

I. Introduction

A. Read passage

B. Big picture: We see the visible and powerful work of the Spirit along with the deceptive and divisive work of human beings

1. Anytime the Spirit moves and transforms God's people, Satan will undermine what that community represents.
2. Our outward behavior is always important, but what gives that behavior value and power is the state of your heart.

II. Spirit filled community

A. Unity in the body (4:32a)

1. Full number were of one heart and mind

- a. Heart: not seat of emotion as songs suggest but seat of the will; a person's control center governing their thoughts and deeds
- b. Soul: the self; the whole person

*The believers were submitting their will to God and one another.

2. Two things:

- a. The Spirit's work precedes community and unity, without it, we are lost
- b. Spirit-filled results in unity.

*If there's not unity within the people of God, then that people are not filled with the Spirit. They are filled with something else and we will see this later in the story.

B. Relationship to possessions (4:32b-37)

1. "No one said... but everything in common..."

*There's a genuine care and compassion for one another in this community. They see each other as family, not *like* family. There's no transaction or keeping score between people. The defining of a family in the church was not the nuclear family we so passionately defend and lament, it was those who surrendered to Jesus Christ. Let that sit for a moment...

2. They voluntarily gave up their stuff for the sake of others.

- a. This is not an economic system/ideology, it is a condition of the heart.
- b. Giving as a pathway toward intimacy with Jesus (when you give)

*Those who comprised the early church had possessions, but they were not possessed by them.

c. No one was in need

- 1) Deuteronomy 15:4 - no poor because God's provision of His people

"But there will be no poor among you; for the Lord will bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess—"

- 2) Love was being manifest in concrete ways

- 3. Joseph
 - a. Diaspora Jew, Levite, but radically committed to Jesus and the community
 - b. “Belonged to him,” but gave it all freely with no expectation
- C. Sin and life and death (5:1-10)
 - 1. “All” one heart and soul and everything in common
 - a. What’s going on? Power and pride
 - b. Not everyone. Why? Because submission to the Spirit and the filling of the Spirit is a moment-by-moment surrender
 - c. Ananias & Sapphira were possessed by their possessions (and power and pride)
 - 1) Under no obligation to give all or any
 - 2) Mockery of the work of the Spirit to glorify themselves
 - 2. Acts 5 & Joshua 7
 - a. Life and death and God’s community
 - 1) Achan vs. Ananias & Sapphira (kept back; Holy Spirit vs Satan)
 - 2) God takes what only God gives - life
 - Has God, under the new covenant, taken back the “right to life?”
 - We are, after all, the people of the Resurrection called to proclaim life in King Jesus to all the nations to the ends of the earth.

*Is there a different expectation post-resurrection regarding the participation when it comes to life and death that we have missed?

- D. What shall we fear? (5:5,11)
 - 1. Last week...
 - a. Whether it is right to obey God or you under threat of punishment... you must judge.
 - b. We will obey no matter the cost.
 - 2. Twice, fear fell on all the people.
 - a. “Whole church” - first use of the word church
 - 1) ekklesia - church, congregation, assembly, meeting
 - 2) never a building or organization
 - 3) Church is a people term; a term describing when God’s people are together, not location specific (we just need a location because we are spatial people)
 - b. The church is called to holiness and loyalty to God even at the expense of our own advancement, freedom, or security.
 - 3. We must stop speaking and living in fear about the world we are exiles in and start obeying the commission of King.
 - We must believe Jesus is deadly serious.
 - a. Do you really want Jesus to return? (Out of exhaustion and frustration or out of obedience to the mission)
 - b. Are you ready? Jackie Hill Perry, the Gospel is offensive, we

need to not add to that. Many of us don't even give the Gospel a chance because we're busy offending others before they can even be offended by it.

c. What will He find you doing?