

**Ananias Compared to Barnabas**

**050602-3**

*Hello! This is Dorothy -*

What we possess, we profess; what we profess, we propagate. What is in our heart, truth or lies, comes out through our actions. What was in Peter's heart? His convictions were reached through contact with Christ. Peter didn't have a supreme authority over the other twelve apostles. Peter's leadership, however, was undoubted in their midst. Though there was a difference between him and the others, it was just of a degree, not of a kind. The authority of Peter couldn't go beyond himself. It wasn't a continuous authority by transmission to his successors. Peter's authority to exercise discipline was not unique, as it was given to all the apostles. The apostles were given of God an authority. **Matthew 18:18** reminds us of Jesus' words

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**. . . Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.** The terminology *bind* and *loosed* are of a Jewish form which mean prohibiting and permitting. Taken with *whatsoever*, they imply disciplinary authority in the Church. This God-given authority was recognized after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Some opposed this authority. Actually, we are told in **Acts 5:33 . . . they were cut to the heart and took**

**counsel to slay them.** They couldn't stand this authority; it really cut across their lives!

But we read in **verses 38,39**, an esteemed doctor of the Law among the Pharisees, named Gamaliel, warned -

**38 . . . let them alone, for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:**

**39 But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.** Perhaps you are fighting against God. You sense an authority and you cannot explain it. It is this authority from God; that is what you are resisting.

After the outpouring of God the Holy Spirit through the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, the newly formed Church prayed. **Chapter 4 -**

**33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all.**

**34 Neither was there any among them that lacked; as many as were possessors of land or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,**

**35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet . . .** In other words, they brought them and presented them and, in presenting them to the apostles, what they were doing was bringing them in the Name of Jesus to give to Him. . . . **and distribution was to every man according to as he had need.** So *everybody was taken care*

of.

**36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, -he had a new name -(which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation), a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,**

**37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.**

**Acts 5 —**

**1 But - notice this word: But - a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,**

**2 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it - she was in league with him in this - and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.**

What went wrong? Ananias was hypocritical. He lacked genuine experience, but he wanted to give the appearance of doing what Barnabas had done. To the Spirit-discerning Apostle Peter, Ananias displayed the sin of his own heart. That was *avarice*, which means a *greed for money*. Behind it all, he was pretending to do something for God, but he was keeping back what he wanted for himself. I don't know if you fully realize God sees and knows your heart. He knows every intent of what you do. In other words, there is a searchlight on you at every second of the day and night. There is nothing you can hide from God.

**3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land?**

**4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? - *listen to this* - thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.**

Oh, may the Holy Spirit search our hearts today! How much of our life has been play-acting before people: giving a little and using it as a pretense, to copy other people? All the time, we have forgotten God is searching us. He sees and knows what we do. "Oh, I'll give this!" A big sign of being generous, but all the time we are working out what we need and how we are going to handle the situation. All I can say is, get right with God in whatever He is saying, and worship Him in spirit and in truth.

*In Jesus' Name. Amen.*