

Acts 5:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

Analysis

The conjunction 'But' (Greek 'de') signals dramatic contrast with Barnabas's genuine sacrifice (Acts 4:36-37). Ananias and Sapphira's story functions as warning against hypocrisy in Christian community. Their sin wasn't failing to give all but pretending they had. The Greek 'aner tis' (a certain man) introduces them as representative examples - every generation faces this temptation to counterfeit spirituality for reputation. This narrative establishes that God sees hearts, not merely actions.

Historical Context

Names are ironic: Ananias means 'Yahweh is gracious' and Sapphira means 'beautiful' - yet their deeds were neither gracious nor beautiful. This occurred during the early church's radical generosity period when many sold possessions. Their deception attempted to gain reputation for sacrifice without actual cost.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. In what ways might you be tempted to fake spiritual commitment for others' approval?
2. How does this passage reveal that God values authenticity over impressive appearances?

Interlinear Text

Ανὴρ	δέ	τις	Ανανίας	όνόματι	σὺν	Σαπφείρη	τῇ
man	But	a certain	Ananias	named	with	Sapphira	
G435	G1161	G5100	G367	G3686	G4862	G4551	G3588

γυναικὶ αὐτοῦ ἐπώλησεν κτῆμα

wife	G846	sold	a possession
G1135		G4453	G2933

Additional Cross-References

2 Timothy 2:20 (Parallel theme): But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

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