

WOMEN OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

SAPPHIRA

Pray and ask God to help you to know Him better as you study His Word.

Read the Bible passage (preferably without using commentaries).

Begin to answer the questions using your own words.

Questions are based on the New International Version (NIV) 2011 edition.

LESSON 18

1. What truth, verse or insight from last week's study of **Mary Magdalene** was helpful to you?

SECTION I: Read Acts 4:32-37

2. For some background and context, how were the believers living at that time, according to **V32-33**?
3. Which group of people was missing from among them in **V34**? What was the explanation given for this in **V34-35**?
4. From **V36-37**, describe the specific positive example of sharing that is given.
5. Read **Acts 2:44-47**. What activities and attitudes marked these believers? Why do you think they were able to maintain this culture of unity?
6. a) From **1 John 3:16**, how do we know what love is?

b) Write a spiritual truth from **1 John 3:17-18**.
7. In what current situation might God be prompting you to love another person "with actions and in truth?" How will you respond?

SECTION II: Read Acts 5:1-11

8. Which couple was part of the community of believers in **4:32-37**, and what did they do in **V5:1**?

9. According to **V2**, how did Ananias handle the money he was paid? What was Sapphira's role?
10. What might have motivated them to make this generous donation?
11. a) What were Peter's observations of the situation according to **V3-4**?
- b) How do you think Peter knew these things?
- c) What sobering truth(s) do you learn about lying?
12. a) Comment on how Ananias and Sapphira had a wrong attitude or understanding of God.
- b) How could they have rationalized their decision?
13. What was the consequence for Ananias, and what effect did it have on the believers (**V5-6**)?
14. In your own words, recount the exchange between Sapphira and Peter in **V7-9**.
15. Think Question: contrast what it may mean to "lie to the Holy Spirit" (Ananias) versus to "test the Holy Spirit" (Sapphira).
16. If Sapphira had come to you for advice after learning about her husband's plan, what Godly counsel would you have given her? On which Scriptures could you have relied?

17. a) From **V10**, what was the fate of Sapphira?

b) What is your explanation for the great fear that seized all who heard what happened to Ananias and Sapphira?

c) What is your reaction to their deaths?

18. In what circumstances do you feel pressure to present an outward appearance based on a perceived standard?

19. Contrast **Mark 12:41-44** with Ananias and Sapphira. How does Jesus' affirmation of the widow help you when you're tempted to hold back from giving your all?

20. What stood out to you most in this story mixed with "good, bad, and ugly," and how will it affect your actions?

21. Ask God to search your heart in the areas of lying, hypocrisy, or holding back, and then write a prayer addressing that.

DIGGING DEEPER

1. As we saw with Ananias and Sapphira, there is a cost to lying. Read the following verses and recount the cost.

Proverbs 6:16-19 _____

Proverbs 12:19 _____

Proverbs 19:5 and 9 _____

2. There are great benefits to speaking the truth. Read the following verses to find some of those benefits:

Psalms 145:18-19 _____

John 3:21 _____

Ephesians 4:15 _____

3. Suggested Memory Verse: **John 3:21**

