

Be Real!

“The CODE” Series – Part 04

A 15 Minute Study Guide- Read Acts 5:1-11

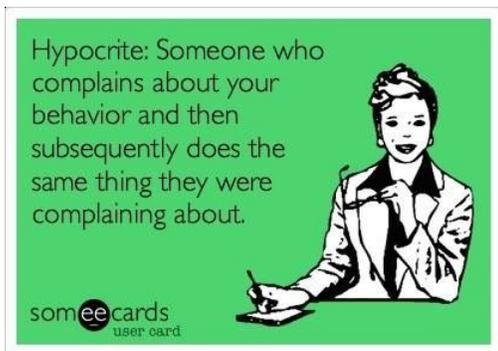
1. Why did this couple bring a portion of their proceeds from their property sale to the Apostles (read Acts 4:32-37 for additional information)? Why did they bring just a “portion” and not the whole amount?
2. What error/sin did they make when they offered their financial gift?
3. In what ways, can a Christian today, sin against the Holy Spirit with his finances? With his talents? With his time?

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A Fuller Study Guide-

Connect question: If you could live inside of a TV show, which would you choose and what character would you play?

Introduction: Look at the following three quotes on hypocrisy and if forced to choose, which one best sums up your feelings about being two-faced and a fake. What is it about the quote that impacts you the most?



Hypocrites are rather easy to recognize. They spend most of their time pointing out the flaws in others, and the rest of the time trying to flaunt their own perfection.

What you do
speaks so loud that
I cannot
hear what you say.
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

One of our core values at Grace Hills is one of having an Authentic Community. We keep it real, fight against fake, and carry each other’s burdens with love and grace. We commit to each other. The opposite of this is to live a fake life, hiding our weaknesses, and pretending to be something that we are not. In our text below, we will look at some early New Testament church members who were not living transparent lives before God and others.

Acts 5:1-11

Act 5:1 But there was a certain man named Ananias who, with his wife, Sapphira, sold some property.

Act 5:2 He brought part of the money to the apostles, claiming it was the full amount. With his wife's consent, he kept the rest.

Act 5:3 Then Peter said, "Ananias, why have you let Satan fill your heart? You lied to the Holy Spirit, and you kept some of the money for yourself.

Act 5:4 The property was yours to sell or not sell, as you wished. And after selling it, the money was also yours to give away. How could you do a thing like this? You weren't lying to us but to God!"

Act 5:5 As soon as Ananias heard these words, he fell to the floor and died. Everyone who heard about it was terrified.

Act 5:6 Then some young men got up, wrapped him in a sheet, and took him out and buried him.

Act 5:7 About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.

Act 5:8 Peter asked her, "Was this the price you and your husband received for your land?" "Yes," she replied, "that was the price."

Act 5:9 And Peter said, "How could the two of you even think of conspiring to test the Spirit of the Lord like this? The young men who buried your husband are just outside the door, and they will carry you out, too."

Act 5:10 Instantly, she fell to the floor and died. When the young men came in and saw that she was dead, they carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

Act 5:11 Great fear gripped the entire church and everyone else who heard what had happened.

What was the great sin that Ananias and Sapphira committed that eventually cost them their life?

Why do you suppose God took serious action against the sin of hypocrisy with this husband and wife?

Discuss the following statements about hypocrisy. How are the statements true? Make an application to our present culture and life:

- 1) HYPOCRISY FOCUSES ON GROUP DYNAMICS, NOT ON PERSONAL REALITY WITH GOD.
- 2) HYPOCRISY FOCUSES ON WHAT PEOPLE THINK, NOT ON WHAT GOD THINKS.
- 3) HYPOCRISY FOCUSES ON THIS LIFE, NOT ON ETERNITY.

How honest should we be about our personal struggles? Should we share all our struggles with everyone? What guidelines apply here?

Homework:

How would you respond to the unbeliever who charges, "The church is full of hypocrites"?

How can a person who is prone to be a people-pleaser become a God-pleaser?