

## Pastor Andrew's Devotion 17<sup>th</sup> June (Wednesday)

**Acts 5:1-5** Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. <sup>2</sup> With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet. <sup>3</sup> Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? <sup>4</sup> Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God." <sup>5</sup> When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened.

Ananias need not have sold his house, and after having sold his house need not have given the money to the Church. But he gave. The only problem was he gave partially with the claim that he has given all. With this lie in him, he fell down dead! We read in Exodus how God's holiness at Mt. Sinai and in His tabernacle can be so dangerous, but here in the New Testament God is equally dangerous with His presence and holiness. When God is near to God's people like in Acts, blessings flow and miracles happen, but so does His judgments.

How much do I really desire God's presence?

- When I want His blessings, I don't mind His presence.
- But I also know that I cannot stand God's full presence with His blazing light.
- Like Adam and Eve who hid from God, there are areas in my life I don't wish to show God. I want to hide from Him.
- So I find it a dilemma. On one hand I want to come near God, on the other hand I want to stay my distance.
- Only as I have yielded to Him have and have been purified from all my conscious inconsistencies can I experience His greater presence.

When we talk about justice and generosity to the poor, it's easy to be like the Pharisees, who gave their money in a showy way without any real sacrifice. It's a lot harder to be like the poor widow who gave secretly and sacrificially (Luke 21:1-4).

What am I trying to hide from God, or trying to appear holier than I really am?