

THE BOOK OF ACTS

February 24, 2019

Acts 4:32-5:11

READ

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QUESTIONS for REFLECTION

1. What comes to mind when you hear the phrase, “of one heart and soul”? What makes this such an outstanding characteristic of the primitive church? What seems to hinder it in our church? What promotes it?
2. What is the basis of their claim that anything belonging to them was not their own (c.f., 4:24; Psalm 24:1)? (True ownership lies where?) To what does this ownership extend? Why is this foundational to our understanding of our finances & ownership?
3. Give some one-word responses which describe the nature of their giving spirit. How was the “abundant grace [that] was upon them all” being expressed? To what did the Apostle Paul attribute such a spirit of generosity & self-sacrifice (c.f., 2 Corinthians 8:1-5)?
4. Joseph is cited as a positive example of this giving spirit. What is the hallmark of Joseph’s life? How important is encouragement? Can you tell of a time when encouragement made all the difference for you?
5. Ananias & Sapphira are cited negatively as contrasting examples of this giving spirit. Are there any clues in the account to suggest that A & S are truly believers?
6. What plan is concocted? What is the extent of the involvement of both A & S in this plan (5:2, 9)? What is the goal of the plan? (What do they hope to accomplish?) What is the true impact of their plan (5:3, 4, 9)? What makes this so grievous (or deserving of the outcome)?

7. Where did this plan originate (5:3, 4)? How does Satan pose an ongoing threat to believers (c.f., Ephesians 6:11b; 2 Corinthians 2:11; 11:14; 1 Timothy 3:7; 1 Peter 5:8)? What role does the heart play? What was Peter's personal experience in this regard (and what was the result) (Luke 22:31-32)? What should be our response to this threat (1 Peter 5:8-9; Ephesians 6:11a)?

8. Handling ourselves and our entrusted resources, before God, are fraught with potential dangers as well as blessings. On one hand we have _____ (5:4) of these resources. On the other hand we're to renew our mind concerning these resources and confess that _____ (4:32). How do we synthesize these two positions?

9. Peter also links divine & personal components in our handling of entrusted resources. On the divine side is _____ (5:3, 9). How does this component affect our handling of entrusted resources? On the personal side is _____ (5:4). What did Jesus say about the place of the heart (Matthew 6:21)?

10. How is the "great fear" that came over the whole church, and all who heard about this incident, a good thing? Are any positives to result from such a grim outcome (c.f., 1 Corinthians 10:6, 11; Hebrews 4:11; 2 Peter 2:6)?

PERSONAL RESPONSE

1. I will be more "of one heart and soul" with my fellow believers this week by . . .

2. I will be more sensitive to the Holy Spirit's interest in my finances this week by . . .

3. I will direct my heart with my treasure this week by . . .