

Struck Dead by God

In Acts 5:1-11, we find a terrifying and disturbing story. God strikes dead Ananias and Sapphira!

Why does God kill them? He doesn't kill David after he commits adultery and murder. He doesn't kill Cain after he murders Abel. He doesn't kill Peter after he denies the Lord.

Consider four lessons we learn about God from this tragic scene.

God sees everything.

- The Jerusalem church was experiencing great fellowship. Christians like Barnabas were selling their property and giving all the proceeds to help needy brethren (Acts 4:32-37).
- Ananias and Sapphira also sold some property, but they were not honest about what they did with the proceeds. While they give a portion of the sale to help poor disciples, they lie and act as though they gave all of it (Acts 5:1-4). Their actions are puzzling because God never required them to give all their money. They lied because they wanted praise from men. They wanted the same esteem that Barnabas received for his generosity.
- God exposed their deceit and struck them dead! He knew they were phonies and hypocrites in the church.
- God knows who is truly giving their all and who is merely pretending to in front of others (Hebrews 4:13; Proverbs 15:3).

God takes sin seriously.

- The lie Ananias and Sapphira told was serious in God's eyes. It cost them their lives (Acts 5:3-10). They had lied to the Holy Spirit!
- Our sins don't just impact us and others, but more importantly, they impact God. They hurt, insult, grieve, and invite God's wrath.
- God feels the same way about sin in the Old Testament as He does in the New Testament. He struck Uzzah for touching the Ark (2 Samuel 6). He consumed Nadab and Abihu for offering unauthorized worship (Leviticus 10). He demanded that Achan be killed for stealing spoils of war from Jericho (Joshua 7).
- God takes all sin seriously!

God's enemy attacks in different ways.

- The devil attacked the church externally through persecution (Acts 4:1-21; 5:17-40).
- The devil also internally attacked the church (Acts 5:3). He tempted Ananias and Sapphira to commit this sin and attempted to hinder God's work. Think of all the Christians who were discouraged by this tragic incident.
- The devil often strikes when God's people are prospering and doing good work. We must be determined to continue working no matter what problems he throws our way (Acts 5:14, 42). The early Christians never stopped being focused on the Lord's work!

God demands integrity and holiness from His people.

- After God struck and killed Ananias and Sapphira, great fear came upon the church (Acts 5:5, 11). They had never seen God respond in this way before!
- This couple was involved in public deception, and God dealt with them in a public way. He used them to send a strong message about His high expectations for His people.
- God demands that His people be honest, pure, kind, godly, and full of integrity.

Conclusion:

Let us always fear the Lord and strive to be holy before Him!

- Shawn Jeffries