



Fidelity

Let's do what is good toward all men, and especially toward those who are of the household of the faith - Galatians 6:10

19th March 2023

Living the Christian Life 3 Most Important Daily Practices



I have often been asked what are the most important activities for a Christian to focus on each day. Each time, I am encouraged by the individual's sincere desire to please our Lord and give of his/her best to the Master. To keep things simple, here are 3 important daily practices.

1. Let your light shine

Do your family, colleagues and neighbours know that you are a Christian? If you were accused of being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?

Jesus tells His disciples in Matthew 5:14-16 that they "are the light of the world. A city located on a hill can't be hidden. Neither do you light a lamp, and put it under a measuring basket, but on a stand; and it shines to all who are in the house. Even so, let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven".

For all of us, every day we must endeavour to live the Christian life from the moment we open our eyes until we close them to sleep at night.

2. Keep your contacts in prayer

God has put us in this world, at this time according to His good pleasure. When we became Christians, He has specific plans for us as His disciples. This is clearly mentioned in James 5:16 - "Therefore, confess your

sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working".

God has bestowed on every Christian the mighty power of prayer at our command. Each day, we can utilise it by going through our prayer list, mentioning our family, friends and contacts by name. When you do this on a regular basis, God will open opportunities for you to reach out to them.

3. Support the church

When you were baptized, the Lord added you to His church. The Bible tells us in 1 Peter 2:5 that, *as living stones, are built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

Each day we need to ask ourselves what spiritual sacrifices we can offer to God? It may be as simple as not forsaking the assembly (Hebrews 10:25), inviting a friend to church or helping with the weekly potluck. God will reward us even for a cup of cold water we give to someone in need.

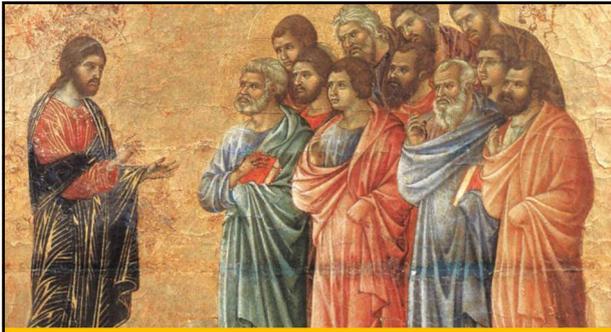


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Bible Christians: Ananias & Sapphira



Introduction

Tonight we take on a Christian couple who are mentioned in only one passage of the Bible

The context was in the early days of the church in Jerusalem

Many of the first converts lingered in Jerusalem to learn more of their new-found faith

Since none of these prepared for a prolonged visit for Pentecost, there was a pressing need to house and feed the thousands of converts

The need was so enormous that members had to sell their homes to accommodate the need



Acts 4:32-37 *The multitude of those who believed were of one heart and soul. Not one of them claimed that anything of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.*

With great power, the apostles gave their testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Great grace was on them all. For neither was there among them any who lacked, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet, and distribution was made to each, according as anyone had need.

Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, Son of Encouragement), a Levite, a man of Cyprus by race, having a field, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.



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Acts 5:1-15 *But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira, his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.*

But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? While you kept it, didn't it remain your own? After it was sold, wasn't it in your power? How is it that you have conceived this thing in your heart? You haven't lied to men, but to God."

Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and died. Great fear came on all who heard these things. The young men arose and wrapped him up, and they carried him out and buried him.



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About three hours later, his wife, not knowing what had happened, came in. Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much." She said, "Yes, for so much."

But Peter asked her, "How is it that you have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." She fell down immediately at his feet, and died.

The young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her by her husband. Great fear came on the whole assembly, and on all who heard these things.



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1. Christian Couples

Christian couples can encourage each other to keep the faith

Ananias and his wife Sapphira conspired to lie to the church – partners in crime

One should have stood up to do the right thing

Ecclesiastes 4:9-11 Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him who is alone when he falls, and doesn't have another to lift him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have warmth; but how can one keep warm alone?



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2. Many Motives

Church is filled with people of many motives

Matthew 13:47-49 *"Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a dragnet, that was cast into the sea, and gathered some fish of every kind, which, when it was filled, they drew up on the beach. They sat down, and gathered the good into containers, but the bad they threw away."*

What was the motive of Ananias and Sapphira?

Some of their sins:
Lied about their gift
Seek the praise of men by pretence
Lied against the Holy Spirit



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3. Imperfect Christians

Ananias and Sapphira must have been impacted by the gospel to leave their Jewish roots

They were wealthy because they did not need to sell their house or land

It is probable that they had been wheeling and dealing their way up in society, for appearances

Do you think that they are still people like Ananias and Sapphira today in the church?

Proverbs 29:25 *It is dangerous to be concerned with what others think of you, but if you trust the Lord, you are safe.*



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4. God is Not Mocked

We cannot serve God hypocritically and hope to get away with it. 1 Samuel 16:7 - *Man looks at how someone appears on the outside. But I look at what is in the heart.*

God is not impressed with our schemes. Internet filled with Christian showmanship. 2 Corinthians 2:17

For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

Galatians 6:7-8 *Don't be deceived. God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that will he also reap. For he who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption. But he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.*



5. Be Sincere & Truthful

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1 Timothy 1:5 *The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.*

John 4:23-24 *But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.*

1 Timothy 3:15 *But if I wait long, that you may know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the assembly of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*



Conclusion

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- 4. God is Not Mocked
- 5. Be Sincere & Truthful

We learned a very important lesson tonight

So many are in religion to promote their own interests

Unless what we do is firmly anchored in the word of God, we are just fooling ourselves

Matthew 6:7 *In praying, don't use vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their much speaking.*

Matthew 15:9 *And in vain do they worship me, Teaching as doctrine rules made by men.*

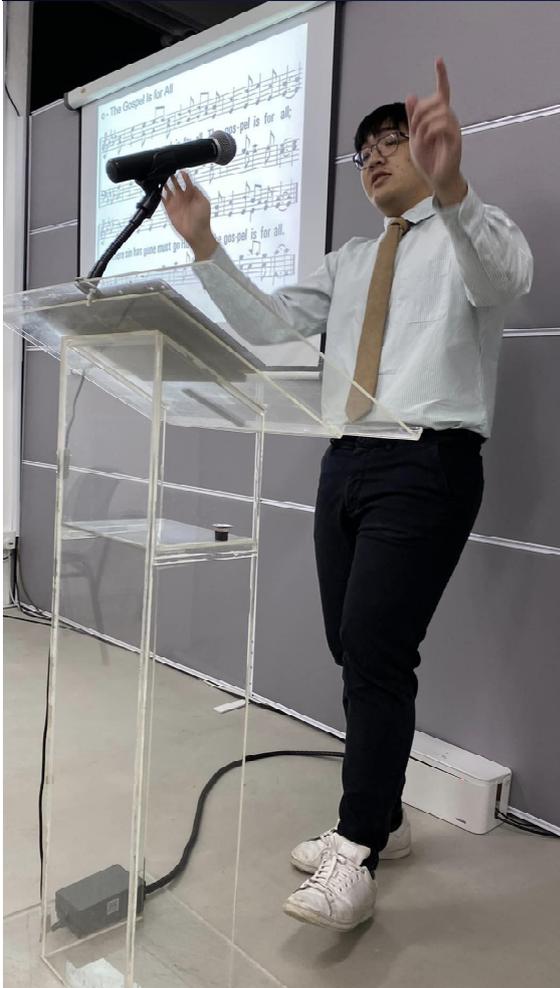
Isaiah 55:11 *So shall my word be that goes forth out of my mouth: it shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*



- Call to Worship
- Scripture Reading
- Opening Prayer
- Congregational Singing
- Communion & Giving
- Exhortation
- Invitation
- Announcements
- Closing Prayer

Next Week: Aquila and Priscilla

BACK PAGE NEWS



Clockwise: Kenneth leading praises; worship; dinner fellowship; lots of desserts; Michael, Catherine and Jesse receiving their certificates on Personal Bible Course.