

Acts 5: 1 – 16. Cheats Never Win.

Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet. Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God." When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. Then the young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him.

About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?" "Yes," she said, "that is the price." Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon`s Colonnade. No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter`s shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.



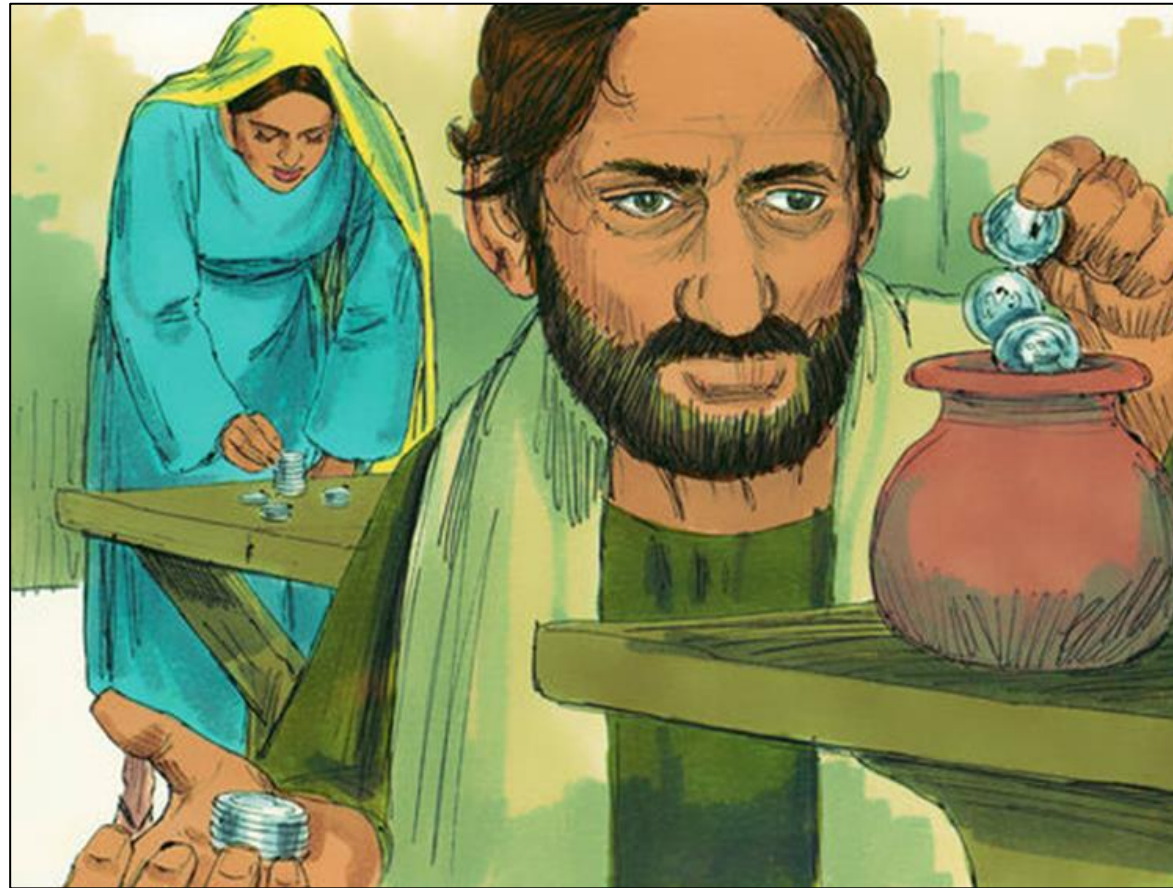
Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property.

“Also” This refers back to what Barnabas did in chapter 4.



Hatching a plot

With his wife`s full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself



What was wrong with that?

With his wife`s full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, **but brought the rest and put it at the apostles` feet.**

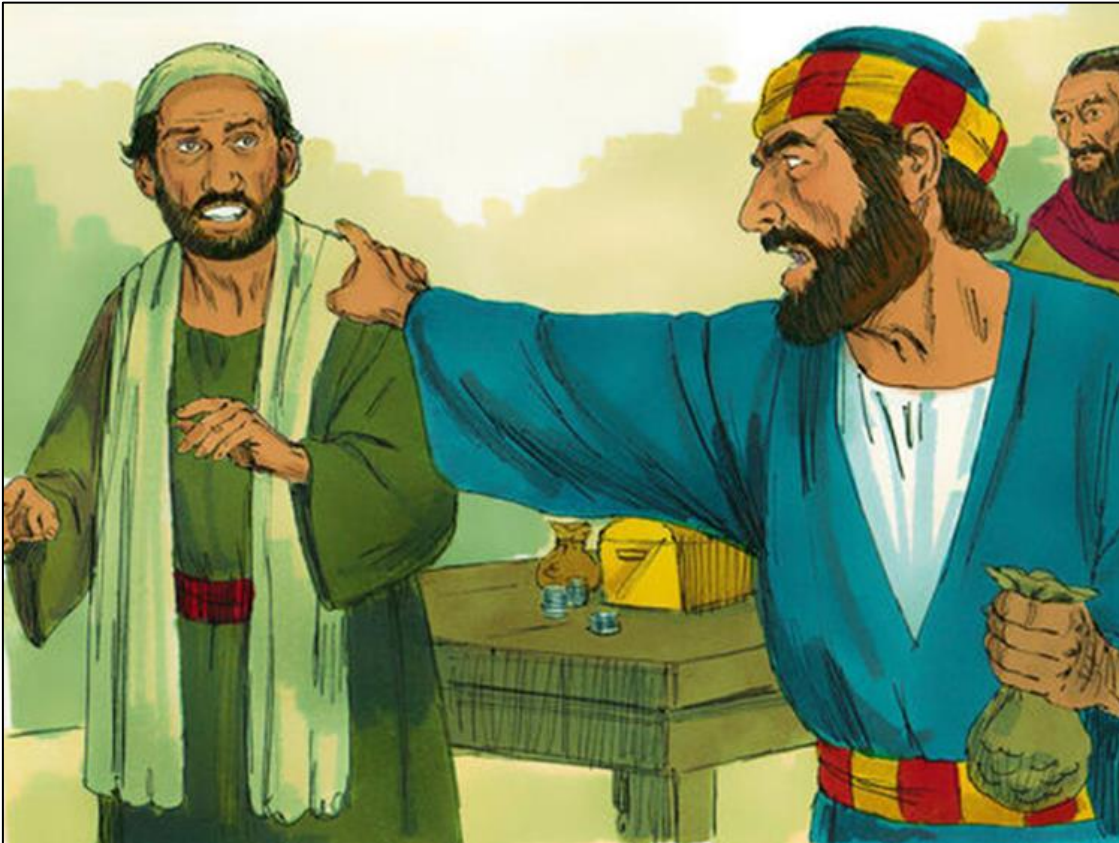


He wanted to look good on the cheap?

He meant to give the impression to the church that he was a generous man.

God knew what was in his heart and told Peter

Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?"

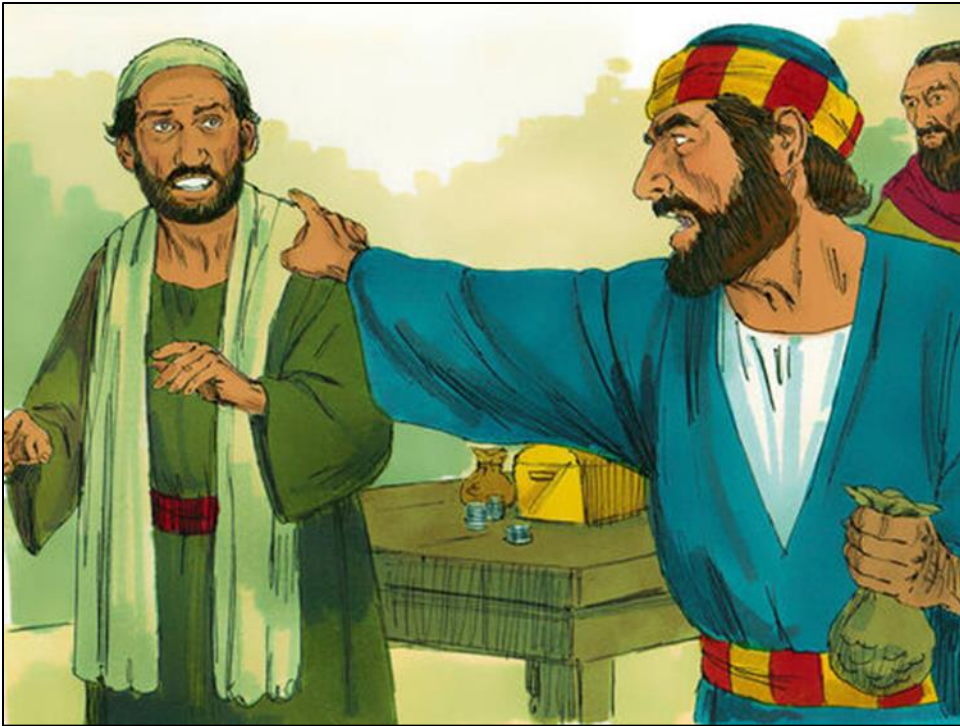


How did Peter know?

1 Corinthians 12:8

How is it ?

Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?"



Peter's diagnosis:-

Satan at work

A receptive heart

A cover of lies

The facts of the case

Didn't it belong to you before it was sold?
And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal?



The assumed answer is 'YES'.

The Big Question Any suggestions?

What made you think of doing such a thing?



Ignorant about God

Desire to look good

Desire for possessions
(love of money?)

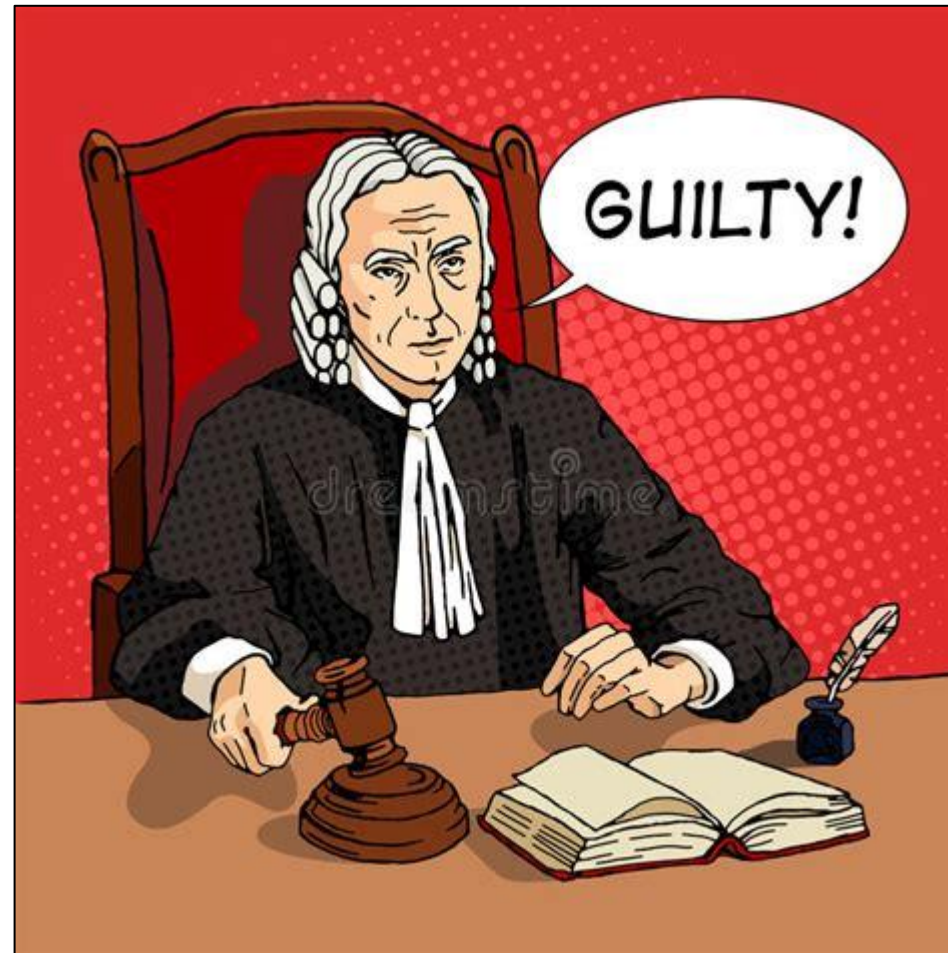
Confident he could lie and get
away with it.
(after all he had given some of it)

You have not lied to men but to God.

Peter's verdict.

This is deadly serious

The seriousness of the crime isn't just in the act itself but also against whom the offence is committed.



When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died.



What did he die from?

And great fear seized all who heard what had happened.

News got around
Church life is not a game or a social club
This is serious

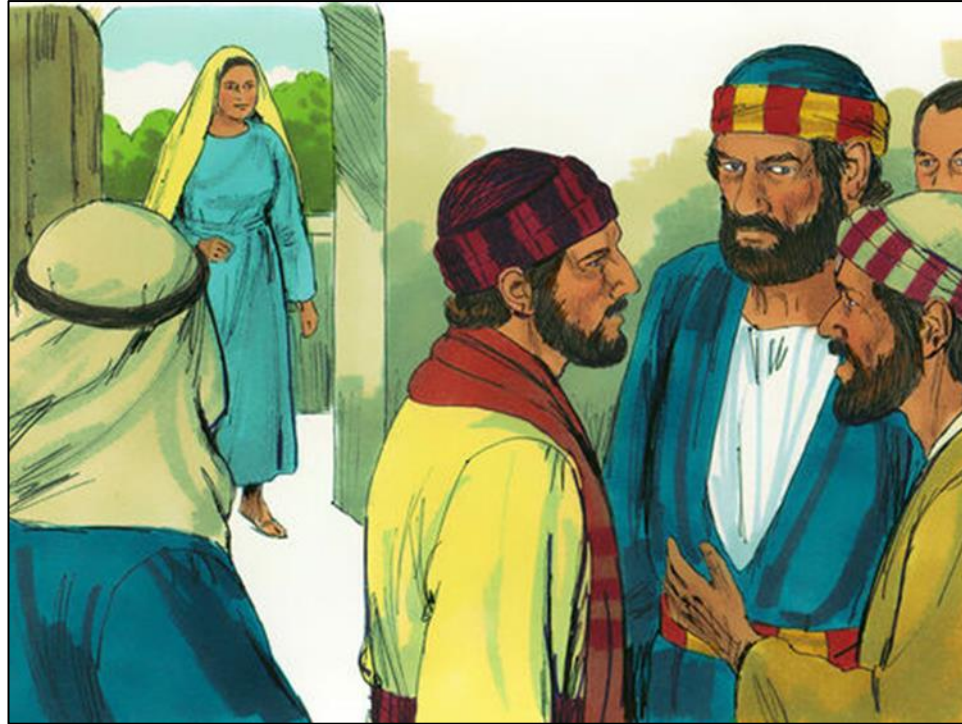


Then the young men came forward, wrapped up his body,
and carried him out and buried him.



Same-day funeral – possibly in a cave.

About three hours later his wife came in,
not knowing what had happened.



What would she have perhaps done if she had known?

It's a chance to be open and repent

Peter asked her,
"Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?"



The fatal error

"Yes," she said, "that is the price."

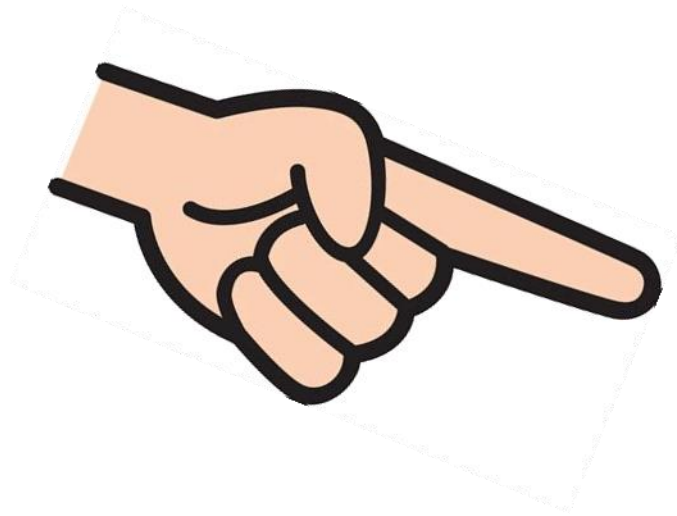


One lie multiplies!

Did they think this was what they were doing?

Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord?"

'agree' = in it together!



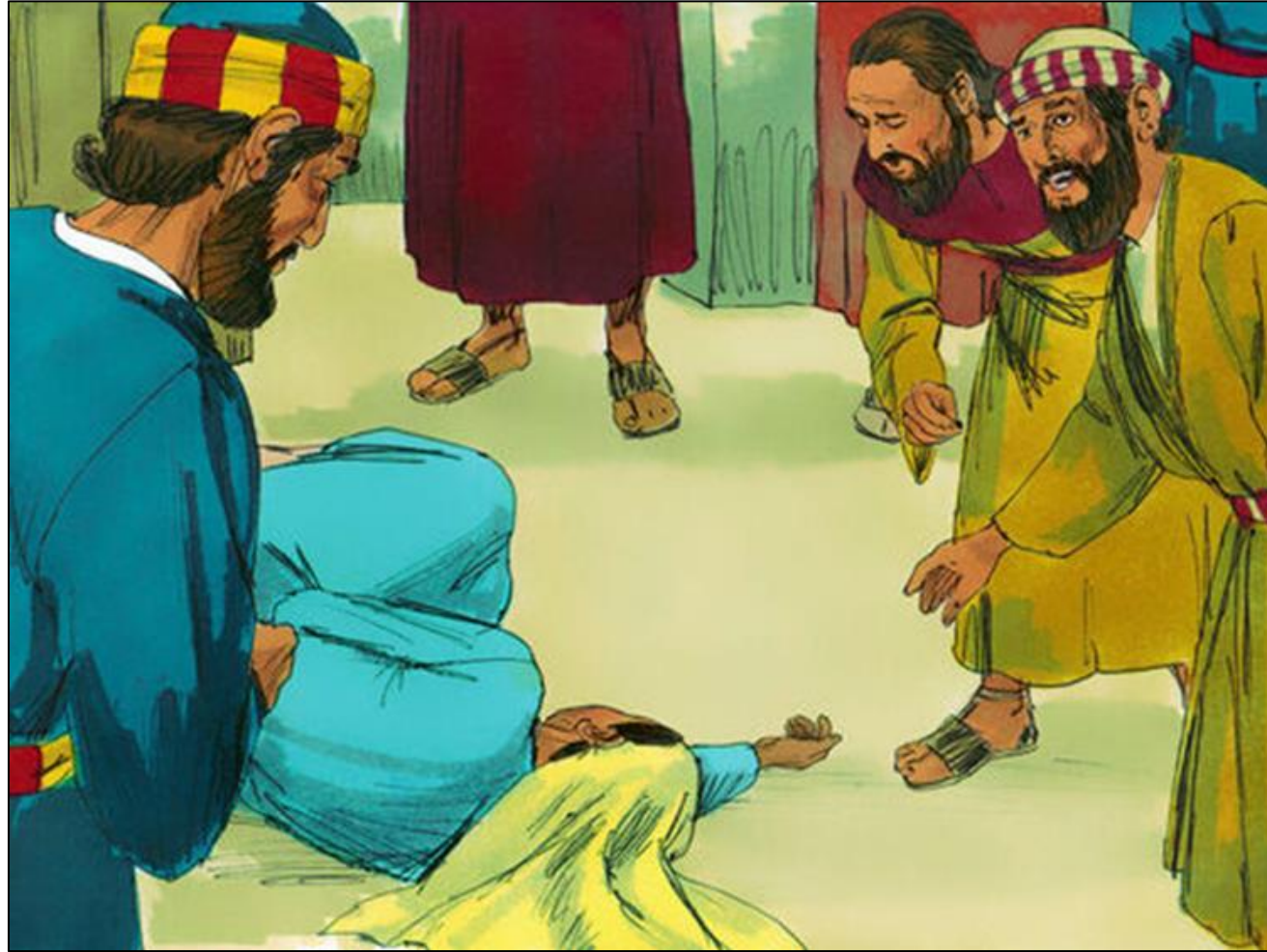
Incidental note: This is evidence of the personality of the Holy Spirit.

This is a prophecy – not a threat!

Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also.

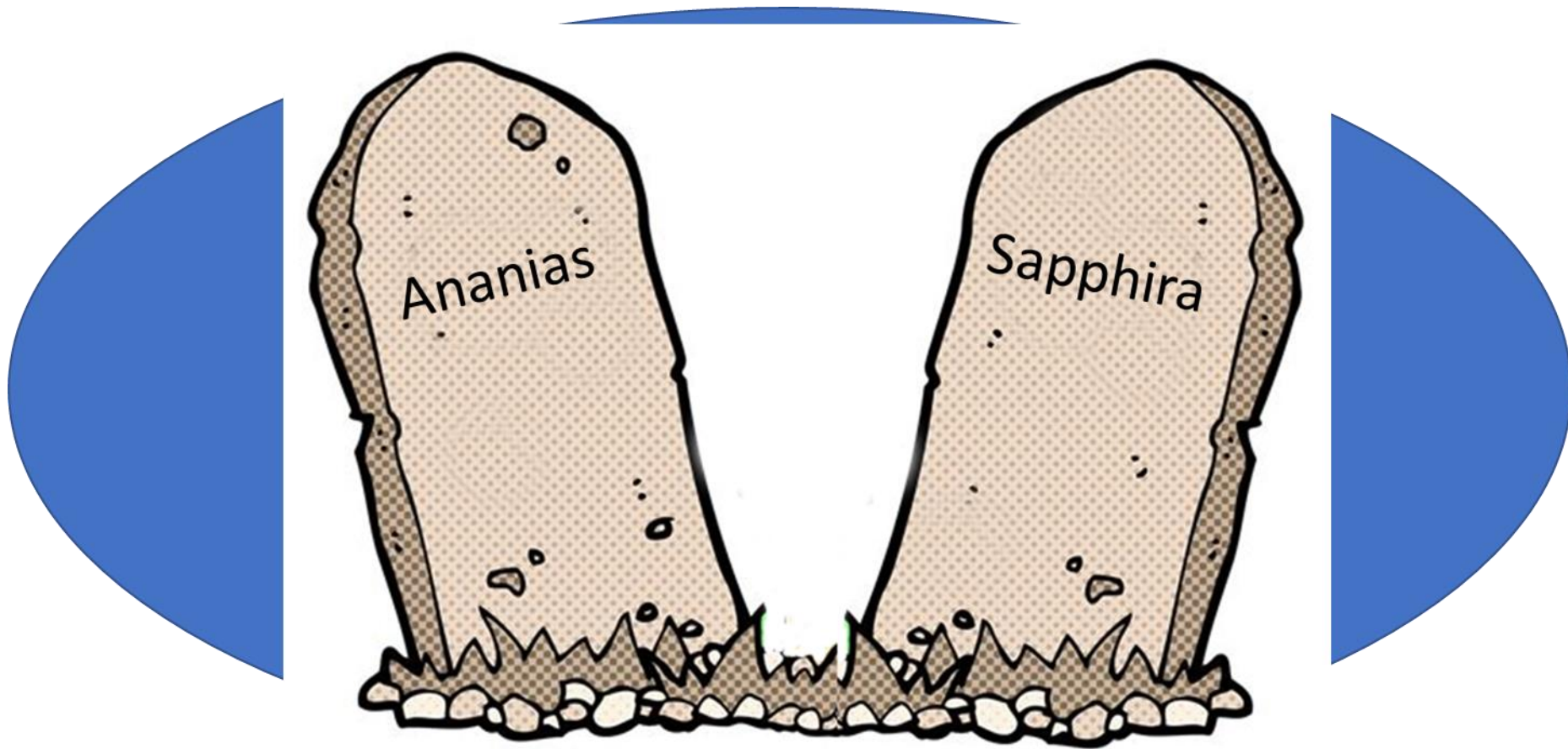


At that moment she fell down at his feet and died.



What happened?

Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

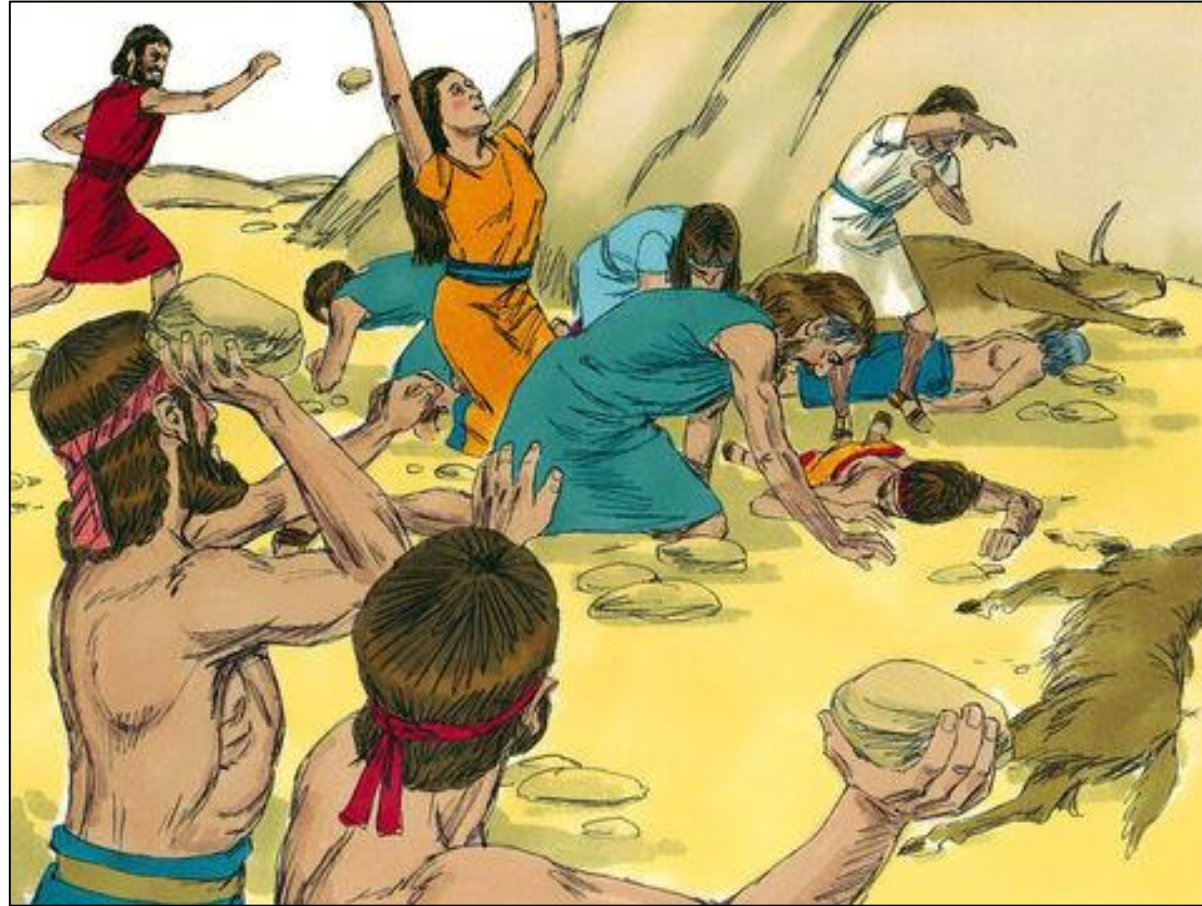


Great fear seized the whole church
and all who heard about these events.



If God dealt like this with every sin, what would you do?

Compare this with the 1st public sin of Achan and his family in Joshua's day



But remember that one day every sin that has not been covered by the blood of Jesus will meet the same severe but just punishment.

The blessing continues in the purified church

The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people.



God is holy and is to be treated with respect
but he is also willing to bless

And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon`s Colonnade.

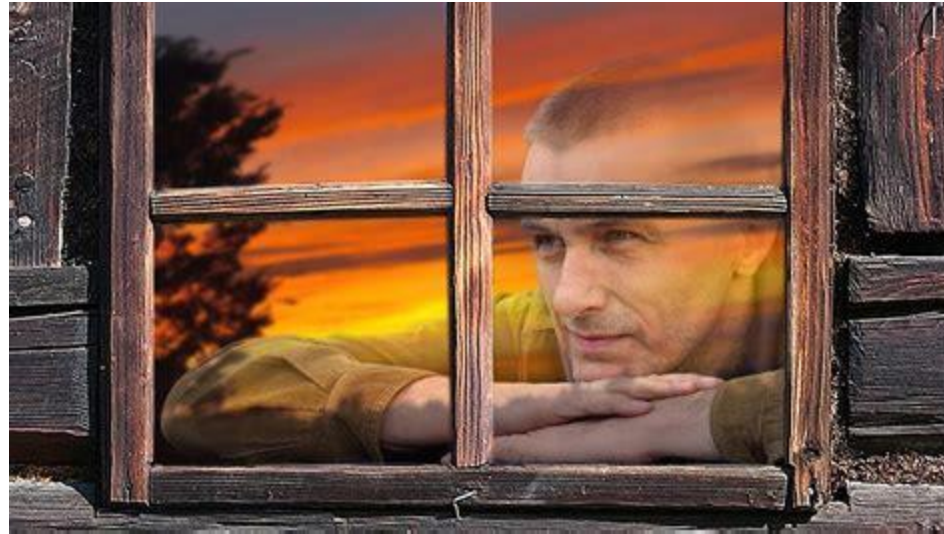


As well as meeting together in their homes (Acts 2:46)
this was a big place to meet together

Outside looking in

No one else dared join them,
even though they were highly regarded by the people.

They now realised it wasn't just a friendly social group



Public opinion is favourable at this time in the church's life
but they were afraid to join them. Why?

Nevertheless

Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.



Membership of the real church is about salvation
by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ

As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by.

Signs to follow ... God worked at first just through the apostles - establishing their credentials

These are non-church members that want and receive the blessings!



Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.



We see the Holy Spirit glorifying the name and power of Jesus over the physical and spiritual world by working through his people.