

July 5, 2026 Leader's Guide

Acts 4:31-5:14 "Revival meets Resistance"

This week we looked at one of the most difficult passages in Acts. While our attention is naturally drawn to the judgment of Ananias and Sapphira, Luke's focus is elsewhere: on the work of the Holy Spirit. As the Spirit creates a generous, truthful, Christ-centred community, Satan and the flesh seek to counterfeit that work through hypocrisy and deceit. Yet God, in his mercy, exposes what would grieve the Spirit and damage the Church's witness. Together we'll consider what this passage teaches us about living honestly before God, caring for one another, and making space for the Spirit to continue his transforming work among us.

Read Acts 4:31–5:14

1. Luke deliberately places the story of Barnabas (4:36–37) immediately before Ananias and Sapphira (5:1–11). What contrasts do you notice between these two accounts? Why do you think Luke wants us to hold these stories together?

Help the group notice Luke's "THUS...BUT..." structure. The point is not simply generosity versus greed, but the work of the Holy Spirit contrasted with the work of the flesh and the devil within the same community. The Spirit produces joyful, free generosity; hypocrisy seeks the appearance of spirituality while pursuing self-glory.

2. Peter says Ananias has "lied to the Holy Spirit" and asks, "Why has Satan filled your heart?" What does this teach us about the reality of spiritual conflict within the life of the Church?

Reflect together on the sobering reality that wherever the Spirit is powerfully at work, the flesh and the enemy also seek to distort God's work. Encourage honesty that all of us wrestle with mixed motives and ongoing spiritual battle.

3. Peter makes it clear that Ananias and Sapphira were under no obligation to give all the money. If money wasn't the central issue, what was? Why is hypocrisy so destructive to a Christian community?

Draw out that they desired the reputation of complete surrender without actually offering it. The issue is stealing glory that belongs to God. Hypocrisy undermines trust and can ultimately discredit the witness of God's people before the watching world.

4. Throughout Scripture, God often exposes what is hidden. Why do we usually resist exposure, and how might exposing darkness actually be an act of God's grace?

The sermon suggests that the Spirit's work is not only to comfort but also to reveal. Exposure can feel painful, but concealed sin grows like a cancer. Invite the group to consider that conviction, accountability, and even difficult revelations may be evidence of God's mercy rather than his absence.

5. **Read Ephesians 4:25–30** alongside this passage. What connections do you see between truthfulness, forgiveness, dealing with anger, resisting the devil, and "not grieving the Holy Spirit"?

Help the group see that Paul is describing a shared life. Sin is never merely private; neither is holiness. We are "members of one another." Our spiritual health either encourages or hinders the Spirit's work throughout the whole body.

6. The sermon ended by asking what it might look like if we shared stories of what the Holy Spirit is doing among us. Where have you seen the Spirit at work recently—in your own life or in someone else's—and how might telling those stories strengthen the Church?

End on hope rather than heaviness. This difficult passage ultimately points us toward the beauty of the Spirit's transforming work. Encourage practical, God-glorifying stories rather than self-congratulation. The goal is to celebrate God's work so that faith, expectancy, and gratitude grow within the community.

Close in Prayer

Take a few moments to pray together. Thank God for the gift of his Holy Spirit, who not only comforts and empowers us but lovingly exposes what would keep us from life. Invite the Spirit to reveal any areas where falsehood, resentment, pride, fear, or hidden sin have taken root, asking for grace to walk in repentance and freedom. Finally, pray that Little Trinity would be a community marked by truth, generosity, holiness, and joyful witness—a people through whom others catch a glimpse of Jesus and his Kingdom.