

Acts 5:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

Analysis

Peter's penetrating questions - 'while it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?' - establish that giving was voluntary, not coerced. The sin wasn't incomplete donation but deceptive representation. The devastating accusation 'thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God' reveals hypocrisy's true nature: attempting to deceive God. The Greek 'pseudomai' (lied) indicates deliberate falsehood. Peter's final question 'why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart?' identifies the internal source - sin begins in heart before manifesting in action.

Historical Context

Community property sharing was voluntary, unlike Qumran's required divestment. Peter's emphasis on voluntary nature refutes claims that Acts 4-5 teaches Christian communism. The lie concerned representing partial gift as complete, seeking glory without cost.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing that lying to the church is lying to God transform your commitment to truthfulness?
2. What does Peter's question about 'conceiving this in thine heart' teach about sin's origin?

Interlinear Text

οὐχὶ	ἔμενεν	σοὶ	ἔμενεν	καὶ	πραθὲν			
was it not	Whiles it remained	thine own	Whiles it remained	and	after it was sold			
G3780	G3306	G4671	G3306	G2532	G4097			
ἐν	τῇ	σῇ	ἐξουσίᾳ	ὑπῆρχεν	τί	ὅτι	ἔθου	
in	G3588	thine own	power	was it not	why	G3754	hast thou conceived	
G1722		G4674	G1849	G5225	G5101		G5087	
ἐν	τῇ	καρδίᾳ	σου	τὸ	πρᾶγμα	τοῦτο	οὐκ	ἐψεύσω
in	G3588	heart	thine	G3588	thing	this	not	lied
G1722		G2588	G4675		G4229	G5124	G3756	G5574
ἀνθρώποις	ἀλλὰ	τῷ	θεῷ					
unto men	but	G3588	unto God					
G444	G235		G2316					

Additional Cross-References

Acts 5:3 (Parallel theme): But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

1 Chronicles 29:3 (References God): Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I

have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house,

Isaiah 59:4 (Parallel theme): None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

Acts 5:9 (Parallel theme): Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

Psalms 139:4 (Parallel theme): For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.

1 Thessalonians 4:8 (References God): He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

Luke 10:16 (Parallel theme): He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.

Ezekiel 38:10 (References God): Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: