

God Vindicates the Purity of His Newborn Church

Acts 5:11-16

PART TWO

Introduction

When *purity* meets with *pretense*: The tragic case of Ananias and Sapphira.

Satan is at war with God.

He attacks the church from without by *persecution*, and he afflicts the church from within with *deception*.

“The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD.” Proverbs 15:8

Why is this so offensive to God? Because Satan is the master counterfeiter.

Matthew 15:1-9

God demands *singleness of heart* among His holy worshipers. He'll accept nothing less than sincerity of heart.

Those who desire to worship God must do so “in spirit and truth” (John 4:24).

The Paradox Power of the Holy Spirit

The same display of divine power that attracts genuine seekers also repels the shallow and half-hearted.

Local churches around the world are called to take sin seriously and deal with it as it arises.

When that happens, people see God at work in the church and it strikes either a *respectful* or *resentful* fear in their hearts (v11).

The healing power of God is harnessed by His messengers the apostles in order to verify His message – *the Gospel*. Vv14-16

“The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works.” 2 Corinthians 12:12

Just as there were special judgments at the beginning of a new era, so there were also *special miracles*.

“*at least his shadow might fall on some of them*” (v15)

“*they were all healed*” (v16)

The scene is reminiscent of the healing ministry of Jesus:

Mark 6:53-56

Matthew 9:35-36

We now have the completed Word of God and we test teachers by the veracity of their *message*, not by miracles (1 John 2:18-29; 4:1-6).

The greatest miracle of all is the transformation of a lost sinner into a child of God by the grace of God.

The importance of *unity of mind* to avoid sin, remain pure, gain courage, and strengthen the body.

Philippians 1:27-28

The dichotomy: “*their destruction*,” “*your salvation*.”

Philippians 2:1-3

“in full accord” Gk *sumpsuchoi*; ‘together-soul’; harmonious;’

“Joined together in soul or sentiment, unanimous. It signifies community of life and love” (Zodhiates).

Romans 15:5-6

1 Corinthians 1:10

“all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.” 1 Peter 3:8

The point is, we’ve been given *one Mind* in which to share – *the mind of Christ* (1 Corinthians 2:16).

We do well then to study that one Mind individually and corporately and make it our own collectively.

Post a guard then, around the clock, at the gateway to the heart – *the mind*.

“Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.” Proverbs 4:23

The heart “the citadel of man – the seat of his dearest treasure.” Schultens

***Filial fear of God* is the greatest deterrent to sin and therefore, the surest path to purity.**

Fear of God means being awestruck by His greatness and glory while dreading the consequences of violating His holy nature.

This is a *filial* fear, not a *servile* fear.

“both Jews and Greeks are under sin.” Romans 3:9

“There is no fear of God before their eyes” Romans 3:18.

Psalms 36:1-3

“The fear of the Lord is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil...I hate.” Proverbs 8:13

“By...the fear of the Lord one turns away from evil.” Proverbs 16:6

“Praise the Lord! Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments!”

Psalms 112:1

Ecclesiastes 12:13

The filial fear of the Lord is the strongest deterrent to sinning. The love of the Lord is the greatest attraction to holiness.

“Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth!” Psalm 96:9