

**Be a Faithful
Steward of All
You've Been Given**

Background Leading Up to Acts 4:36

- Jesus' ministry, death, and resurrection as well as the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- Peter and John heal a lifelong cripple and are arrested, told not to speak in Jesus' name, and then released.
- After their release, they gathered with fellow believers and prayed for boldness to preach. Then the place was shaken, and they're filled with the Spirit and preached with boldness.
- They began sacrificially giving for the sake of those in need.

Acts 4:36-5:2 (ESV) ³⁶ Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, ³⁷ sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. ^{5:1} But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, ² and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Barnabas recognized the value of using what God provided to help those in need. Christians' generosity demonstrates obedience to, and love for, Christ.

Ananias and Sapphira had decided to follow Christ and Satan wasted no time in tempting the new believers.

Self promotion didn't start with social media. Do you realize that self-promotion and pride were in Satan's very first temptation?

Acts 5:3-6 (NKJV) ³ 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? ⁴ 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." ⁵ Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. ⁶ And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried *him* out, and buried *him*.

Do you recognize the enemy's tactics both new and old to tempt you?

Much like the judgment of Nadab and Abihu, God also used a severe example at the beginning of the New Covenant.

God owns everything, but he still permits personal property to test our stewardship.

Do you use what God has given you for His glory?

Acts 5:7-11 (NIV₂₀₁₁) ⁷ About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?" "Yes," she said, "that is the price."

⁹ Peter said to her, "How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." ¹⁰ At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ Great

fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

When given a chance to repent, she chose deception instead.

God is the God of love and grace, but He is also the God of truth and judgment.

This is another swift example of what the wages of sin earn.

Do you love ***and*** revere the Lord of all?