

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: Living Supernaturally or Superficially

SERMON REFERENCE: Acts 5:1-14

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2282

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) There are two great forces, orchestrated by Satan himself, working against the lives of believers and the church.
 - i) Persecution
 - ii) Hypocrisy
- b) The devil tried to intimidate the early church, but that did not work.
- c) Satan then tried to persecute the early church, but that just drove the Christians to their knees.
- d) The devil then decided to attack the church from the inside with hypocrisy and superficiality.
 - i) The church of the Lord Jesus Christ has been hurt far more by hypocrisy, lukewarmness and superficiality than by persecution.
 - (1) Revelation 3:15-16
 - (2) The Lord would rather you be out and out against Him than pretending to be for Him and, yet, truly denying Him.
- e) Satan loves to put doubts in the minds of people concerning the Word of God.
 - i) Genesis 3:1
 - ii) Anyone who puts a question mark after the Word of God is doing the work of Satan.
- f) The book of Acts is the story of the early church, and the early church believed in the Word of God.
- g) The message today will give us two things to beware of and two things to be sure of.

2) BEWARE OF THE PRETENDED DEVOTION OF SUPERFICIAL RELIGION
(Acts 5:1-11)

- a) A man named Barnabas had sold a piece of property and gave all the money to the disciples because there was a financial need in the church.
 - i) Acts 4:36-37
 - ii) It was a gift motivated by love.
 - iii) People saw his good works, and they glorified God in Heaven.
- b) Ananias and Sapphira saw what Barnabas had done, and they decided to sell property.
 - i) But rather than giving all the money to the church, they decided to keep part of the money for themselves and let others think that they had given all; thus, getting credit for giving everything.
 - ii) This was a premeditated lie and pretended devotion.
- c) Pride was the cause of this deception.
 - i) Pride is Satan's chief tool.
 - ii) Acts 5:3
 - iii) The root of their sin was pride, and the fruit of their sin was hypocrisy.
- d) 1 Peter 5:5
 - i) Grace is the desire and the ability to do the will of God.

- ii) When someone is filled with pride, he does not receive the grace of God because God gives grace to the humble.
 - (1) God withdraws His grace and sets up a barricade against that man; He resists the proud.
 - e) 1 Peter 5:8
 - i) This man, devoid of the grace of God, now has Satan circling to devour him.
 - f) Nothing puts a person more out of the reach of Satan than genuine humility.
 - g) Ananias and Sapphira's sin was not that they failed to give everything, but that they pretended a devotion that they did not have.
 - i) Acts 5:4
 - ii) God did not command that they give it all.
 - (1) What we do not freely give, God neither needs nor wants.
 - h) Are you pretending a devotion to Jesus Christ that you do not have?
- 3) BEWARE OF THE PREMEDITATED DECEPTION OF SUPERFICIAL RELIGION (Acts 5:3-4)
- a) Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Ghost; a premeditated lie.
 - b) Every lie originates with Satan.
 - i) John 8:44
 - ii) Whenever we tell a lie, we are acting like the devil.
 - c) The Holy Spirit revealed the seriousness of this premeditated deception.
 - i) Acts 5:3
 - ii) It is most serious to lie to God.
 - (1) Not only is it most serious, but it is also foolish to lie to God.
 - (a) The Holy Spirit was there from the beginning and saw it all.
 - iii) This premeditation, this conspiracy, was a direct challenge to the Holy Ghost.
 - (1) Acts 5:4
- 4) BE SURE OF THE PENETRATING DETECTION OF SUPERFICIAL RELIGION (Hebrews 4:12)
- a) God the Holy Spirit told Peter that Ananias and Sapphira were lying.
 - i) Peter was an apostle; and God spoke to Peter, and Peter declared the Word of God.
 - ii) The Word of God was in the mouths of the apostles.
 - b) There is nothing hidden that will not be revealed.
 - i) The Bible teaches that one day all secrets will be made known.
 - ii) It is only a matter of time until hypocritical and pretended devotion will be made manifest.
 - iii) 1 Corinthians 4:5
 - iv) Psalm 139:23-24

5) BE SURE OF THE PURIFYING DISCIPLINE OF SUPERFICIAL RELIGION

(Acts 5:5-11)

- a) This discipline was a severe judgment.
 - i) Both Ananias and Sapphira died.
 - (1) It is likely that Ananias and Sapphira were saved.
 - ii) God judges His own children.
 - iii) There are three kinds of judgment:
 - (1) Our judgment as a sinner.
 - (a) This judgment takes place at Calvary.
 - (b) Romans 8:1
 - (2) Our judgment as a servant.
 - (a) At the judgment seat of Christ, we will receive rewards for the things we've done.
 - (3) Our judgment as a son.
 - (a) This judgment takes place daily.
 - (b) Hebrews 12:5-7
 - iv) There will be severe judgment if we challenge God; if it is a premeditated conspiracy and confrontation between that which Satan has placed in the heart and that which the Holy Spirit has warned against.
 - v) Paul warned the church at Corinth about the way they were taking the Lord's Supper.
 - (1) 1 Corinthians 11:29-30
 - vi) 1 John 5:16
 - (1) There comes a time when a child of God can so challenge God that they go to Heaven sooner than they should.
 - (a) Moses died prematurely.
 - (i) Deuteronomy 34:7
- b) It was a saving judgment.
 - i) It saved Ananias and Sapphira from further sin.
 - (1) God is loving and kind, and He did this in mercy.
 - (2) 1 Corinthians 5:5
 - (a) God is more interested in the spirit of man than his body.
 - ii) It saved the early church from the pollution of hypocrisy.
 - (1) Acts 5:11
 - iii) It brought salvation to the lost.
 - (1) The worst thing that could happen to a church would be for the church to be so filled with hypocrisy and superficiality that unsaved people can see no difference between it and the world.
 - (2) Acts 5:14
 - (a) Where Satan ruled, God overruled.
 - iv) It saved succeeding generations from hypocrisy.
 - (1) God will do certain things in the physical world as an example of how He feels about it in the spiritual.
 - (a) Jude 1:7

(b) 1 Corinthians 10:10-11

6) CONCLUSION

- a) Sin among the saints is more serious than sin among the lost.
- b) Sin against the Holy Spirit is very serious.
- c) Be on guard against hypocrisy in your life.
 - i) Ask God to search your heart.
 - ii) Do not pretend a devotion greater than you have.
- d) Do not let a hypocrite keep you away from Jesus Christ.
 - i) People often say that they do not want to be a member of a church because it's so full of hypocrites.
 - (1) It is better to be in a church with a few of them than be in hell with all of them forever.
- e) A church filled with the Holy Spirit cannot be stopped by superficiality.
 - i) The church in Acts 5 continued to grow.
- f) Love Jesus with all of your heart.
 - i) Do not be superficial.
 - ii) Do not pretend a devotion.
 - iii) Be real, and God will guide you.
- g) God desires you to be saved today.
- h) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- i) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16