

God Vindicates the Purity of His Newborn Church

Acts 5:11-16

Introduction

The Church demonstrates tremendous power...

- 1) when it upholds the *Truth*
- 2) when it gathers to *worship* and *pray*
- 3) when it maintains a faithful *Witness*
- 4) when it pursues *Purity*

Why? Because these objectives fulfill God's will for the Church.

Why the swift and severe treatment of Ananias and Sapphira?

Because of the importance of preserving the fledgling Church from corruption at its very beginning.

Satan wants to disgrace and ultimately scatter the newborn Church by scandal.

"Vindicate" = 'To clear from criticism, suspicion, or doubt by means of demonstration.'

God the Holy Spirit is *Purifying* His Church

God loves His people and wants to dwell with them. In order for that to happen, they must be purified.

Psalm 24:3-6

This is not talking about sinless perfection. Rather, it speaks to the *integrity of desire* in those who truly seek to know God, to love Him, and to walk with Him.

Ephesians 5:25-27

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8

Matthew 6:22-23

"Strive...for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord." Hebrews 12:14

Reconciliation and communion with God is impossible through law-keeping. But, made possible only by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

"Clean hands" and a "pure heart" speaks to both internal desire and external behavior.

Matthew 6:24

Jesus *cleanses* the temple (Matt. 21; Mk. 11; Jn. 2). This too was necessary and symbolic.

Jesus healed the lepers,

They were "cleansed"

Why? Because leprosy was highly contagious and could infect everyone in the temple.

“Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.” James 4:8

In order to be used by the Lord, a person must be pure.

2 Timothy 2:19-21

Titus 1:16

The same is true for the church. If it is going to have a powerful witness, the church must deal with sin.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

So, whose agenda are we taking up? God’s or Satan’s?

Titus 2:11-14

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

“Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.” 2 Corinthians 7:1

“I do not understand how a man can be a true believer unto whom sin is not the greatest burden, sorrow, and trouble.” John Owen