

## Sharing, Sin

Two Core Issues to wrestle with in the Christian Community

Acts 4:32-5:11

August 10, 2008

### Intro:

Start by drawing something you own on the bulletin...

Today we continue our discussion through Acts, looking to be molded and shaped as a community through this book. We look at two core issues today.

Let's look at our passage: Acts 4:32-5:11.

Two core issues that are key to community.

### **Sharing our possessions with each other is an essential part to Christian community.**

#### *6 points on sharing*

Sharing: it's about love and unity. (4:32)

Sharing: It involves how we talk about our stuff along with how we manage our stuff. (v.32- note "claimed," or literally "said")

Sharing: is a sign that God's grace is around. (v.34- note the verse starts with "for"- not translated in the NIV- which links it to the previous verse as the explanation of why there was grace)

Sharing: Takes trust in each other, leadership. ("laying it at the apostles feet"- this is the meaning)

Sharing: It's encouraging to others. (v.36- Barnabus being called a son of encouragement- this is part of it)

Sharing: It's of note for us who have things, who are of the middle class. (the people who could actually sell their property were either upper or middle class, around 20% of that society).

#### *Application:*

This is something not just for within our local church, but it's something for us to think about on a global level. Romans 15:26 talks about this- there churches in Macedonia and Achaia (Greece) gave to the poor believers in Jerusalem; churches in Greece shared their resources with churches in another country.

I believe our church has the call share with the global church in a very significant way. We are far too well off here, and there is far too much need around the world in the global church, for us to not seriously pursue this. I believe we can do this not because many of us have significant resources (we do even though we don't feel like it, but it's not just about that), but because many of us have the potential to give generously and sacrificially, if God can put this vision in you. And I pray that He will, I pray that as a church he does, so that we can join him in the amazing work globally.

I'll forward a story to you this week about a couple who, living on 47, 500, decided to up give 40% of their income. Think about it, that means they have to live on 2375/mo and gave almost 1600/mo. It's a story that shows that, if God is for us, we can truly live this out.

**\*\*Thoughts?\***

**Sin, doing something against God's will, is something we must always take seriously.**

Exegesis:

Their sin is not that they didn't give everything, but that they lied (to God!) about giving everything. The clues that point to this conclusion are:

- It seems like that could have kept whatever amount they thought was necessary (v.4)
- And so Peter explicitly points out lying (v.4), a lying about the amount he Annanias actually gave. This is confirmed in v.8, and v.2- the word keeping back is used negatively in all other usages of intentional financial mishandling.

The sudden death is most likely God's way of telling this new community, this new movement, that sin is something to be taken seriously. There are parallels both in Lev 10 and Josh 7 where new things are being setup, and God for whatever reason does this.

Two Main questions to be addressed because of the text (you may have more):

- *Is this the way of Jesus?*

Luke 12-13 (see 13:1-5), Matthew 24-25.

- *How does this square off with a God of love?*

The elimination of sin is a part of love. Just think of the worst possible sin happening to those you love. I think of my kids, and if I ever became an abuser or molester of them. If I did, I would expect my wife, I would expect you all, to lock me up. That would be loving to the kids, and loving for me.

We can't forget the cross. God, out of his sense of justice, had to punish sin. But out of his love, he wanted to spare us. So Jesus came to take our punishment on the cross. And so Jesus took that punishment for us. Mark 10:45, John 1:29.

**\*\*Other questions?\***

*Application:*

1. Take in seriously within our church community. Two points: a) Within the church is key- I don't think passage is talking about us going on some sort of moral crusade. Other passages may, but not this one. This passage is telling the Christian community- don't put up with sin. Other passages in the Bible are clear on this distinction as well. I Cor. 9:11-12, Matt. 18:15-20. b) this needs to be done correctly, with love, prayer, humility, truth. There's more we could say, Matt. 18 is key.

2. Take God seriously.

**Response:**

Pray for God to convict and guide you, pray for the faith needed. Commit to him what he brings to mind in regard to Sharing and Sin.