

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: God's Warning to Big Pretenders

SERMON REFERENCE: Acts 4:36-37, 5:1-11

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) In order to face the future, we have to look backwards to find out what God has done to see what God wants to do.
- b) Someone who is a big pretender is a hypocrite.
- c) A hypocrite is not necessarily an unsaved hypocrite.
 - i) There are a lot of saved hypocrites.
 - (1) People who are saved, but there is in their life duplicity and pretense.
 - (a) They are living dangerously.
- d) The early church at this time was in revival.
 - i) God was blessing.
 - ii) They were in a spirit of revival.
- e) The devil didn't like it, and the devil tried to stop it.
 - i) The devil tried to stop this revival with intimidation.
 - (1) But that didn't stop it.
 - ii) Then, the devil tried to stop it with persecution.
 - (1) But that didn't stop it.
 - (2) Instead, it drove the church to its knees.
 - iii) The more the revival was opposed, the more it seemed to grow.
 - (1) Thousands and thousands of people were being saved.
- f) If the devil couldn't conquer them, then he would try to corrupt them.
 - i) Rather than attacking from without, he tried to find some on the inside of the church.
 - (1) He found a man and a woman named Ananias and Sapphira.
 - (a) He got them to play the hypocrite and to tell a big lie.
 - (i) It was an attack on the revival.
- g) However, the early church so reacted and the Spirit of God so moved that it didn't stop the revival.
 - i) It only increased the revival.
 - ii) Everything that the devil did in the book of Acts just seemed to come back on the devil's head.
- h) Acts 4:36-37
 - i) "Son of consolation" literally means "encourager".
 - (1) Barnabas was a great encourager.
- i) Acts 5:1-5
 - i) Ananias told a lie, and right on the spot, he died.
- j) People lie.
 - i) They lie casually, or they exaggerate.
 - ii) They call it a white lie or a black lie.
 - iii) They lie about their weight, age, and about different kinds of things.
 - iv) Even Peter, who had told Ananias that he had not lied to men but to God, lied.
 - (1) Acts 5:4
 - (2) He had lied when he cursed and swore that He never knew Jesus.
 - (a) Matthew 26:69-75

- k) God doesn't strike all liars dead, but He struck this couple dead for telling a lie.
 - l) In today's message, we will look at God's warning to big pretenders.
 - i) It is God's solemn warning against hypocrisy.
- 2) THE EXPRESSION OF THAT LIE (ACTS 5:1-2)
- a) Acts 5:1
 - i) The word "but" is in contradistinction to what Barnabas had done.
 - b) Barnabas had made a gift.
 - i) He didn't have to make this gift.
 - ii) He sold some property.
 - (1) He brought everything that he got for it and gave it to the church.
 - iii) He didn't give it as a designated gift; he didn't say what to buy with it.
 - (1) It was to be used however they wanted.
 - (2) He just laid it at their feet.
 - iv) He gave it to the Lord.
 - v) Barnabas was moved by the Spirit of God to do this.
 - c) Barnabas didn't do this to be seen of men, but he was not ashamed of what he had done.
 - i) He laid it at the apostles' feet.
 - (1) Acts 4:37
 - (2) It was obvious that he did it.
 - ii) Don't do your giving to be seen of men, but don't be ashamed that you give and don't be ashamed to let people know that you give.
 - (1) Matthew 5:16
 - iii) When we do something right, we don't have to hide it; but we don't have to advertise it.
 - (1) Colossians 3:23
 - iv) People were blessed by what Barnabas did.
 - (1) God used Barnabas.
 - (2) He was an encouragement to others.
 - (a) As a matter of fact, His name means "encouragement".
 - (i) "Son of consolation" literally means "encouragement".
 - (3) Through his life, love, and generosity, he encouraged everyone who was there that day.
 - d) Ananias and Sapphira saw what Barnabas had done, and they decided that they would do the same thing; but it was not the same thing.
 - i) They had some property, and they sold their property, also.
 - (1) Acts 5:1
 - ii) They pretended that they also had given it all, but they kept back a part.
 - (1) Acts 5:2
 - iii) They pretended that they had done something that they had not done; therefore, they were hypocrites.
 - e) This lie was rooted in pride.

- i) They wanted to be praised, loved, and to have preeminence.
- ii) They gave to be seen of men.
- iii) Jesus warned against this.
 - (1) Pride, more than anything else, makes us putty in the devil's hands.
- iv) Peter was there that day and saw all that God did.
 - (1) 1 Peter 5:5
 - (a) He said to wear humility like clothes.
 - (2) 1 Peter 5:8
 - (a) There is nothing that puts someone further out of the devil's reach than genuine humility.
 - (b) There is nothing that makes us more susceptible to the schemes of the devil than pride.
- v) When we have pride in our hearts, we share the very nature of the devil.
 - (1) It was pride that made the devil the devil to begin with.
- vi) Ananias and Sapphira allowed pride to seep into their hearts, just exactly as pride had come into the devil's heart and turned Lucifer, the son of the morning, into Satan, the father of night.
- f) This lie resulted in pretense.
 - i) The root of the lie was pride, and the fruit was pretense.
 - ii) A proud person is always a pretender.
 - (1) He is always exaggerating.
 - (2) He is always wanting people to think more highly of him than is deserved.
 - iii) The fruit of pride is hypocrisy.
 - (1) Ananias and Sapphira pretended a full dedication that they didn't have.
 - iv) The sin of Ananias and Sapphira wasn't that they refused to give, and it wasn't that they didn't give everything they received for the piece of property.
 - (1) God didn't command them to give everything; that was their idea.
 - (a) Acts 5:4
 - (b) They could have done what they wanted with it.
 - (2) Had they felt led of the Lord to keep part of it, there would have been nothing wrong with that.
 - v) But they said that they sold a piece of property and gave it all.
 - (1) They pretended to have a devotion to Jesus that they didn't have, and they became hypocrites.
 - vi) Have you done the same thing?
 - (1) Have you sung, "All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give"?
 - (a) Have you meant it?
 - (2) Talk is cheap.
 - (a) We need to be careful about saying how we love Jesus and pretending to have a devotion that we don't have.
 - vii) God struck Ananias and Sapphira dead because they pretended to have a devotion to Jesus that they didn't have.

- 3) THE EXPOSURE OF THAT LIE (ACTS 5:3-4)
 - a) In this early church, the lie was exposed.
 - i) Acts 5:3-4
 - b) The Holy Spirit gave to Simon Peter the gift of knowledge or the gift of discernment.
 - i) Simon Peter was able, with supernatural insight because he was an apostle, to see directly into this man's heart.
 - ii) The Holy Spirit whispered into his ear and told him everything that Ananias and Sapphira had done.
 - c) The Holy Spirit revealed the source of that sin.
 - i) Acts 5:3
 - (1) Satan was in Ananias' heart.
 - ii) Ananias was a Christian, but Paul had warned not to give a place to the devil.
 - (1) Ephesians 4:27
 - (2) Pride gave a place to the devil.
 - iii) Satan filled their hearts to lie to the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) We are never more like the devil than when we tell a lie.
 - (a) John 8:44
 - (2) We are never more like the Lord Jesus than when we tell the truth.
 - iv) Every morning, we must have the Holy Spirit of God to search our hearts and make certain there is no room for Satan there.
 - (1) Proverbs 4:23
 - (2) Proverbs 23:7
 - v) We must not give place to the devil.
 - (1) If the devil could use Ananias and Sapphira, then the devil could use us.
 - (2) Acts 5:3
 - d) The Holy Spirit revealed the seriousness of that sin.
 - i) Acts 5:3-4
 - ii) Acts 5:9
 - iii) It is serious to tell a lie, but it is unspeakably serious to tell a lie to the Holy Spirit of God.
 - (1) Acts 5:4
 - (2) They lied to the Holy Spirit; they tempted the Lord.
 - iv) It is foolish to lie to the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) The Holy Spirit was there when Anaias and Sapphira talked about what they were going to do.
 - (2) The Holy Spirit was there when they brought the money.
 - (a) He was there the whole time.
 - (3) How foolish to think that we can escape detection when we have the Holy Spirit of God in us.
 - (4) It was serious and foolish for them to lie to God who knows all things.

- v) Ananias and Sapphira were more concerned with what people thought than with what God thought.
 - (1) They were trying to impress people, and at the same time, they were lying to God.
 - vi) What they did was not what we would call a white lie or an exaggeration, though all lies are bad; what they did was premeditated.
 - (1) They had to think about it and write it down on paper.
 - (2) Not only did they do it independently, but they also did it together.
 - (a) They did it in collusion.
 - (3) The whole time they were doing it, the Holy Spirit was saying, "Don't."
 - (a) They said no to God's Spirit.
 - vii) It was a sin against the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) It was a direct challenge to the Holy Spirit of God in the heat of revival.
 - viii) We are dealing with serious matters when God's Holy Spirit is moving in revival fire and power, and we become a tool of the devil to stop revival and oppose the work of God.
 - (1) When we knowingly, willingly, deliberately, and even in collusion with someone else, stand against God.
- 4) THE EXPULSION OF THAT SIN (ACTS 5:5-11)
- a) God judged that sin.
 - i) Ananias and Sapphira died.
 - ii) Acts 5:5-6
 - (1) This put fear in the people's hearts.
 - (2) "Wound him up" means that they wrapped him in burial clothes and carried him out and buried him.
 - iii) Acts 5:7-8
 - (1) It was about the space of three hours when Sapphira, not knowing what was done, came in.
 - (2) One more time, she was given a chance.
 - (3) But she lied to God's man and in the face of great revival.
 - (a) She really lied to God and not to men.
 - iv) Acts 5:9-11
 - b) It was a severe judgment.
 - i) They died.
 - (1) Even though someone is saved, God may deal with them severely.
 - ii) The Christian has three judgments that he faces:
 - (1) The Christian is judged as a sinner at Calvary.
 - (a) When Jesus Christ died for us, we (those who are saved) died with Him.
 - (b) The judgment of our sin was when Jesus died on the cross.
 - (i) It is over; the case was settled out of court because Jesus died for us.
 - (c) Romans 8:1

- (i) There is no judgment for those who are in Christ Jesus.
 - 1. They have passed from death unto life.
- (2) The Christian will be judged as a servant at the judgment seat of Christ.
 - (a) We will give an account for the way that we have lived.
 - (i) 1 Corinthians 3:13
 - (b) We will give an account for our stewardship.
 - (i) We will answer to the Lord Jesus for what we did with what He did in us and through us.
 - (ii) We are saved by grace, but we will face the judgment seat of Christ and will be judged as stewards.
 - (c) Some people have the idea that because we are saved by grace that it makes no difference how we live, that Heaven will be the same for everyone.
 - (i) But that is not so.
 - 1. Matthew 6:20
 - 2. Revelation 22:12
 - a. We are not saved by works, but we are rewarded by works.
- (3) The Christian will be judged as a son or daughter.
 - (a) Hebrews 12:5-6
 - (b) The judgment of sons and daughters is the way the Father disciplines us and grows us day-by-day.
 - (c) Ananias and Sapphira were not judged primarily as sinners, nor were they judged as servants.
 - (i) They were judged as a son and a daughter.
- iii) Sometimes our judgment can lead to premature death.
 - (1) Paul warned the church about sinning against holy things.
 - (a) One of the most holy times that any church will have is the taking of the Lord's Supper.
 - (i) It is a very sacred time.
 - (ii) We hold in our hands the emblems that represent the broken body and shed blood of the Lord Jesus.
 - 1. Nothing is more precious than the blood of Jesus.
 - (b) There were people in Corinth who did this, and Paul warned them.
 - (i) 1 Corinthians 11:29-30
 - 1. The word "damnation" in this passage means "judgment".
 - 2. They ate and drank the Lord's Supper unworthily.
 - 3. The word "sleep" is a Bible word that refers to the death of the saints.
 - (2) 1 Corinthians 11:31-32
 - (a) God links judging with chastening and chastening with death.
 - (b) Sometimes, God will chastise one of his own so severely that the child of God will die prematurely.

- (3) 1 Corinthians 5:5
 - (a) There was a man who was living in flagrant sin against a clear warning.
- (4) 1 John 5:16
 - (a) A child of God may cross God's deadline.
 - (i) He may sin against light.
 - (ii) He may sin against the Holy Spirit of God.
 - (iii) He may sin to death and die.
- (5) This is what happened to Ananias and Sapphira.
 - (a) God dealt with them as His own children.
 - (b) Their sin was so obstinate that God dealt with them in this way.
- c) It was a saving judgment.
 - i) It was a saving judgment for Ananias and Sapphira.
 - (1) God didn't do this to get even with them.
 - (a) God doesn't take vengeance on His own children.
 - (2) In mercy, God took them early to keep them from further sin.
 - (3) God did the same thing to Moses.
 - (a) Moses was a man after God's own heart, but Moses never went into the Promised Land.
 - (b) Moses did this same thing when he struck the rock, and that rock pictured Christ.
 - (i) Numbers 20:7-11
 - (c) Deuteronomy 34:7
 - (i) He died in full health; he died prematurely.
 - (d) Moses is in Heaven.
 - (i) He appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration.
 - 1. Matthew 17:1-3
 - (ii) But he got there too soon because he played with holy things and sinned against light.
 - (iii) God in mercy took him.
 - (4) Some of us may get to Heaven a lot sooner than we need to get there.
 - (a) It will be a saving judgment to keep us from disgracing ourselves and the Lord even more.
 - ii) It was a saving judgment for the church.
 - (1) Acts 5:11
 - (2) God showed the church how He feels about sin.
 - (3) God has given us examples:
 - (a) He gave the example of Sodom.
 - (i) Jude 7
 - (ii) God left Sodom with its smoking ruins.
 - 1. He wanted to show us how He feels about sodomy.
 - (iii) God doesn't destroy every sodomite city.
 - 1. But He destroyed one, and left it for an example.
 - (b) God destroyed a generation of Israelites as an example.

- (i) 1 Corinthians 10:1-6
- (4) God does this to save the church from further hypocrisy.
- iii) It was a saving judgment to save souls.
 - (1) The devil thought he had stopped the revival, but it only extended the revival.
 - (2) A great number of people were saved and came to the Lord as a result of this.
 - (a) Acts 5:14

5) CONCLUSION

- a) If you are a child of God, then sin in your life is more serious than sin in the life of an unsaved person.
 - i) 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
 - ii) Be careful that you do not lie to the Holy Spirit.
 - iii) Be careful that you do not lay cold and profane hands on holy things.
 - iv) If there is a man of God, a work of God, a move of God, a truth of God, then don't tamper with it.
 - (1) It may mean sudden death.
- b) Don't let someone like Ananias or Sapphira keep you from the things of God.
 - i) Don't be turned off from the Lord and from Christianity by a hypocrite.
 - ii) It didn't stop this early church, and it shouldn't stop the church of the Lord Jesus today.
 - iii) Hypocrites come and go, but the church of the Lord Jesus marches on.
- c) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- d) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16