

# THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



Date: 5.18.25 | Title: The Community Shares Together  
Scripture: Acts 4:32-5:11

## LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING

### Middle School Students:

- God is eternal and has existed for eternity past and will exist for eternity into the future.
- Each person who comes to faith in Christ receives the Holy Spirit and is given a spiritual gift.
- Jesus promised that God would send the Holy Spirit to minister to God's people in a special way.
- The Holy Spirit intercedes before the Father on our behalf.
- The Holy Spirit inspired and guided people to write the Bible.

### High School Students:

- God is eternal, and although He is not bound by time, He chooses to operate in it to relate to us.
- Each person who comes to faith in Christ receives the Holy Spirit and is endowed with a spiritual gift to be used to serve in the church.
- Jesus promised that God would send the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit has come to convict, teach, comfort, lead, strengthen, and seal us, as well as to produce fruit within and through us.
- The Holy Spirit intercedes before the Father on our behalf when we do not know how to or what to pray.
- The Holy Spirit inspired and guided people to write the Bible and used the personalities and voices of men to communicate the very words of God.



### MEMORY VERSE

And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." - Acts 2:38-39

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE LESSON

**Play a game of charades. Have a few students act out a job or pretend to be someone, and have the other students guess who or what they are pretending to be.**

**Say: None of you are actually the people you pretended to be. Sometimes people try to act a certain way to make others believe that's who they really are, but God knows their true heart and who they are when no one is watching. Today, we will learn how two people in our Bible story pretended to be generous, but weren't.**

**Our story today teaches us about the generosity of the early church. They recognized how generous God is and how much they had been given in Jesus. They trusted God and desired to be generous like Him. Yet, not everyone was as generous as they seemed. As we read, we'll learn that God knows our hearts and see how Peter confronted sin.**

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## BACKGROUND INFO FOR LEADERS

The early church, empowered by the Holy Spirit, demonstrated remarkable courage in proclaiming Jesus' identity and performing miracles to validate their message. But beyond bold testimony and supernatural signs, the Spirit also produced a deep unity and love among believers, which led to generous, voluntary sharing of resources, compelled by love, not law.

Acts 4:32–35 highlights how this Spirit-inspired generosity ensured “there were no needy persons among them” (Acts 4:34). Believers laid their resources at the apostles' feet, entrusting them to distribute aid where it was most needed. This practice reflected the commands of Deuteronomy 15 and honored God, as hearts were transformed to give joyfully and sacrificially. A shining example was Barnabas, who sold a field and gave the proceeds to the apostles to help those in need (Acts 4:36–37).

However, amid this unity, the tragic story of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1–11 provides a stark contrast. They, too, sold property, but deceitfully kept back part of the money while pretending to donate the full amount. The Greek word for “kept back” (*enosphisato*) implies embezzlement and is the same term used in Joshua 7:1 when Achan took forbidden spoils, bringing judgment on all Israel. Similarly, the couple's deceit threatened the integrity and unity of the early church. Though Ananias appeared to lie to the apostles, Peter revealed he had lied to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3), and ultimately to God (Acts 5:4). Rather than being influenced by the Spirit, Ananias was filled with Satan, giving the enemy a foothold through his greed.

Their sin was not merely about withholding money but hypocrisy—pretending to be Spirit-led while secretly serving self-interest. When confronted, Ananias collapsed and died, a divine judgment (Acts 5:5). Sapphira, unaware of what had happened, repeated the lie and also died at Peter's feet (Acts 5:10). As a result, great fear—a reverent awe—came over the whole church (Acts 5:11). Notably, this is the first time Luke uses the term “church” in Acts, underscoring the gravity of sin within the body of Christ.

This episode serves as a sobering warning. God desires His people to serve Him in truth and integrity, and failure to do so can disrupt the harmony and mission of the church

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**(Eph. 4:25–28). The same power that blessed the church with unity and miracles (Acts 4:32; 5:12–16) also brought judgment against deception and disunity. The Holy Spirit exposed the couple’s treachery, ensuring the church remained pure and on mission.**

**While others surrendered to the Spirit’s leading, Ananias and Sapphira let the desires of the flesh override the good works God had prepared for them. Their actions grieved the Spirit by masking false motives with a facade of devotion—a danger still relevant to the church today. Yet even in this sobering account, we are reminded of the transforming love of Christ. Though greed ensnared this couple, we are called to live in obedience to the Spirit, allowing His power and Christ’s sacrificial example to shape us into a generous, unified, and truthful community, fully committed to God’s mission.**





## LOCATE THE SCRIPTURE & TELL THE STORY



Remind your group that we are studying the New Testament. The book of Acts is about God sending the Holy Spirit to permanently dwell within Jesus' disciples and other believers after He ascended back to heaven. With the help of the Holy Spirit, those who followed Christ told many people about Jesus, helped others, and started the first churches. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the message of Jesus began to spread all over the world.

TELL  
THE  
STORY



Tell the story: After Jesus ascended into heaven, his disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and were given power to be Jesus' witnesses. Thousands of people believed in Jesus, and the church began. Peter played an important role in the early church, following the example Jesus had set. Like Jesus, Peter preached the gospel and healed people, all so that others might come to know Christ too. Today, we will learn how Peter confronted sin within the church.

Read directly from Scripture, use The Jesus Storybook Bible, The Biggest Story Bible, or the summary provided in the lesson

The early church was growing. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the apostles were telling people that Jesus had been raised from the dead. A large group of believers met together in Jerusalem. They shared everything they had. If someone had more than he needed, he gladly gave it away so everyone had what they needed.

One man, Barnabas, sold a field and gave the money to the apostles. The apostles used the money to help people in need. Everyone who had land or houses did the same. Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, sold some land and pretended to give all the money to the apostles, but they kept some of it for themselves.



Put the events in order, draw a comic strip, build it with blocks or playdough, act it out, etc...

When Ananias brought the money to the apostles, Peter asked him, "Why are you lying to the Holy Spirit? You could have been honest about what you did with the money, but instead you lied- not to us, but to God." When Ananias heard this, he fell down, died, and was buried. Everyone who heard this was filled with fear.

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About three hours later, Sapphira came to the apostles. She did not know what had happened to her husband. Peter asked her, “Is this all the money you got for the land?”

“Yes,” she said, “That’s all of it.”

Peter said, “Why did you and your husband agree to test the Lord?” Then Sapphira fell dead too. Great fear came on everyone in the church and all who heard about these things.

God wants us to be generous to others. God displayed His generosity toward us when He sent His Son, Jesus, to take the payment for our sins. Today, we will learn how the early church showed generosity.

Re-tell the Bible Story: put events in order, draw a comic strip, build it with blocks or playdough, act it out, etc.

Share the GOSPEL: Ananias and Sapphira wanted to look generous but were greedy and chose to lie. The Holy Spirit changes our hearts so that we want to share with those in need. Jesus generously gave all He had so we can share in His riches and have forgiveness and eternal life.

We can’t hide our sins from God. He knows our hearts and thoughts, but God is generous and has made the way for our sins to be forgiven. Sharing the good news of Jesus lets everyone know how we can freely come to Him to find forgiveness and new life.

As followers of Jesus, we show our trust, thankfulness, and love toward God when we live generously. Being greedy reveals a heart that is self-focused and unbelieving toward God. God mercifully gave us the Holy Spirit, who transforms our hearts so we can show generosity toward others and be a witness for Jesus’ incredible generosity toward us.

The Holy Spirit empowered the apostles to share the good news. As a result, people came to trust Jesus as their Savior, and the church began to grow. They not only grew in number, but in love for one another. The Holy Spirit transformed their hearts to desire to show love through generosity. They gave so that every believer had what they needed. The church grew and displayed Jesus’ generosity because of the Holy Spirit. The same is true for us. Our spiritual growth and good works are due to the Lord working in and through our lives.



## QUESTIONS TO REBUILD THE STORY

**Many were coming to faith in Jesus, and the early church was growing in number. How was the work of the Holy Spirit seen in the early church? How did the people care for each other? (Acts 4:1, 34)** People gave and shared with one another, supporting each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. The Holy Spirit transformed the people's hearts and lives. The early church became known for how they shared and gave generously when others had a need. People even began to sell their land and houses to give money to the apostles to distribute to the poor. Some, however, wanted to appear generous but were greedy.

**Ananias and Sapphira sold their land, but instead of giving all the profit to the apostles, they kept some for themselves. They lied and told the apostles they had given all the profits, pretending to be generous. Who did Peter say Ananias was lying to? (Acts 4:5).** When Ananias and Sapphira lied about the money they gave, they lied to the Lord. When we sin, we not only hurt others, but we also sin against the Lord. The story of Ananias and Sapphira reminds us how serious sin is to the Lord and how we need the Holy Spirit to transform our hearts so we can live in a way that honors God.

**Why is the gospel good news?** The gospel is good news because Jesus' life, death and resurrection is the only way for us to be saved from sin. When we are saved, the Holy Spirit dwells in us to change us so that our hearts love God more than we love our sin.

**Do we work for or earn our salvation? Why not? How is salvation an act of generosity toward us?** God has freely given us the gift of salvation, which we can't earn. God gave His only perfect Son, Jesus, so that we could be saved. God provides help and comfort to believers through the Holy Spirit.

**Jesus has been generous to us. How can we show generosity to others?**

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**How does giving to others show the love of Jesus?** The Holy Spirit grows the fruit of generosity in our hearts so that we desire to love others through giving. Generosity is evidence of a heart transformed by grace.

**Why is honesty important in the life of a believer?** Honesty is important as we try to point others to Jesus and live as a witness for Him. Believers should strive to honor God in every aspect of their lives. God knows our hearts, and we cannot fool Him. Being honest shows others what Jesus is like.

**What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?**

**What does the story teach me about myself?**

**Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?**

**Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?**

**How does this story help me live on mission?**

**Application (include Mission Measures where applicable) - See Attached Application Questions. Choose the questions that work well with this section of scripture and tailor them to fit the age group of your students.**



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## PRAYER PROMPT:

Thank You, Lord, for the gift of salvation. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus so that we can have forgiveness and eternal life. Help us live to please You in everything we do. In Jesus' name, amen.

## BIBLE SKILLS PRACTICE:

**“Compare & Contrast: Barnabas vs. Ananias/Sapphira”**

- Skill Focus: Observation and interpretation
- Activity: On a whiteboard or worksheet, make two columns. Have students compare:
  - What each person/family did with their money
  - How the community responded
  - What motivated them (based on the text)?
  - What were the outcomes?

## MISSIONS EMPHASIS:

Our Creek Families will collect money in the funnel for United Christian Ministries in May and June.

## REVIEW UNIT VERSE:

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”

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## ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

**ATTENTIVE** - God hears and responds to the needs of his children.

**COMPASSIONATE** - God cares for his children and acts on their behalf.

**CREATOR** - God made everything. He is uncreated.

**DELIVERER** - God rescues and saves his children.

**ETERNAL** - God is not limited by time. He exists outside of time.

**FAITHFUL** - God always keeps his promises.

**GENEROUS** - God gives what is best and beyond what is deserved.

**GLORIOUS** - God displays His greatness and worth.

**GOOD** - God is what is best and gives what is best. He is incapable of doing harm.

**HOLY** - God is perfect, pure, and without sin.

**IMMUTABLE/UNCHANGING** - God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

**INCOMPREHENSIBLE** - God is beyond our understanding. We can comprehend Him in part but not in whole.

**INFINITE** - God has not limits in His person or on His power.

**JEALOUS** - God will not share his glory with another. all glory rightfully belongs to him.

**JUST** - god is fair in all his actions and judgements. He cannot over-punish or under-punish.

**LOVING** - God feels and displays infinite, unconditional affection toward his children. His love for them does not depend on their worth, response, or merit.

**MERCIFUL** - God does not give his children the punishment they deserve.

**OMNIPOTENT/ALMIGHTY** - God holds all power. nothing is too hard for God. What He wills He can accomplish.

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## ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

**OMNIPRESENT** - God is fully present everywhere.

**OMNISCIENT** - God knows everything, past, present, and future - all potential and real outcomes, all things micro and macro.

**PATIENT/LONG-SUFFERING** - God is untiring and bears with His children.

**PROVIDER** - God meets the needs of his children.

**REFUGE** - God is a place of safety and protection for his children.

**RIGHTEOUS** - God is always good and right.

**SELF-EXISTENT** - God depends on nothing and no one to give him life or existence.

**SELF-SUFFICIENT** - God is not vulnerable. He has no needs.

**SOVEREIGN** - God does everything according to His plan and pleasure.

**TRANSCENDENT** - God is not like humans. He is infinitely higher in being and action.

**TRUTHFUL** - Whatever God speaks or does is truth and reality.

**WISE** - God knows what is best and acts accordingly. He cannot choose wrongly.

**WORTHY** - God deserves all glory and honor and praise.

**WRATHFUL** - God hates all unrighteousness.

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## Application Questions

LOOK UPWARD



- How does this story apply to your relationship with God?
- What does it teach you about Him- His will and His heart?
- What aspect of His character is He inviting you to experience and enjoy?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story in your relationship with God?
- What practical steps can you take to live out these truths in your relationship with God?

LOOK INWARD



- How does this story apply to your heart and your own spiritual growth?
- What does it teach you about yourself, your needs, or your goals in life?
- In what aspects of your personal life is God inviting you to grow and mature?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story inwardly?
- How will those around you benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to allow these truths to help you grow spiritually?

LOOK AROUND



- How does this story apply to your relationship with others?
- What does it teach you about how to see others and relate to them?
- What is god inviting you to do differently in your relationships?



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## Application Questions

### LOOK OUTWARD »»

- How does this story apply to your ministry and mission in life- to your role in God's kingdom, in society, and in the world?
- What does it teach you about God's purposes for the world?
- What part of His mission is He inviting you to participate in?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story in your ministry?
- How will the world benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to live out these truths in the world?

### LOOK FORWARD »»»

- How does this story apply to your future, both in this age and in eternity?
- What does it teach you about God's plan for your life, now and forever?
- What aspects of eternity is God inviting you to participate in?
- How will you benefit in the future by applying these truths now?
- How will God's kingdom benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to impact eternity now with these truths?