

May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## ***The Heartbeat of a Healthy Church*** ***Unity, Generosity, Integrity, and Reverent Fear***

### ***Acts 4:32-5:11***

#### **Unity**

*Acts 4:32-33*

- ❖ Their belief united them, giving them one heart and care for everyone within the body.  
*John 13:34-35* “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”
- ❖ Their testimony was enhanced with power as they spoke of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.  
*1 Corinthians 15:3-8* “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup>that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup>and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup>Then He appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup>Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup>Last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared also to me.”
- ❖ An extraordinary grace was evident within the members of the church.  
*Acts 2:47* “Praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

#### **Generosity**

*Acts 4:34-37*

- ❖ Sharing among believers was and is to be common within the church.  
*1 John 3:16-17* “By this we know love, that He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. <sup>17</sup>But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?”  
*Galatians 6:9-10* “And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. <sup>10</sup>So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”
- ❖ Selling part or all of what you owned was an extraordinary event that occurred in the early church, and yet it was not forced.  
*1 Timothy 6:17-19* “As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. <sup>18</sup>They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, <sup>19</sup>thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.”  
*2 Corinthians 9:7-8* “Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup>And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.”

#### **Integrity**

*Acts 4:36-5:2*

- ❖ God loves and rewards giving that is from a sincere heart and is not driven by the need for recognition.

*Deuteronomy 16:16-17 “Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God at the place that He will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths. They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed. <sup>17</sup>Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God that He has given you.”*

*Exodus 25:2 “Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me.”*

- ❖ The desire for recognition led Ananias and Sapphira to lie not only to people but to the Holy Spirit, bringing immediate judgment from God.

*Acts 5:3 “But Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land?’”*

- ✧ The self-imposed pressure and the need for recognition led Ananias and Sapphira to open the door to Satan.

*James 1:14-15 “But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.”*

- ✧ God condemns dishonesty among the believers because it breaks the fellowship that is meant to exist within the body.

*Colossians 3:9 “Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices”*

*1 John 1:6-7 “If we say we have fellowship with Him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. <sup>7</sup>But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.”*

## **Reverence**

*Acts 5:3-11*

- ❖ God led Peter to confront and rebuke sin before it corrupted the unity, generosity, and integrity of the whole body.

*1 Corinthians 5:6-7 “Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? <sup>7</sup>Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.”*

- ❖ God initiated judgment on Ananias and Sapphira by bringing sudden death, underscoring that judgment starts with God’s household.

*1 Peter 4:17 “For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?”*

- ❖ The agreement that Sapphira had with her husband made her a participant in the same sin, and therefore, she faced the same judgment.

*1 Timothy 5:22 “Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.”*

- ❖ God warns us of the seriousness of acting in or approving of the sins of those who reject God.

*Romans 1:28-32 “And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. <sup>29</sup>They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, <sup>30</sup>slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup>foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. <sup>32</sup>Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.”*

- ❖ The fear of God moved the Church to reverence, recognizing God’s presence, active involvement, and the severity of His judgment on sin.

*Acts 5:12-14 “Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon’s Portico. <sup>13</sup>None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. <sup>14</sup>And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,”*

## Endnotes:

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