LESSONS THIS QUARTER

1) 6 March 2016 Acts 1 Entrusted
2) 13 March Acts 2 Empowered and Unified
3) 20 March Acts 3 Beneficent
4) 27 March Acts 4 Resurrected!
5) 3 April Acts 5 Courageous
6) 10 April Acts 5 Integrity & Faithful

INTRODUCTION

- Church discipline seems harsh, and the Apostles are thrown into jail for the 2nd and 3rd time. Can anything good come out of this?
- What kind of god is our God? Is He a loving, benevolent God more willing to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, or is He more willing to hit us with a baseball bat when we sin?

Background on the Ananias and Sapphira Situation

- The early church saw the need to pool their resources together to help the less fortunate within their fellowship. Acts 4:32-37
- Joseph (aka, Barnabas) was notably singled out as selling and donating all the proceeds from his property to the Church
- Christians were not required to liquidate their assets and give them to the Apostles. Such acts were purely voluntary
- E.g., We will see later that Christians often met in the spacious homes of the more wealthier believers for church and fellowship, so they didn’t sell off everything. Acts 5:42; 12:12

- We are encouraged to “provoke one another to love and good works” (Heb 10:24), so it is possible Ananias and Sapphira got caught up with whatever fervor and emotional appeals might have been made to help the poor and needy within their church
- Unfortunately, the desire for praise without sacrifice led to a failure of integrity, & without integrity the Church could suffer immensely

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CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS

- Ananias and Sapphira (assuming they were saved) lost their lives but not their salvation. Salvation is a gift of God and cannot be earned by merit or lost through demerit
- God is not 50% Love and 50% Just. He is 100% Love and 100% Just. 100% Righteous and 100% Holy
- YES, God’s discipline seems very harsh at times, especially to those on the receiving end – but it is out of love to protect and preserve His people from even more disastrous consequences

NEXT WEEK: Acts 6. Problems within the church had to be quickly resolved for the church to continue growing