

Acts 4:32-5:11 Generosity vs Hypocrisy

American Idol – Are you a Fan? – Boycotted the first season – because I didn't like the name –

America's talent

A) But since then I have gotten into it – Favorite this year **Big Mike**

B) Family sit together – no sex – no violence – Great talent – Simon

C) If you watch the show – DVR on Wednesdays – You have heard the judges say to a Contestant – you have the it Factor

The early Church had the It factor as well!

A) Acts 2:42 Devoted to Apostles teaching – Word – Prayer – fellowship and communion.

B) God was working – Healed – saved – transformation was happening – the Lord added to the Church daily!

1) Meeting house to house

C) **Contagious thing going on – Something about those pp – real authentic**

D) **Jesus was alive – Risen – He was alive in them – they were excited about it!**

In our text today we see 3 more attributes of the impact that Jesus was having on the early Church. V.32 “Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul;**”**

#1 Unity of heart and of Soul!

A) The Scriptures use the word *heart* to indicate the center of our being!

What we might call the Core{ Everything else connected to.

B)The deepest part of a human being – includes our emotions – where we feel things – what we are passionate about.

1)Involves the emotions – but is not limited to the emotions

C)So the Church in Acts was united in the deepest part of its being.

Ever meet someone who is just really in love with Jesus – like they exude Jesus not a put on. Passionate

A)And because you love Jesus and our passionate about Jesus – there is this instant connection. Richard Langworthy

B)So they were united in Heart – but also in soul – is that the same or is that different.

C)The soul is the **conscious part of life, it is where we consciously live.**

D)It consists of the mind and the will, whatever is going on in your thoughts right now.

1)You look like you are listening to me, but it may not be true.

E)You have that smile on your face – because in reality you are at the beach! – Eating a double double – thinking about later

Whatever is going on in your thoughts right now is an activity of your soul.

A)Your mind is engaged, and your will is making choices; that is the soul.

B) Jesus was their central passion – and because He was their central passion – he was the center of their thought life.

1)He was the driving force in their thought life – their conversation

C) They were Jesus People! Unified around Him

No one has explained this better than A. W. Tozer:

“Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other? They are of **one accord** by being tuned, not **to each other**, but to another standard to which each one must individually bow. So one hundred worshippers met together, each one looking away to Christ, are in heart nearer to each other than they could possibly be were they to become “•unity•” conscious and turn their eyes away from God to strive for closer fellowship.”

D) They turned to Christ- Focus was Jesus – result – Unity of Heart and soul.

#2 Great Power and Great Grace was upon them.V.33

And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.

A) Great Power literally, “•mega-power.~” The root for the Greek word translated “•power•” is the origin of our English word *dynamite*.- Dunamis

B)V.33 With explosive power they “•continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus•.”

C) Boldness as well as an anointing with which they were sharing Christ
1) Plus moving in the miraculous

D) Great power – but also Great Grace!

Boldness by itself can be overbearing – so it says that great grace was upon them.

A) Literally mega grace!

B) Christ came to an empty people and poured his grace upon them. We are saved by grace, healed by grace, nurtured by grace.

C) What is Grace?

It is a word that describes the enrichment of life that results from the love and power of God. Divine Favor

G -- God's

R -- Riches

A -- At

C -- Christ's

E -- Expense

Grace is what God gives us to get us through!

A) Ever had a situation in life – you just needed to get through? – I have had times like that!

B) Literally one day at a time – one hour – one moment – PTL for His Grace

C) Doctors give prescriptions to make you well.

1) Employers give pay checks so we can get current.

2) Teachers give lessons so we can get smart

3) PT gives exercises so we can get fit.

C) God gives Grace so we can get through!

The New Testament has a lot to say about Grace!

A) Ephesians 2:8 Saved by Grace

Titus 2:11 Saving Grace has appeared to everyone.

2 Corinthians 12:9 His Grace is enough for us.

2 Corinthians 6:1 We need to do something with this grace – not receive it in Vain.

Hebrews 12:15 Don't fall short of the Grace.

B)1 Peter 3:7 Husband and wife are heirs together of the Grace life.

2 Peter 3:18 Grow in Grace.

Titus 2:1 Be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus.

C)Romans 16:24 – One of many places where we are told - The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all amen!

Great Grace was upon!

A)God was meeting them in their need – supplying them with what the need was at hand.

B)Great grace was upon them – Grace was coming out of them

C)Manifested itself – in Great Care for each other.

#3 There was an absence of self.

They were so into Jesus that Self didn't matter!

V.32b neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.

"The company of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common."

They were not clinging to anything – The word mine was not in their Vocabulary.

A)So Like Jesus - Philippians 2 Jesus didn't cling to his right to be equal to the father.

B) He made himself of no reputation in becoming a man – made himself the servant of the father.

C) Are you clinging to anything?

1) To a **material standard** of living that you insist on having, no matter what someone else is needing?

1 Timothy 6:10

“For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.” NLT

Signs that we love money:

When money thoughts consume my day!

When the blessings of others makes me jealous! – resent their car /house / clothes

When success is determined by what I have vs who I am in Jesus.

When my family is neglected in my pursuit of money. Big retirement fund – set – fool

When I close my eyes to the genuine needs of others.

When I am living in paralyzing fear of losing my money.

When I give to God my left over’s rather than my first fruits

Chasing after what I lost!

A) Clenching it so tight!

B) Are you clinging to status, to personal ambition, or to something else?

C) Here is the posture of the man who clings: He is hanging on with clenched fists. Mine – not letting go!

E) Person *not clinging* – **open hand – here God do what you want!**

They weren't clinging to anything – sharing everything.

34 Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, 35 and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.

A) Those who were blessed realized they were **blessed to be a blessing to others!**

B) I know pp who are rich – been blessed who share their wealth – tithe – they help out those less fortunate

1) They are so satisfied

C) Know others rich who hoard – keep all for themselves they **are miserable.**

Now there were many who were selling their land to bless the body!

A) We are told of one by name! Barnabas – Son of Encouragement.

36 And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, 37 having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Love his name! Son or daughter of encouragement

A) Took an outcast Paul – put him to use!

B) Took a mess up – John Mark – 2nd chance

C) Took his land – sold it – what is mine is yours

D) None of this was forced – Socialism – all equal – Yours is mine – Force us to be equal

1) Christianity { willing – what is mine is yours

Great Power – Great Grace – Unity – sharing Caring

So the early Church sharing – loving – Great Power and Great Grace was upon them.

A) Satan wasn't successful threats and persecution – seeks to weaken from within. RD 5:1-11

B) Interesting The wife's name was “Sapphira,” Aramaic for “beautiful,” and the husband's name was “Ananias,” which in Hebrew means “God is gracious.”

The problem with Annaias and Sapphira was not ownership it was fine that they owned the land.

A) It was fine that they wanted to keep some of the money for themselves

B) The Problem was Hypocrisy they were *pretending* to give it all.

1) They wanted to be esteemed in the eyes of others – Wow!

Hypocrisy is not someone who believes something and falls short of it!

A) *That is called being a Christian* – that is us.

B) We have standards that we are trying to live by that we fall short of.

1) That is called being human – we are imperfect people trying to serve a perfect God.

B) *Christians are not perfect* – we struggle with our flesh – Every believer falls short

1) So a Hypocrite is not someone who fails to live what they believe –

C) A Hypocrite is something completely different.

The word hypocrite means to wear a mask– used of actors – playing a part!

A) Poser – Pretending to be a Christian a Church – living in an entirely different way outside of the Church.

B) Hypocrite is the business man – fish on his truck/ card ...window- who rips people off

George MacDonald rightly said, “Half the misery in the world is caused by people trying to look rather than trying to be.”

C) Their sin was hypocrisy – Lying !

1) Lie to men but not to God.

D) V. 3,4 Interesting Peter says V.3 Satan has filled your heart to lie to the HS – V.4 Not lied to men but to God! { HS is God }

E) He sees – He is not fooled!

Why such a Harsh punishment?

A) The answer to that question lies in the principle of precedence that says:

God will make a strong statement at *one* point in time to be remembered and applied to *all* points in time.

B) Joshua 6 Achan – New country

1) Purity – no compromise

C) Acts 5 – New Country – new Church

1) Purity – No Hypocrisy

Take away for us!

A) Be real! – Not pretending – posing – trying to look better in the eyes of others.

B) Biblical Characters Drawn to: Used to be David, Moses, Joshua, Nehemiah –

C) Woman with the issue of Blood – bleeding desperate.

1) Blind Bartimaeus – Jesus only hope.

D) Father – Lacking faith – Lord I believe – help unbelief

E) Martha – Lord where were younot died.

Really: David had his Problems

A) Moses – insecure

B) Joshua Scared

C) Nehemiah – comfortable

Can we just be real today – Lord here I am

A) Admire Barnabas – But I am Clinging – scared

B) Lord – Help me– frustrated

1) Lord – I believe – lack – unbelief