pray that you would use the preaching and hearing of your word, which is now, just now, been offered as worship unto God.

Independence upon you and that you would do with it that good work for which it has been appointed that you would sanctify us by your truth. That you would bring us safely at last to be with Jesus where He is that you would grant to us to see now by faith, his glory, and to love him whom we have not seen so that we might be at last brought into his presence to see that glory that he has had with the Father because the Father has loved him from before the foundations of the world we praise you.

Oh, triune God for the perfect love and joy in which you dwell in which you exist from everlasting to everlasting. And we pray that by your triune work and especially by the help of your spirit among us that you would bring us at last into the full experience of that love and that joy which is in Jesus Christ.

And in whose name we ask that it would be fully reproduced in us. Amen.