

# ACTS CHAPTERS 4:32-5:16

## Preserving the Purity of the Early Church



# 4

April 3, 2005  
2.ACT04

### Lesson Goal

Students will understand God's passion for holiness in the church.

### Lesson Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Tell the teacher how the spirit-filled believers were sharing their belongings making sure everyone's needs were met.
- Explain what happened to Ananias and Sapphira and why it happened.
- Explain what God's view of sin is.

### Memory Verse

*Acts 5:4b-5 ~ "You have not lied to men but to God. When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened."*

### Application

- Allow God to use you and the things He has given you to care for fellow believers and to further His kingdom.
- Realize how God views sin, turn from your sin and follow Christ as your Lord and Savior.
- God wants you to live a holy life.
- Pray for open doors to share the Gospel message.

# TEACHER PLANNING SHEET

## Prepare Your Heart

- Read and study through the passage meditatively.
- Prayerfully seek how God would have you personally apply this passage to your own life. Write these down.

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## Prepare the Lesson

- Choose from the various ideas in the lesson plan.
- Write down an approximate time frame for each.
- List the materials needed.

## HOOK

Time

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## BOOK

Time

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## LOOK

Time

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## TOOK

Time

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Materials  
Needed:

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# ACTS CHAPTERS 4:32-5:16

## Preserving the Purity of the Early Church



# 4

1st–3rd Grade  
April 3, 2005  
2.ACT04EL

### MEMORY VERSE



“...You have not lied to men but to God. When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened.”  
Acts 5:4b-5



## SHOOK

**How Do You Feel? (Activity/Discussion).** Pass out a ballot from **2.ACT04EL.GF1** to each student. Tally up the answers, and share them with the class. Discuss whether or not it is wrong to tell a “little white lie.” Tell the students that in today’s Bible Adventure they will hear about a couple who were greedy and prideful and told a “little white lie” to appear more generous. They will learn how serious God considers the sin of pride and lying.

**Liar, Liar (Game).** Have a panel of three or four teachers share some interesting “facts” about their lives. Have all three share the way they met their husband or wife (*or current or most recent girlfriend/boyfriend*). Have them share the most interesting job they have ever had and their most unusual birthday celebration. Have them share an embarrassing moment. (*Add some more ideas of your own.*) In each case, have one teacher tell a complete lie. Let students guess who is lying. **Debrief:** How can you tell when someone is lying? Is it possible to deceive God? (*No, God knows about everything. He knows whether you are telling the truth or not.*) Why isn’t it okay to lie to God? Tell the students that in today’s Bible Adventure they will hear about what happened to a couple who were prideful and lied to God.

**Apostles’ Feet (Game/Intro Activity).** Before the students come into class put a pair of adult-sized sandals on the floor. As the students come in give each of them a couple of pennies. Have students stand behind a line a few feet away and throw pennies at the sandals. The object of the game is to get the money to land as close the sandals as possible without touching them. It may be a good idea to have multiple pairs of sandals so that many groups may be involved. At the beginning of class tell the students that in today’s Bible adventure, Acts 4:34, 35 tells us that there were no needy persons among the believers because “from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the Apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.” Isn’t this an unusual way to take an offering?

**Famous Couples (Worksheet).** Have the students test their Bible knowledge. See if they can match these famous Bible couples correctly. Bonus: Which couple was not married? Today we will learn about one of these couples and why we might not want to follow their example, **2.ACT04EL.GF2**.

### *Presentation Ideas*

**Dead Wrong (Illustration/Overhead).** Acts 5:1-10 tells about the fatal outcome of Ananias and Sapphira's lie, **2.ACT04EL.GF3**.

### *Bible Adventure for 1<sup>st</sup>- 3<sup>d</sup> grades*

We've been learning from the book of Acts in the New Testament of our Bibles about the early Church. We heard how Jesus, just before He was taken up to heaven by God, told the Apostles to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit. On the Day of Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit to them with a sound like a mighty wind. The Apostles became bold, courageous witnesses for Jesus to those around them. Many people became followers of Jesus after listening to their message. These new believers were devoted to four things: the teaching of the Apostles, remembering the Lord's Supper regularly, encouraging one another, which is called fellowship, and praying together. They did these four things continually, and as a result, they grew rapidly with God making many changes in their hearts.

Last week we saw how some Sadducees and Jewish leaders tried to stop Peter and John from telling others about Jesus. In short, their efforts failed and only managed to get the new believers even more excited about sharing their faith. As they prayed, God filled them with the Holy Spirit and again gave them boldness to go and share the Good News about Jesus.

The Bible says that "all the believers were one in heart and mind." They understood that God had given everything they owned to them, **so when somebody in the church had a need, they gave some of God's wealth to meet it.** Some of them who owned land or houses even sold their property and gave it to the Apostles so the money could go to those who had less. Nobody was penniless in the first church. The Apostles continued to testify about the resurrection of Jesus, and the Bible says that "much grace was upon them all." They not only had God's approval, but the approval of people watching them.

What did outsiders see when they looked at this group of believers? They saw changes in men's lives that could not be explained away. **Instead of the usual chasing after riches and possessions, they saw people willing to give up all they had in order that someone else would not go without.** This was not normal behavior. They also saw that God was present, through His Holy Spirit, and really was leading the church. They saw attempts to stop the spread of God's Word fail. However, God's enemies had not given up. The next challenge to the holiness and purity of the church came from within it. As we will see, God took it very seriously indeed.

Within the body of believers was a man named Ananias and his wife, Sapphira. They sold a piece of property that they owned. They intended to give the money to the Apostles, but before they did, **Ananias kept a portion of it for himself.** Sapphira knew about it and approved. Ananias took the rest of the money and laid it at the Apostles' feet. Why did they do it? Ananias and Sapphira were not only greedy for money—they were greedy for recognition. They thought they could impress the Apostles and the other believers while gaining a little money at

the same time. Now, there would have been nothing wrong with this couple keeping some of the money they had made on the sale. There was no rule that said they had to give it all. **Their sin was lying, making it seem as though they had given it all when they had not, and trying to look more spiritual than the rest through their gift.** Did they get away with it? Not hardly. Listen to Peter's next words.

"Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land?..Why is it that you have conceived this sin in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God." No one had pressured Ananias to sell the land or to donate all of the money from the sale. He could have kept the land or let it be known that he was only donating a portion of the money. But he schemed in his heart a way to make himself look good, and God, speaking through Peter, nailed him with it. The Bible tells us that even as Ananias heard Peter's words, he fell down and died.

The news of Ananias' death spread like wildfire, and **tremendous fear came upon everyone who heard of it.** They all knew that Ananias' death happened because of his sin. About three hours after this, Sapphira arrived. She had not heard what had happened to her husband. Peter, giving her one last chance to tell the truth, asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?" Sapphira chose to continue the lie. "Yes, that is the price," she replied. Peter pronounced God's judgment on this woman as well. "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord?" he asked her. "Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." That same moment she fell down at Peter's feet and died.

As you can imagine, the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira caused great fear, not only in the Church, but also in all those who heard about it. **There was no doubt in anyone's mind that lying and hypocrisy were not going to be tolerated by God in His Church.** Everyone gained a whole new respect for the Holy Spirit, knowing that He was able to look into a man's heart and see what was there.

The judgment of Ananias and Sapphira's sin had another effect on this new Church. The Apostles were doing signs and wonders among them, and **there was once again great unity among them. But people who would have flocked to join the believers were thinking long and hard about it.** They realized they were dealing with a God who would not accept half-hearted pretenders into His Church. They had great respect for this God and for His people.

There were also people who heard the Apostles' message and responded to it with their whole hearts. More and more men and women became a part of the Church. Many sick people were brought to the Apostles, and they were all healed.

God's power flowed through the Church because it was pure and holy, and sin was not tolerated. God showed us how important the purity of His Church is in his judgment of Ananias and Sapphira. Remember, the actions of the early Church were being watched. If Ananias and Sapphira had been able to trick the Apostles, **people would have begun to question God's power and presence in the Church.** Who could worship a God who could be lied to, cheated, and

used to make someone look good? Who could follow the teachings of men who could be so easily fooled? Most of all, if Ananias and Sapphira had been successful, it would have introduced the thought that “it doesn’t really matter if I sin or not. Nothing will happen.”

If we learn nothing else from the story of this couple, we should understand that God places great importance on dealing with sin within His Church. We don’t express His love by saying, “Whatever you want to do is fine with me.” Instead we need to say, “This is God’s standard. If you ignore it or disobey it, there are going to be consequences. Because I love you, I want to help you turn from your sin and be obedient to God.” Pray that God will place people in your life that will love you God’s way. Be open to God’s correction. It often comes through a brother or sister in Christ or a loving parent. Take it seriously, because you know God does.

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**Aim Questions:**

1. **What was happening among the wealthy and poor believers in the early church? Who did Luke use as a good example of this being done?** *They were selling all they had and sharing it with each other. Barnabas*
  2. **List the things that Luke said Ananias and Sapphira did wrong.** *Lying and trying to look more spiritual than the rest (pride).*
  3. **How were they punished for their sin?** *God struck them dead.*
  4. **If God punished people in the Church today in the same way He punished this couple, what do you think would happen?**
  5. **From this account, what can you confidently say about God’s view of greed and lying? What expectations does God have from the people who follow Jesus Christ?**
  6. **Knowing these things about God, what changes or cautions should you give attention to in your attitudes and actions?**
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**A.C.T.S. 4:32 – 5:16 (Worksheet/Discussion).** What did the Apostles continue to testify? Who confronted Ananias? In what city were the Apostles? What did Ananias and Sapphira do wrong? What happened as a result? What did the Holy Spirit do when Ananias and Sapphira lied? What happened when Peter’s shadow passed over the sick? **2.ACT04EL.GF4.** *Answers: Jesus Christ raised from the dead. Peter; Jerusalem; They lied to the Holy Spirit; The Holy Spirit took their life purifying the church. The sick were healed.*

**Ananias & Sapphira’s Mistake (Worksheet).** Have the students connect the dots from 1 to 20. Have them use the answer to complete the verse. Can we hide anything from God? What can we do when we are tempted to lie? **2.ACT04EL.GF5.**

**The Truth and Nothing But the Truth (Bible Drill).** These are all verses regarding truth. Have all the students begin by sitting with their Bibles closed. Give them the Scripture reference. Whoever finds it first must stand and read the verse aloud. A piece of candy may be given to the first person who finds the verse, **2.ACT04EL.GF6 Pgs. 1 & 2.**

**Clue/Word/Answer (Worksheet).** Have the student use the clues to unscramble the answer, **2.ACT04EL.GF7**. *Answers: unselfishly, death, resurrection, Barnabas, greed, shadow.*

**What Moves Your Caboose? (Worksheet).** Each student will need **2.ACT04EL.GF8 Pgs. 1 & 2**, scissors and glue. Have the students cut out the six train parts on page 1 and glue them behind the corresponding engine on page 2. Discuss the differences between the two trains and the personal application questions on page 2.

**What Did They Share? (Worksheet).** Have the students circle the things the believers in the first church shared. Discuss ways that we can do the same today. Encourage the students to draw something to show what they might be able to share, **2.ACT04EL.GF9**.

**Aim Questions (Worksheet).** Have the students answer the Aim Questions about today's Bible Adventure, **2.ACT04EL.GF10**.



## TOOK

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**Answer in the Form of a Memory Verse (Review).** "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

"God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact." Acts 2:32

"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12

Before class, write the entire list of verses on a 5 x 7 card or paper. Make enough cards for the number of teams you think you may have. Before class, write the verses on the board. As a class, review these memory verses. Then erase the verses from the board. Divide the students into teams. Tell the students you will ask a question and they must answer it with the appropriate memory verse. Award 1 point if the student can only give the scripture reference such as Acts 1:8, or can only recite part of the verse. Award 2 points if the student can recite the entire verse correctly. Students may refer to their 5 x 7 card to help them answer the questions, but must turn the card over as soon as the teacher has called on them to answer the question. Call on the first student to raise his hand.

1. Who raised Jesus to life?
2. What would be received when the Holy Spirit came upon the Apostles?
3. To what event had the Apostles been witnesses?
4. What is found in no one other name than "Jesus"?
5. Who would come upon the Apostles and give them power?
6. To whom is the name of Jesus given?
7. What would the Apostles do in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria?
8. Where would the Apostles be witnesses in addition to Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria?
9. Who did God raise to life?
10. How many names under heaven can accomplish salvation for men?

**Learn from Example (*Discussion*).** What example do you think God was making through Ananias and Sapphira? If God punished people in the Church today like He punished this couple, what do you think would happen? Knowing how God feels about lies and deceit, what changes or cautions should you give attention to in your attitudes and actions?

**This is not available at this time for Faith Bible Church curriculum.**

**A.C.T.S. Action Cards (*Workbook*).** Encourage students to continue using the Apostle action cards to memorize the significant statistics throughout the book of Acts. The main events of Acts 4:32 - 5:16 are:

- A. Peter.
- C. In the city of Jerusalem.
- T. Ananias and Sapphira lied.
- S. Purifying the Church.

## How Do You Feel?

Answer “yes” or “no” to the following questions.

**YES**

**NO**

Is it wrong to sell your possessions and give to the needy and keep some for yourself?

Is it wrong to tell a “little white lie”?

Does God know everything you do?

## How Do You Feel?

Answer “yes” or “no” to the following questions.

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Does God know everything you do?

## How Do You Feel?

Answer “yes” or “no” to the following questions.

**YES**

**NO**

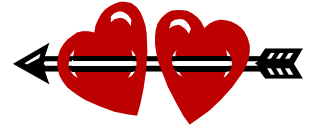
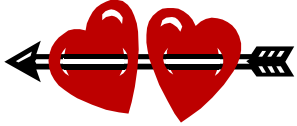
Is it wrong to sell your possessions and give to the needy and keep some for yourself?

Is it wrong to tell a “little white lie”?

Does God know everything you do?

# Famous Couples of the Bible

Test your Bible knowledge. See if you can match these famous Bible couples correctly.



Bonus: Which couple was never married?

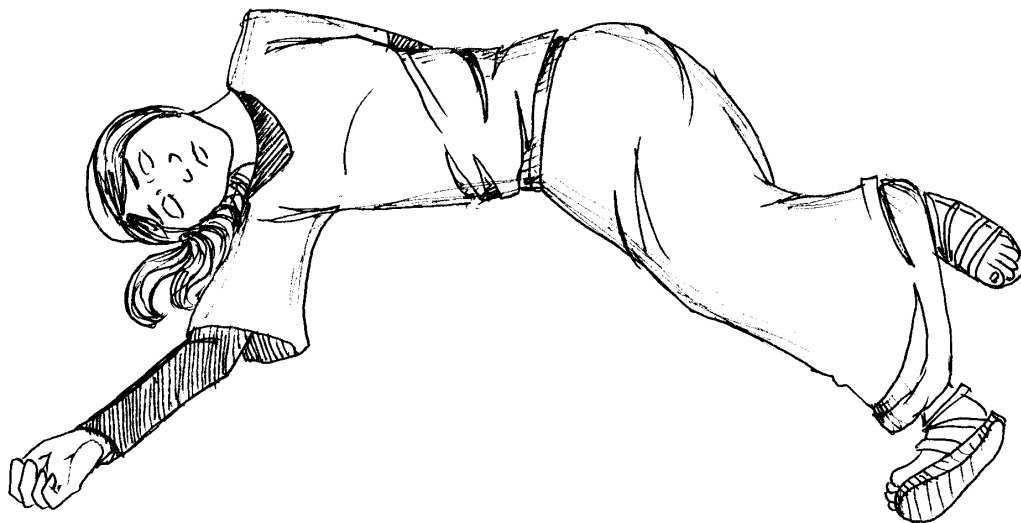
Adam	Sapphira
Abraham	Gomer
Lot	Mary
Isaac	Rachel
Jacob	Eve
Moses	Esther
Samson	Delilah
David	Zipporah
Ahab	Rebekah
Hosea	Pillar of Salt
Xerxes	Sarah
Boaz	Priscilla
Zechariah	Ruth
Joseph	Jezebel
Ananias	Elizabeth
Aquila	Bathsheba

# Dead Wrong



"What made you do such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God. When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died."

Acts 5:4, 5



"Peter said to her, 'How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also.' At that moment she fell down at his feet and died." Acts 5:9, 10

# A.C.T.S.

## 4:32 - 5:16

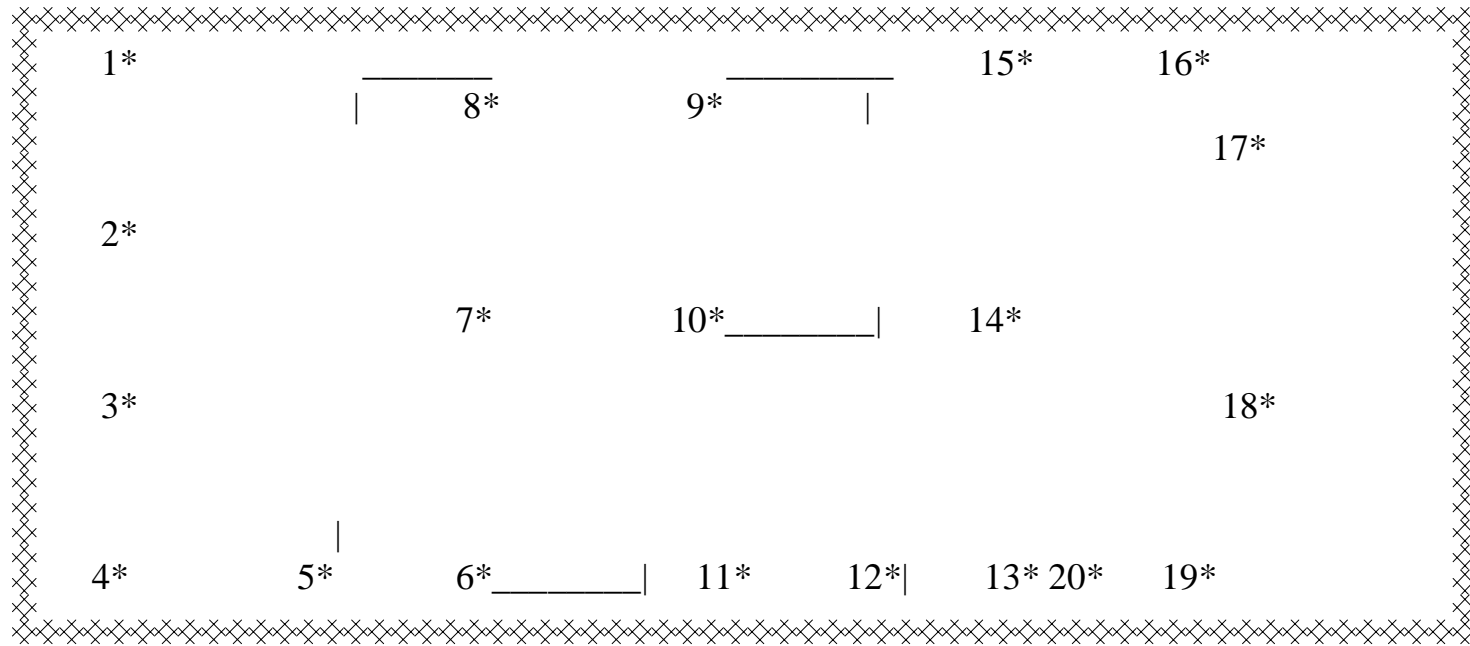
**A**postles – About what did the Apostles continue to testify? Who confronted Ananias?

**C**ity – In what city were the Apostles?

**T**rials/troubles – What did Ananias and Sapphira do wrong? What happened as a result?

**S**pirit – What did the Holy Spirit do when Ananias and Sapphira lied? What happened when Peter's shadow passed over the sick?

# Ananias' & Sapphira's Mistake



Connect the dots from 1 to 20. Use the answer to complete the verse.

"Then Peter said, 'Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have \_\_\_\_\_ to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?'" Acts 5:3.

Can we hide anything from God? What can we do when we are tempted to lie?

# THE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH



## BIBLE DRILL



**John 7:18**

“He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth.”

**John 14:16-17**

“And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever---- the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you will know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you.”

**John 17:17**

“Sanctify them by the truth; Your Word is truth.”

**Romans 1:18**

“The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness.”

**Romans 2:8**

“But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.”

**Romans 9:1**

“I speak the truth in Christ – I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit... “

**1 Corinthians 13:6**

“Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.”

**2 Corinthians 4:2**

“Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the Word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.”

**Galatians 5:7**

“You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth?”

**Ephesians 4:15**

“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

# THE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH



## BIBLE DRILL



### **Colossians 1: 5-6**

“the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the Word of truth, the Gospel that has come to you. All over the world this Gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God’s grace in all its truth.”

### **2 Thessalonians 2:10**

“and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.”

### **2 Thessalonians 2:12-13**

“and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness. But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.”

### **2 Timothy 2:15**

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the Word of truth.”

### **1 Peter 1:22**

“Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.”

### **1 John 1:8**

“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”

### **1 John 2:4**

“The man who says, ‘I know Him,’ but does not do what He commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

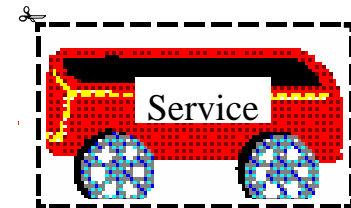
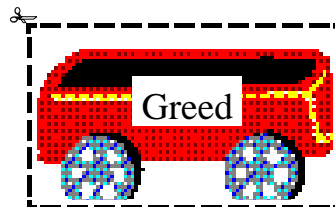
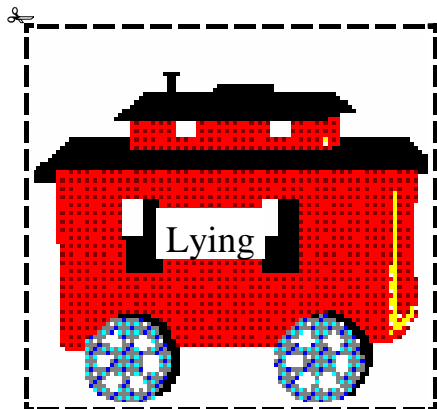
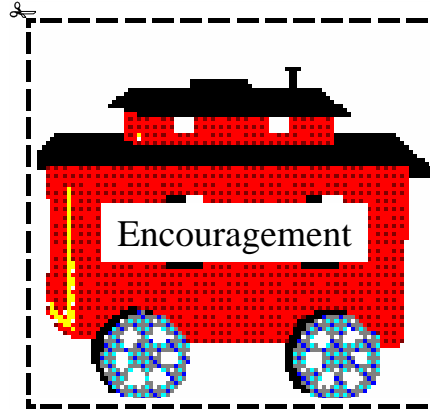
### **1 John 3:18-20**

“Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in His presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and He knows everything.”

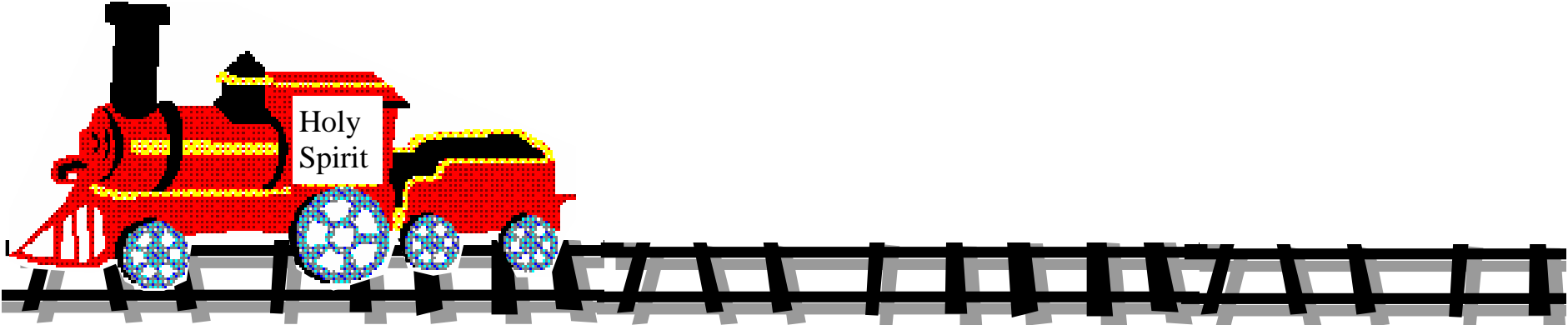
<b>CLUE</b>	<b>WORD</b>	<b>ANSWER</b>
God wants us to live our lives this way	YUNLSHSIELF	
The result of Ananias' and Sapphira's sin	HEDAT	
The Apostles testified about Jesus' _____	RNURCEOSREIT	
He sold a field and put all the money at the Apostles' feet	RBASANBA	
Ananias and Sapphira were full of this	EREDG	
The sick wanted Peter's _____ to fall on them	OSWHAD	

# What Moved Their Caboose?

Cut apart the train cars, and attach them to the correct engine.  
Make sure the cabooses are put on last.



**What moves your caboose, and what kind of load are you carrying? For where is your train bound?**



**Barnabas' Train**



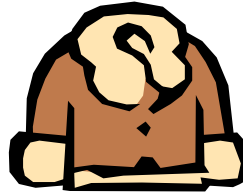
**Ananias' & Sapphira's Train**

# What Did They Share?

Circle the things that the believers shared.



Money



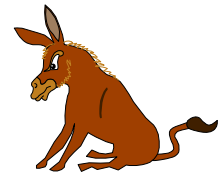
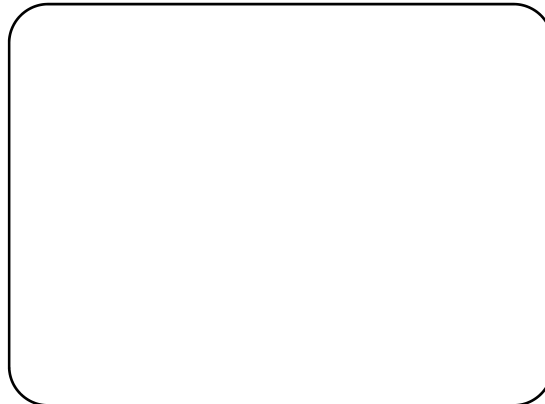
Clothes



Food



Skills



Transportation

Draw something you  
can share with other  
believers.



Homes



Property



Medicine

“All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had.”

Acts 4:32

# Aim Questions

Answer the following questions about today's Bible Adventure.

1. What was happening among the wealthy and poor believers in the early church? Who did Luke use as a good example of this being done?
2. List the things that Luke said Ananias and Sapphira did wrong.
3. How were they punished for their sin?
4. If God punished people in the Church today in the same way He punished this couple, what do you think would happen?
5. From this account, what can you confidently say about God's view of greed and lying? What expectations does God have from the people who follow Jesus Christ?
6. Knowing these things about God, what changes or cautions should you give attention to in your attitudes and actions?

*Remember that God is holy and sin is detestable in His sight!*

**Acts**  
**Chapters**  
**4:32-5:16**

*"You have not lied to men but to God. When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened."  
Acts 5:4b-5*