

Sunday, October 19, 2025
Sierra Vista Community Church, Las Cruces, NM
Acts Sermon Series: Pray Send Go
Think Before You Lie, Acts 5:1-11

Introduction—

- The check is in the mail.
- I'll start my diet tomorrow.
- We service what we sell.
- Give me your number and the doctor will call you right back.
- Money cheerfully refunded.
- One size fits all.
- This offer limited to the first 100 people who call in.
- Your luggage isn't lost, it's only misplaced.
- Leave your resume and we'll keep it on file.
- This hurts me more than it hurts you.
- I just need five minutes of your time.
- Your table will be ready in a few minutes.
- Open wide, it won't hurt a bit.

These are statements we are used to hearing and it doesn't even phase us since we aren't expecting these things to truly happen.

Sometimes we do lie about things that matter. According to one estimate, 40% of people lie on their resumes. While that's something for employers to be wary of, it's worse if you are part of the 30% of internet users looking for love on a dating site. According to a study by Scientific American, a whopping 90% of people looking for a date online lie in their profile. The biggest fib told by women is an obvious one; on average ladies claim to weigh eight and a half pounds less than they actually do.

Men, on the other hand, try to use their profile to convince potential partners that they are taller, richer, and/or better educated than they actually are.

But before you vow never to trust anyone again, here's some food for thought: A study by the University of Toronto found that it is actually the most trusting people who are best able to tell when they are being lied to.

Today, I am here to say when it comes to our relationship with God, you cannot lie to him if you want genuine love from Him.

Stand & Read—Acts 5:1-11

Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property.
 2 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.
 3 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?
 4 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 just to human beings but to God."
 5 When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. 6 Then some young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him.
 7 About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?"
 "Yes," she said, "that is the price."
 9 Peter said to her, "How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also."
 10 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. 11 Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

1. What is Done in the Dark Will Finds its Way to the Light—verse 1-3

- A. Operating in darkness doesn't shield you from the Light
- B. **Luke 12:2-3—2 There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. 3 What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs.**
- C. No now can lie to God. No one can hide from God. No one can mock God. No one has any power when it comes to God.
- D. Ultimately God is the One who everyone will answer to.
- E. I won't be there when you give your account of your life on judgement day. You won't be able to blame it on me. Thank God!
- F. It is better to live in the light as children of the light
- G. **1 John 1:5-7—5 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.**
- H. **Verse 1—Ananias.** Who is Ananias? Ananias was married to Sapphira. They were wealthy members of the early church.
- I. The church was growing rapidly and was experiencing miracles and favor from God.
- J. The early church wanted to make sure that needs were being met among the church. So, members decided that they would sell off their excess properties or land.
- K. With the sale of the properties, they would give the proceeds to the church so there wouldn't be any needs among the people.
- L. This is where the story takes off. Ananias and Sapphira sold a piece of property.

- M. **Verse 2**—With the wife full knowledge, Ananias keeps some of the proceeds for himself.
- N. Ok, it is one thing to ignorant of what is going on, but to know and let it happen is horrible.
- O. Remember when God created woman to be man's helper. God knew we might try some bonehead moves like this.
- P. That is why we need our wives in our lives. To help us not be so stupid!
- Q. Sapphira should have told Ananias to be truthful about the money, but instead she was thinking of her shopping spree that was sure to follow.
- R. The depiction was this: Ananias and Sapphira wanted to be viewed as generous givers in the eyes of the apostles, while still keeping some of the money that they had already agreed upon prior to the sale of this land.
- S. If you aren't obedient to God, you will lie not only to others, but in reality, to God Himself.
- T. It was never about the money; it was about the commitment that was made to God and the local church.
- U. When you decide to keep back for yourself what is rightly God's to allow the local church to be all that God has intended it to be, you are ultimately showing your lack of obedience to God.
- V. **Verse 3**—Even with all the lying going around, they still had an opportunity to get right with God. The Holy Spirit is allowing them an opportunity to settle their allegiance.
- W. Look at what Peter says— 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?"
- X. I think Ananias was viewed as a committed, faithful member of the First Messianic Baptist Pentecostal Church of Jerusalem.
- Y. Peter is this Spirit filled leader, and he ain't here to play games. He is straight forward and to the point.
- Z. I think he looked at Ananias with disappointment. How could you allow Satan to fill you to the point of lying to God? That is Ananias way out. Right then and there Ananias could have repented and asked for forgiveness and said let me go get the rest of the money and make this right!
- AA. Peter makes sure Ananias is clear that it isn't Peter he's lying to, but to the Holy Spirit.

Illustration—Darkness is absent of light. In reality there is no darkness. It just means the light isn't currently present. That is precisely why whatever you do in the dark, will eventually find its way out and into the light!

Application—Are you currently in a dark place? I want to encourage you this morning to get right and get back in the light so you can be at peace with God. You can do that today.

2. Lying is the Devil's Language—Verses 4-6

4 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 just to human beings but to God."

5 When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. 6 Then some young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him.

- A. When you decide to lie, you are choosing to be bilingual. You speak in another language. The language goes back to the Garden of Eden.
- B. **Genesis 3:1-4**—Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" 2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" 4 "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. 5 "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
- C. Satan is a stinking liar! He has used this tactic for so long and it is amazing that it still works!
- D. When you lie, you are being obedient to the one who is against God.
- E. **John 8:42-47**—42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me. 43 Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. 44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. 45 Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! 46 Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me? 47 Whoever belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God."
- F. **Verse 4**—Peter tells Ananias that he was able to do whatever he wanted with the money. He committed to give it the church at first, but he wanted some of the earnings.
- G. I don't think there is anything wrong with that. That is not what this lesson is about.
- H. The truth is that he lied. All he had to say was I wanted to keep some of the money. God would have understood.
- I. We serve a merciful God and a God who knows us intimately.
- J. The point is this: Lying is in total opposition to the truth. God is truth. Period.
- K. Peter reminds Ananias about lying to God.
- L. **Verse 5**—When Ananias heard this truth, he fell down and died. This isn't about lying to God and down you go.
- M. It is about sending a message to the church about being faithful to your commitments and how important it is to be truthful to God and His church.

- N. There is significant reason to have a healthy fear of God. God isn't lazy or sitting around unaware of all that is happening. He doesn't usually punish this way either. He loves us and has made a pathway of Truth in Jesus.
- O. **Verse 5**—It says great fear seized everyone who heard about Ananias.
- P. Why do you think the church was gripped with fear? I believe even within the church, we take advantage of our heavenly father.
- Q. We don't really believe He is watching everything or listening to everything, do we?
- R. If we really believed God was watching and listening to us, none of us would do some of the things we do, fearing that our God would see and hear.
- S. If Ananias was struck dead over some money he lied about, what ever will He do with me?
- T. I lie. I think badly of others. I haven't given God all of myself. I have been holding back on him.
- U. The church was put on notice: God's for real when it comes to building His church.

Illustration—Achan from the book of Joshua. He wasn't supposed to keep any of the plunder (metals) from the war, but He did, so everyone suffered. He eventually was stoned to death. God isn't interested in your treasures, what He is interested in is your obedience.

Application—What language do you speak to God? Truth or lies? Your actions can answer that question for you. Today, you can choose truth by choosing Jesus to be your Lord.

3. The Truth Shall Set You Free—verses 7-11

About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?"

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

9 Peter said to her, "How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also."

10 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. 11 Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

- A. The God of second chances allows face to be saved. An opportunity presents itself to tell the truth.
- B. **Verse 8**—Peter gives Sapphira an opening to say the truth. He asks her—Is this the price you and your husband received for the sale of your land.
- C. Seems simple enough, right? Even with the opportunity for truthfulness, she still lies. She says, yep, that was the price.
- D. **Verse 9**—I wish we could see Peter's face. Peter knows first-hand what it means to receive a second chance. After all, he has been the recipient of not just a second chance but many chances.
- E. Here, he repeats to Sapphira what he told Ananias. How could you? You aren't lying to me, but to the Holy Spirit of God.
- F. **Verse 10**—Sapphira dies as well for lying to God.
- G. **Verse 11**—Great fear came to the church. This the second time Luke uses this statement.

- H. If you weren't sure of God's greatness and need for the church all things to stand for the truth. The church is founded on truth.
- I. Reverent fear is healthy fear. It keeps us on the straight and narrow road.
- J. **John 8:31-32—31** To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. **32** Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Illustration— By age four, 90% of children have grasped the concept of lying, and it just gets worse from there. Just how bad is it?

We lie to everyone. Our parents get the worst of it, with 86% of us lying to them regularly, followed by friends (75%), siblings (73%), and spouses (69%). But in general, we lie about things that aren't important, little things that we think will make us look better or more likable. Since we want to fit in, we tell a little white lie.

Application—Are you free today? Do you have the spirit of Truth living on the inside of you? Do you have a healthy fear of God? Come to Jesus today. He will set you free!