



Big Idea: Purity in the church yields power for evangelism.

1.) God despises duplicity in the church.

-- **Duplicity disparages the Holy Spirit among us.**

-- v. 3 - In lying about their gift to the church, Ananias and Sapphira disparaged the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 10:29).

-- **Ananias and Sapphira show essence of image over integrity.**

-- v. 4a - Christianity operates by freedom of conviction, not the force of compulsion

3.) Holiness in God's people advances God's message.

-- Two major purifying events are recorded in Acts, both of which are followed by an increase in evangelistic power and success.

-- **Acts 5:1-14 - The Account of Ananias and Sapphira**

-- The Outcome (v. 13-14):

a.) The church gained great respect in the community.

b.) News about God's righteousness and power spread, and more than ever, and people believed and were saved.

-- The Lesson: Personal holiness matters immensely to God.

-- **Acts 19:13-20 - The Seven Sons of Sceva**

-- The Outcome (v. 17-20)

-- v. 17 - The name of Christ was rightly respected and extolled.

-- v. 18 - Believers confessed and gave up what they knew was evil.

-- v. 19 - People everywhere were so serious about renouncing their evil practices that they burned costly books and scrolls.

-- v. 20 - Purity in the church yields power for evangelism.

-- Salvation is the work of God alone, and He chooses to unleash it among people who are serious about _____.

-- The Scriptural record implies that God chooses to pour out His power upon us in proportion to our piety (Hebrews 12:14).

Application

1.) Be honest and humble.

-- A healthy church is one that understands and acknowledges our desperate need for the holiness that only comes from God.

2.) Deal immediately and decisively with secret sin.

-- Realize how brokenhearted God is over "whitewashed tombs."

-- Be aware that secret sin of any individual in the church hurts the whole church.

3.) Remember the priority of piety in proclaiming Christ.

-- Evangelism without holiness is image without integrity.

-- Being all in for sharing Christ means being all in for holiness.

ion (last week).

-- v. 4b - Keeping some of the profits for themselves was not the issue.

Lying to look good was (Matthew 23:27-28).

-- **Honesty and integrity before God and each other are spiritual mandates of the church.**

2.) Duplicity diminishes God's power in us.

-- v. 2 - "...kept back..." - The same Greek word is used in the Septuagint in the story of Achan's sin.

-- Because of Achan's sin, God's power was stripped from Israel.

-- Consider the history of Israel: The more they strayed from God's commands, the more easily and thoroughly they were defeated.

-- **God's swift judgment upon Ananias and Sapphira is meant to shock us into understanding God's view on duplicity in the church.**

-- Phony piety among us hinders the power we need from God to accomplish His mission for us (Revelation 2:4-5).

-- In far too many churches in our culture, the blazing fire of Christ is being snuffed out by a cavalier attitude toward sin.