

The Power and Purity of the Early Church

Harold Summers

September 05, 2026

16th Avenue Gospel Chapel

References: Acts 4-5, Acts 4:36-37; Acts 5:1-25; Revelation 21:8; Luke 14:26

Barnabas and the Fellowship of the Early Church

Welcome to all, especially Sharon who has just joined us. We are going to start reading in Acts chapter four.

欢迎大家，特别欢迎Sharon加入我们。我们现在要从《使徒行传》第四章开始读起。

Remember that the apostles had been together in the city of Jerusalem. In chapter two, the Spirit came down, enabling them to preach, and many were saved. Then in Acts chapter three, the lame man who had been lame for forty years was healed. By the grace of God, he became a mighty example of the power of God, and the blessing of God was upon them because of him. A number were saved—praise the Lord! But the apostles were put into prison, and they were released from prison after lots of discussion.

大家还记得，使徒们聚在耶路撒冷城。在第二章里，圣灵降临，使他们能够放胆讲道，许多人便得救了。到了《使徒行传》第三章，那个生来瘸腿四十年的人得了医治。借着神的恩典，他成了神大能的有力见证，神的赐福也因着他临到众人。许多人因此得救，赞美主！但使徒们被关进了监狱，经过一番审议和争论后，他们才被释放。

So we are now at the end of verse 35, and verse 36 says:

[Acts 4:36-37 NKJV]

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.

我们上周学到了第35节末尾，第36节说：有一个利未人生在塞浦路斯，名叫约瑟，使徒称他为巴拿巴（巴拿巴翻出来就是劝慰子）。他有田地，也卖了，把价银拿来，放在使徒脚前。

So in a wonderful way, the Christians immediately became family one with another. Families are God's provision very often in times of great difficulty. A father and a mother look after

the children when the children have problems. Very often in life, brothers look after sisters and sisters look after brothers because there is a problem. And as it should be in the natural family, so it should be in the spiritual family.

因着这样奇妙的方式，当时的基督徒立刻彼此成为了家人。在遭遇极大困难的时候，家庭往往是神的奇妙供应。当孩子们遇到难题时，父母会看顾他们；在生活中，弟兄照顾姐妹，姐妹照顾弟兄。在肉身的家庭中理当如此，在属灵的大家庭中更应当如此。

Many who became Christians found that upon becoming a Christian, some of them lost their jobs. Others lost their family members—maybe the husband was a Christian and the wife was not, or the other way around. For one reason or another, many of the Christians, especially the widows, had problems. And so the Christians rallied around one another, recognizing that the Christians were the brothers and the sisters of those Christian people.

许多人成为基督徒之后，发现自己失去了工作；有些人则失去了家人——也许丈夫信了主而妻子没有，或者反过来。出于各种各样的原因，许多基督徒（尤其是寡妇们）生活陷入困境。因此，信徒们紧紧团结在一起，深知彼此就是基督里的兄弟姐妹。

So who are our brothers and sisters? In many respects, it would be each one on the screen, wouldn't it? And so our responsibility is to encourage one another, to help one another, and in times of great need to even reach into our pockets to help one another.

那么，谁是我们的兄弟姐妹呢？在许多方面来说，正是屏幕上的每一个人，不是吗？因此，我们的责任就是彼此鼓励、互相帮助；在遭遇重大缺乏时，甚至要自掏腰包去周济扶助。

And so the Christians did this, and in particular there was this man we read about in verse 36. His name is Barnabas; he was originally called Joses. He was a man who became a Christian in these early days of the church. He was a Jew from the tribe of Levi. According to the Old Testament requirements, as a Levite, his job was to help maintain and serve in the temple, and he was not to own land.

基督徒们正是这样做的，特别是我们在第36节读到的这个人。他名叫巴拿巴，原名约瑟。他在教会建立之初就信主成为了基督徒。他是一个犹太人，属于利未支派。按照旧约律法的要求，作为利未人，他的本职是在圣殿中服侍与维护，照理是不该拥有土地的。

So he had a double problem. He was guilty of many sins in his life like we all are before we become Christians, but he didn't even live near the temple. How could he help? He lived on an island in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea; he lived on Cyprus. And not only that, but he had land! He was told he was not to have land; he was to serve the Lord instead of serving his land. But he owned land, and so he said, "I am going to leave Cyprus. I'm going

to sell my lands, I'm going to move to Jerusalem, and I'm going to give the money from my lands to the apostles to help build the church."

所以他有着双重的問題。就像我們在信主之前一樣，他一生犯過很多罪；而且他甚至不住在聖殿附近，他又該如何服侍呢？他住在地中海當中的一個島上，也就是塞浦路斯。不仅如此，他还拥有土地！按规矩他是不能拥有土地的，他应当事奉主而不是服侍自己的产业。但他既然拥有田地，于是他下定决心说：“我要离开塞浦路斯，卖掉我的田产，搬到耶路撒冷去；我要把卖地的钱交给使徒，用来建造和支持教会。”

Do you think that would have been a blessing to the church in Jerusalem and elsewhere? The answer is yes. Of course it was a marvelous help to them. The story of his conversion would have been a great encouragement to them. The fact that he had sold his lands to give to some of the poor in the congregation was also a great encouragement to them. And the fact that he gave up his work on his farm in order to come to Jerusalem to serve the church—that would have been a great encouragement to them.

你认为这对耶路撒冷及其他地方的教会来说是一个祝福吗？答案是肯定的，这当然对他们是极大的帮助。他悔改信主的故事对他们是极大的鼓舞；他变卖产业周济会众中的穷人，是极大的鼓励；而他放弃农庄田产的事业，专程来到耶路撒冷服侍教会，这更是一个巨大的激励。

So why did they call him the Son of Encouragement? By everything he did and was and said, he was an encouragement to them. The most natural thing for them to call him was the Son of Encouragement. That was the beginning of the witness for the Lord and the service for the Lord from this good man Barnabas! That wasn't the end, but that was the beginning.

那么，他们为什么称他为“劝慰子”（鼓励之子）呢？因为无论从他的为人、言语还是行动来看，他都实实在在成了众人的鼓励。使徒们称他为劝慰子，是最自然不过的事了。这就是这位良善之人巴拿巴为主作见证、为主服侍的开端！这并非终点，而是一个美好的开始。

Some of us look back at our own beginning and we say, "Was my beginning what it should have been? Was my beginning what it could have been?" A lot of us look back and say, "Thank You, Lord. You gave me a little bit of a beginning, but frankly, I could have done more at the beginning; I could have been more like Barnabas at the beginning." And then we say, "Lord, my beginning may not have been as strong as it should have been, but by God's grace, You could use me now. You could take me and use me in the future. That's what I want. I want You to build on my beginning; I want my present to be strong for God."

我们当中有些人回顾自己的起步，会自问：“我起初的光景是否合乎当有的样子？是否发挥了应有的潜能？”许多人回顾时会说：“主啊，感谢祢给了我一个起步，但坦白说，我起初本可以做得更多，本可以更像巴拿巴那样。”接着我们会说：“主啊，我的起步也许不够坚实，但靠着神的恩典，祢如今依然可以使用

我；在未来的日子里，祢仍然能使用我。这正是我所渴求的：愿祢建立我的起步，愿我现今能够为神刚强站立。”

The Deception and Judgment of Ananias and Sapphira

The first four chapters of the book of Acts are basically a summary of the many, many good things that happened. But now we are going to see that problems entered into the church and into the work of God. And what are we going to do with the problems? It is true of any work for God: the Lord does His great work, and the evil one comes in and in various ways attempts to interrupt the work of God.

《使徒行传》的前四章基本上概述了许许多多发生的美事。但现在我们将看到，问题与难处开始潜入教会，进入神的事工之中。面对这些问题，我们该如何应对呢？在任何神的工作中都是如此：主成就祂伟大的工作，而恶者就会在各方面伺机介入，企图拦阻并破坏神的工作。

The religious leaders were very active in chapters one, two, three, and four. Now in chapter five, it is obvious that it is not just those outside the church that could be problems; it could be people inside the church as well. And so now we are in chapter five, and we read about this man Ananias and Sapphira his wife. They were good people, but they also had some land and they sold it.

在第一至四章中，宗教领袖们十分活跃地逼迫教会。而到了第五章，显然制造麻烦的不仅是教会外的人，教会内部的人同样也会带来问题。现在我们来到第五章，读到了亚拿尼亚和他的妻子撒非喇。他们表面上看似是不错的人，他们也拥有田产，并且卖掉了。

I think that they thought about Barnabas, and they said to themselves, "You know, Barnabas got a really good reputation by selling his land and helping the church in Jerusalem." And I think they said, "We'd like to get a good reputation like that, so we'll try to get a good reputation." The key about this man Barnabas was that he gave his lands to the apostles. We are not sure how much this man and his wife said they would sell the property for, but they said, "We will sell the property, and we'll pretend to give it all to the Lord, but we'll just keep back some of it for ourselves." I think their objective was to buy for themselves a good reputation: "We can use our money to make ourselves look good."

我想他们当时想到了巴拿巴，心里盘算着：“你看，巴拿巴卖了田产周济耶路撒冷的教会，赢得了极好的名声。”我想他们暗自商量：“我们也想要得着那样的好名声，所以我们也去博取一个好声誉吧。”巴拿巴的关键在于他是真心将卖田产的价银交给使徒。至于这对夫妇卖了多少钱我们不得而知，但他们商议说：“我们要把产业卖了，假装把所有的钱都献给主，但私底下留下几分给自己。”我认为他们的目的就是为自己“购买”一个好名声：“我们可以用钱来装点自己，让自己显得高尚。”

Now that is not an uncommon problem in our day. You will often find buildings, hospitals, and even universities named after certain people—good people or even bad people—names associated with philanthropy. Sometimes you will go to a park, a building, or a hospital, and you'll find the name of somebody on that facility. There is a park that I sometimes go to, and there is a bench. The bench says, "This bench was provided by Mr. So-and-so." Who gave Mr. So-and-so the money for the bench? Ultimately, it's the Lord. The Lord provided him with the intelligence and the energy to get the money to buy the bench in the first place. So the glory should not go to the individual; it should go to the God who enabled the individual to have the wherewithal to give it in the first place.

这在我们现今的时代也是屡见不鲜的现象。你常会看到有些大楼、医院甚至大学都是以某些人的名字命名的——无论那人是好人还是恶人，他们的名字总是与慈善捐助挂钩。有时你去公园、公共建筑或医院，会看到设施上刻着某人的名字。我有时去的一个公园里有一张长椅，上面写着：“此长椅由某某先生捐赠。”是谁给了这位先生买长椅的钱呢？归根结底是主！是主赐给他智慧与力量去赚取资财，使他起初有能力买下这张长椅。因此，荣耀不应归于个人，而应当归于那位起初赐予他能力与资财去奉献的神。

So back now to Ananias and Sapphira: they sold their property. We don't know what they sold it for, but if they sold it for a hundred thousand dollars, they probably said, "We sold it for eighty thousand dollars," and they put the other twenty thousand dollars into their bank account and didn't tell anybody. And so they decided that they would keep twenty thousand dollars for a rainy day—that's not bad in itself. But they said they sold the property for eighty thousand dollars, and people said, "You gave all the money that you got from the property! You gave it all to the Lord; you didn't keep any for yourself. You are a very good person." And so they put together a simple lie in order to get more glory for themselves.

回到亚拿尼亚和撒非喇的事上：他们卖了田产。我们不知道实际卖了多少钱，但假设他们卖了十万块钱，他们很可能对人宣称：“我们只卖了八万块。”然后把剩下的两万块私自存进自己的银行账户，瞒着所有人。他们决定存下两万块以备不时之需——存钱防患未然本身并没有错；但问题在于他们声称这块地只卖了八万，于是人们便夸赞说：“你们把卖地的全款都献上了！你们全部献给了主，一点都没给自己留，你们真是太善良、太伟大了！”于是，他们编造了一个简单的谎言，企图把更多的荣耀归给自己。

So back down to our story, verse three:

[Acts 5:3 NKJV]

³ But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?"

我们回到经文，第3节说：彼得说：“亚拿尼亚！为什么撒但充满了你的心，叫你欺哄圣灵，把田地的价银私自留下几分呢？

What they did was they agreed to lie. But do you remember that to lie is very bad? Revelation chapter twenty-one and verse eight says:

[Revelation 21:8 NKJV]

But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

The devil was a liar in the beginning, and we must not be like him.

他们所做的是同谋撒谎。但请记住，撒谎是极恶劣的罪。《启示录》第二十一章第8节说：“唯有胆怯的、不信的、可憎的、杀人的、淫乱的、行邪术的、拜偶像的和一切说谎话的，他们的份就在烧着硫磺的火湖里，这是第二次的死。”魔鬼从起初就是说谎的，我们绝不可效法它。

We are not sure precisely how Peter knew this, but he says to them, verse four:

[Acts 5:4 NKJV]

⁴ While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

我们无法确切知道彼得是如何知晓内情的，但他在第4节对他说：“田地还没有卖，不是你自己的吗？既卖了，价银不是你作主吗？你怎么心里起这意念呢？你不是欺哄人，是欺哄神了！”

Was that very bad? And the answer is yes. They thought they were just lying to the men who were around them, the Christians in their small circle. But Peter says, "You have lied to God." How did Peter know this? Quite possibly because the Spirit of God revealed it to him; it may have been a miraculous revelation. Either way, it was very serious.

这是不是很严重？答案是：极其严重！他们以为自己只是在欺骗身边的人、欺骗自己小圈子里的基督徒；然而彼得却指出：“你不是欺哄人，是欺哄神了！”彼得是怎么知道的呢？极有可能是神的圣灵启示了他，这完全可能是一个神迹般的启示。无论如何，这都是极其严重的问题。

Verse five:

[Acts 5:5 NKJV]

⁵ Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things.

第5节：亚拿尼亚听见这话，就仆倒，断了气；听见的人都甚惧怕。

When accused of lying, Ananias didn't repent; Ananias didn't have time to repent. He just died because the Spirit of God killed him. Verse five says, "So great fear came upon all those who heard these things." How do you think they heard it? These were the early days of the Christian church, and the people of God, the Christians, were together almost all the time.

当谎言被揭穿时，亚拿尼亚没有悔改，他也根本没有时间去悔改。他就这样倒地暴毙，因为神的圣灵击杀了他。第5节说：“听见的人都甚惧怕。”你觉得他们是怎么听说的呢？当时是初代教会时期，属神的子民、信徒们几乎时时刻刻都在一起交通聚会。

So when Ananias died, who was going to help Peter deal with the problem? The answer: all the other Christians who were there. It was the young men who stepped forward and said, "Peter, Ananias is dead. We should go out and bury him." And so it was the young men who went to bury him.

因此，当亚拿尼亚死后，谁来协助彼得处理善后呢？答案是：在场的所有基督徒。这时，几位青年人站了出来，说：“彼得，亚拿尼亚死了，我们应当抬出去把他埋葬了。”于是正是这几个青年人把他抬出去埋葬了。

Why weren't the young men at university? Why weren't the young men at work in the middle of the day, and probably the middle of the week? What on earth were these young men doing? They were with the people of God; that's what they were doing. May I remind you that the work of God has priority over university? The work of God has priority over your job. The work of God has priority over everything. Somewhere you've got to start by saying, "I'm going to say no to my other opportunities in order to say yes to God."

这些年轻人为什么没在大学里上课呢？为什么在大白天、甚至大概是在周间的工作日，他们没有去上班呢？这些青年人到底在做什么？他们与神的子民同在，这就是他们所专注的事！请容我提醒大家：神的工作优先于大学学业，神的工作优先于你的世俗职业，神的工作优先于世上的一切！在人生的某个时刻，你必须下定决心说：“我要对其他的机会说‘不’，好叫我能对神说‘是’。”

So in a wonderful way, these young men were prepared to do the work of God. They were there learning from Peter and the apostles; they were there with the saints, and they stepped in and did their job.

因此，借着这种奇妙的方式，这些青年人随时预备好服侍神。他们留在那里向彼得和其他使徒受教，与众圣徒在一起交通；一旦需要出现，他们便挺身而出，履行职责。

Verse seven now says:

[Acts 5:7 NKJV]

⁷ Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.

第7节说：约过了三小时，他的妻子进来，还不知道这事。

That's an amazing thing. The Christians were so united that they were even able to bury this man without his wife's knowledge! They were a wonderfully close-knit family.

这是一件令人惊奇的事。当时的基督徒们如此同心合一，他们甚至能在妻子不知情的情况下将这入埋葬妥当！信徒之间真是一个奇妙而亲密无间的大家庭。

Verse eight says Peter spoke to her:

[Acts 5:8 NKJV]

⁸ And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?" She said, "Yes, for so much."

第8节说彼得对她说：彼得对她说：“你告诉我，你们卖田地的价银就是这些吗？”她说：“就是这些。”

Peter said to her, "Did you sell for such and such a number?" She said, "Yes," because she had agreed with her husband that that was the number, but it was a lie. She had sold it for more than that; she kept part of it back, but in order to get the glory, she said, "I sold it for so much."

彼得问她：“你们卖田地的价钱就是这个数目吗？”她回答说：“是的。”因为她事先与丈夫串通好了这个假数目。但这是一个彻头彻尾的谎言。田地卖得的价钱远不止这些，她把一部分私自留下了；但为了博得奉献全款的荣耀，她撒谎说：“我们只卖了这么多。”

Then Peter said to her:

[Acts 5:9 NKJV]

⁹ Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out."

第9节说：彼得对她说：“你们为什么同心试探主的灵呢？看哪，埋葬你丈夫之人的脚已经到门口，他们也要把你抬出去。”

Verse ten:

[Acts 5:10 NKJV]

¹⁰ Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband.

第10节说：妇人立刻仆倒在彼得脚前，断了气。少年人进来，见她已经死了，就抬出去，埋在她丈夫旁边。

All right, so what happened then? Verse five says at the end, "So great fear came upon all those who heard these things." And a parallel, verse eleven:

[Acts 5:11 NKJV]

¹¹ So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

接下来发生了什么呢？第5节末尾说：“听见的人都甚惧怕。”平行的第11节也是如此说：全教会和听见这事的人都甚惧怕。

So the church was together; it was together a great deal. And I don't think this had to go on the internet; I don't think they had to put it on a mass message or a WeChat or whatever else. They were all together; they heard it.

教会全体常常聚在一起，彼此紧密相连。我想这消息在当时根本不需要发到互联网上，不需要群发短信或发微信通知；因为他们全都在一起，自然都亲耳听闻了。

So, two or three things on this. First of all, does this kind of thing ever happen today? The answer is: probably somewhere. But have you ever heard of it happening today? I haven't. Has it ever happened to you or me? I don't think so. I presume that I've probably done some

bad things. I may have lied—I don't know—I may have lied, but the good Lord didn't kill me. Why did He kill Ananias and Sapphira and not me? If someone were to do this very thing today, I don't really think that it might happen that they would be killed immediately. And so the question would be, why?

关于这件事，有两三点值得思想。首先，这种当场遭击杀的事情今天还会发生吗？答案是：或许在某个地方发生过。但你今天曾亲耳听闻过吗？我从未听过。这事曾在你我身上发生过吗？我想没有。我料想自己大概也做过错事，我可能也撒过谎——我不知道——我或许说过谎，但仁慈的主并没有当场击杀我。为什么祂击杀了亚拿尼亚和撒非喇，却没有击杀我呢？今天如果有人做了同样的事，我想大概不会立刻暴毙受审。那么问题来了：为什么会这样？

There seems to me to be a bit of a principle in Scripture that goes like this: the first or the initial time that a problem arises, God often deals with it in severity and in detail. I think He does that in order to prove that the sin is very serious. But He doesn't always follow up immediately, because He also wants to forgive. And so He allows people to do bad things and He doesn't kill them immediately, because He says, "I'm going to defer judgment; I want them to repent."

在我看来，圣经中似乎有这样一个原则：当某种罪恶或问题初次冒头时，神往往会以极其严厉、详尽的方式来严加处置。我认为神这样做，是为了向世人显明：这种罪是极其严重的！但祂并不总是次次立即降罚，因为祂同样渴望宽恕人。因此，祂容忍世人犯了过错而不立刻击杀他们，因为主说：“我要宽容暂缓审判，好叫他们有悔改的机会。”

So these stories are not here to prove that these people were worse than other people. They're not here to prove that God doesn't do this anymore. But they are here to prove that God is gracious and He will defer judgment in order that there can be repentance. Will people who sin like Ananias and Sapphira get the same kind of judgment that Ananias and Sapphira got? Yes, there will be deferred judgment. It may very well be judgment at the judgment seat of Christ, but there will be deferred judgment. Don't think that because you do something wrong or because I do something wrong, we're going to get away with it when Ananias and Sapphira didn't. We're going to face the same judgment. This is a warning to all.

所以，这些经文故事并非为了证明亚拿尼亚和撒非喇比其他人更坏，也不是为了证明神以后绝不会再施惩罚；而是向我们证明：神是有恩典的，祂延缓审判，是为了给人留有悔改的余地。那么，凡像亚拿尼亚和撒非喇那样犯罪的人，是否会承受同样的审判呢？是的，必定会有那延后而来的审判！那极可能是在基督台前的审判，但迟早必定会来。千万不要以为，既然亚拿尼亚和撒非喇没有逃脱，你我做了错事却能侥幸逃脱。我们终将面对同样的公义审判。这是对所有人的严厉警戒！

The consequence of this, in verses five and eleven, is that great fear fell on the church. And so you and I should also have great fear, lest we end up like them. Problems could arise in

the church, as they did then, with people who are professing believers in the church telling lies, doing things they shouldn't do, trying to cover up, and telling lies about it. Don't be like that!

正如第5节与第11节所记载的，其结果就是极大的敬畏与惧怕临到了全教会。因此，你我也应当存深深敬畏的心，免得落得与他们相同的下场。教会内部可能会出现问题，正如当时所发生的那样：在教会中自称是信徒的人，却说谎欺瞒，做不当做的事，企图遮掩并编造谎言。千万不要效法那样的行为！

Signs, Wonders, and the Priority of God's Kingdom

Verse 12 now:

[Acts 5:12 NKJV]

¹² And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch.

现在看第12节：使徒手在民间行了许多神迹奇事；他们都同心合意地在所罗门廊下。

In an amazing way, many miracles were carried out by the apostles. They had all done miracles when the Lord Jesus Christ was alive. Now their Lord Jesus Christ has gone to heaven, and they're still doing those kinds of miracles. Where were these people? "They were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch." Why weren't they at home? Why weren't they doing all the work that has to be done at home? Why weren't they cutting the grass, going for a walk?

使徒们借着令人惊叹的方式行了许多神迹。当主耶稣基督在世时，他们都曾行过神迹；如今主耶稣基督已升上高天，他们依然在行同样的神迹。这些人当时在哪里呢？“他们都同心合意地在所罗门廊下。”他们为什么没待在家里？为什么没在家里操持各项家务？为什么没去修剪草坪、出门散步呢？

They prioritized the work of God. As I had said, some of them were not going to their jobs—giving up their jobs; some of them were not going to university, but saying, "Postpone that right now. We've got something important: we've got to serve the Lord."

他们把神的工作放在首要位置。正如我刚才所说的，他们当中有些人暂且放下了日常工作，甚至放弃了世俗职业；有些人暂缓去大学求学，而是说：“先把那些放下，眼下我们有更重大、更紧迫的事：我们要全力事奉主！”

I was speaking to a younger Christian recently, and I said there are several areas in life that are important: one is your family responsibility; one is your educational responsibility; one is

your financial responsibility; one is your personal responsibility to be responsible for your own needs; and one is your spiritual responsibility. Of all five of those, which one is the most important? They're all important, but especially your responsibility to God—your spiritual responsibility—is most important.

我最近与一位年轻基督徒交通时提到，人生中有几个不可或缺的责任层面：一是家庭的责任，二是学业教育的责任，三是财务管理的责任，四是对自身需求负责的个人责任，五则是属灵的责任。在这五项责任当中，哪一项最为首要呢？它们固然都很重要，但对神的责任——也就是属灵的责任——乃是至高无上的。

So the Lord Jesus Christ says—I can't quote the verse exactly, but He basically says that:

[Luke 14:26 NKJV]

"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.

You don't love yourself; you love the Lord, and compared to that, you hate your family—you hate your brother, your sister, your mother, your father; you even hate your own life, but you love Jesus. There has got to be a priority, and so here we read of the priority of these people.

主耶稣基督曾教导说（我无法一字不差地背诵经文，但祂大致说）：主说：“人到我这里来，若不爱我胜过爱自己的父母、妻子、儿女、弟兄、姐妹，和自己的性命，就不能作我的门徒。”你不能专爱自己，你要全心爱主；与爱主相比，你对家人、兄弟、姐妹、父母的爱，甚至对自己性命的爱，都当退居其后。人生的优先次序必须分明！在这里，我们看到正是这些信徒摆正了优先次序。

Now remember, because of the great fear and because of the great responsibility, because of the great service that they had for the Lord, the result was that many miracles took place. They had great power. Welcome to Amir; we're happy you're with us. Amir, we're studying Acts chapter five, and we're at verse number 13. Verse 13 says:

[Acts 5:13 NKJV]

¹³ Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly.

请记住，因着全教会存着深深的敬畏，因着他们勇担重责、竭诚服侍主，结果便是许多神迹奇事显明出来，他们大有能力。欢迎Amir加入我们，很高兴你与我们同在。Amir，我们正在学习《使徒行传》第五章，现在看到第13节。第13节说：其余的人没有一个敢贴近他们，百姓却尊重他们。

People were somewhat afraid to become Christians. Why was that? It was obvious that the Christian life was a holy life, and that if you became a Christian, you'd have to stop lying. The people esteemed them highly, but they were afraid to join them. And then, when they did become Christians, it was because they really had a conviction, rather than just a superficial saying, "I believe."

当时的人对成为基督徒有些畏惧。为什么会这样呢？因为大家显然看出，基督徒的生命是圣洁的生命；一旦你信主成为基督徒，就绝不能再沾染谎言。百姓虽然极其尊重敬佩他们，却不敢轻率贴近加入。而当他们真正信主成为基督徒时，那是因为他们内心深处有了真实的痛悔与认罪，绝非肤浅地随口说一句“我相信”。

So you get this strange combination: verse 13, "yet none of the rest dared join them"; and verse 14, "believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women." Both those things were true! People were afraid to join, but then they did join with great zeal and frequency. Does this sound to you like they were a pretty powerful church? Each one of them had given up much of their personal activities, given up much of their funding; they had spent much time with the people of God. What happened?

于是你看到这样奇妙的对照：第13节说“其余的人没有一个敢贴近他们”，而第14节紧接着说“信而归主的人越发增添，连男带女很多”。这两句话都是千真万确的！人们起初因敬畏而不敢轻举妄动，但一旦加入，就带着极大热忱与信心恒常聚会。这听起来是不是一个大有能力的教会？他们每个人都放下了许多私人活动，奉献了大量资财，并花大量时间与神的百姓在一起。结果发生了什么呢？

Verse 14, not only were believers added to the Lord, but verse 15:

[Acts 5:15 NKJV]

¹⁵ so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them.

第14节提到信徒不断增添归主，第15节更进一步说：甚至有人将病人抬到街上，放在床上或褥子上，指望彼得过来的时候，或者得他的影儿照在什么人身上。

There was amazing power; there was amazing awareness of the things of God. And verse 16 says:

[Acts 5:16 NKJV]

¹⁶ Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

那里显出了何等惊人的大能，人们对属神的事有着极其深刻的体认。第16节说：还有许多人带着病人和被污鬼缠磨的，从耶路撒冷四围的城邑来，全都得了医治。

What was going on in Jerusalem? Many wonderful things! Two examples were: number one, what happened to Barnabas; number two, what happened to the lame man at the Beautiful Gate; number three, what happened to Ananias and Sapphira; and number four, what happened to the countless others we never read about. And the news of that spread far beyond Jerusalem, so that many came from cities far from Jerusalem, the surrounding cities. They came to Jerusalem bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

当时耶路撒冷究竟发生了什么？发生了许许多多奇妙的事！举几个例子来说：第一，巴拿巴身上发生的事；第二，美门口那个瘸腿之人身上发生的事；第三，亚拿尼亚和撒非喇身上发生的事；第四，那些经上未曾记载、无数其他信徒身上所彰显的事。这些消息远远传到了耶路撒冷之外，以致四围各城邑的人都纷纷涌向耶路撒冷，带着病人和被污鬼缠磨的人前来，而且他们全都得了医治。

It could be that I was sick and lived in a small town twenty or thirty miles away from Jerusalem. Let's assume I lived in Langley, and the temple of the Lord was in downtown Vancouver. And you also lived in Langley, and I was pretty sick. So I said, "I would like to go to Jerusalem to see Peter." And you would say, "How are you going to get there?" And I would say, "I think the only way I could get there would be for a few of you to get together and carry me." And you might say, "Harold, that's all very nice. We'd be happy to carry you a couple of blocks, but to carry you all the way from Langley to downtown Vancouver—that's a big deal!" And I would say, "Yes, but I believe that if I were to go, I could get healed." And you would probably say, "That's true, Harold. I think if you were to be there, you could get healed."

打个比方，假设我病重卧床，住在距离耶路撒冷二三十英里外的一个小镇上。就当我们住在兰里

（Langley），而神的圣殿位于温哥华市中心（downtown Vancouver）。你们大家也住在兰里，而我病得极其严重。我对你们说：“我想去耶路撒冷见彼得。”你们会问：“你打算怎么去呢？”我说：“唯一的办法，大概就是你们几个人合力把我抬过去。”你们也许会说：“哈罗德，心意是好的，我们抬你走过两三个街区倒无所谓；但若要把你一路从兰里抬到温哥华市中心，那可真是一桩浩大的工程啊！”我会回答：“是

的，但我深信，只要能去到那里，我就必得医治！”你们很可能会说：“这倒是真的，哈罗德，我相信只要你到了那里，就一定能得医治。”

And so many of you would say, "We'll carry him." You'd get a stretcher and you'd carry me. You'd probably have three or four teams, and each team would carry me for a few blocks, and then the next team and then the next team, and somehow we'd all get there. God did marvelous things. Many wonderful people were doing wonderful things, all because they believed that the Lord Jesus Christ had risen from the dead and that He was doing great miracles through His disciples. And I just wonder: were there so many people coming from other cities that there was almost a traffic jam on the road when all the people came carrying their friends to Jerusalem so that Peter could be a blessing to them?

于是你们许多人便齐心说：“我们来抬他！”你们找来担架抬起我，组织了三四个轮班小组，每组轮流抬着走几个街区，换了一组又一组，最终大家齐心协力抵达目的地。神成就了何等奇妙的大事！许多可爱的信徒甘心做出非凡的事奉，全因他们深信主耶稣基督已经从死里复活，并且主正借着祂的门徒大行奇事神迹。我不禁思想：当时四围各城邑赶来的人如此之多，当众人抬着自己的亲朋好友拥向耶路撒冷、指望彼得成为他们的祝福时，路上恐怕几乎都要交通瘫痪堵塞了吧！

Imprisonment and the Angelic Deliverance

Absolutely amazing days! In part because of the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon them, but also because of the response of the saints, the disciples, and those who were following them. The response of the people of God in zeal and in honesty was powerful, and many marvelous works took place. Now verse 17:

[Acts 5:17-18 NKJV]

¹⁷ Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation, ¹⁸ and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison.

那是极其震撼人心的日子！这一方面是因为圣灵的极大浇灌，另一方面也是由于圣徒、门徒以及跟随者们的回应。属神子民在热忱与诚实中的回应大有力量，成就了无数奇妙的善工。接下来看第17至18节：大祭司和他的一切同人，就是撒都该教门的人，都起来，满心忌恨，就下手拿住使徒，收在外监。

What is the primary story of the book of the Acts of the Apostles? The primary story is the wonderful work of the acts of the apostles that they were able to accomplish because the Holy Spirit of God was working in them and through them. What is the secondary story in the book of the Acts of the Apostles? You could call it the acts of the enemies of the apostles,

because everywhere the apostles went, the enemies followed. There was battle, battle, battle all through the book—battle after battle. The acts of the apostles, and the acts of the enemies to defeat the apostles, which they couldn't do. The book of the Acts of the Apostles is really a book of spiritual warfare. And so the fact that you might have some spiritual warfare is not surprising, because that's what they had.

《使徒行传》的主线叙事是什么？主线就是使徒们所行的大能作为——因着神的圣灵在他们里面运行并藉着他们彰显，使他们能够成就奇妙的工作。那么，《使徒行传》的副线叙事又是什么呢？你可以把它称为“使徒仇敌的行传”；因为无论使徒走到哪里，仇敌的逼迫就跟到哪里。整卷书中充满了属灵的争战，一场接着一场——一边是使徒的作为，另一边是仇敌企图击垮使徒的阴谋（但他们注定无法得逞）。《使徒行传》本质上就是一卷属灵争战的记录。因此，若你在信仰生活中经历某些属灵争战，丝毫不足为奇，因为使徒们当年也是这般经历过来的。

So what happens after these apostles are put into the common prison?

[Acts 5:19-20 NKJV]

¹⁹ But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, ²⁰ "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life."

那么，当使徒们被关进外监之后，又发生了什么呢？第19至20节：但主的使者夜间收了监门，领他们出来，说：“你们去站在殿里，把这生命的话都讲给百姓听。”

Does this sound like warfare to you? The apostles and the saints do the great preaching; the religious leaders say, "We've got to put a stop to this," and they tell them that they can't preach anymore and put them in prison; and the Lord opens the prison, lets them out, and says, "You go back and preach again." I think that's absolutely wonderful! I'm not sure that I would have had the honesty and the boldness to go back to preach. If I were them, I might say, "Lord, I'm pretty tired. I think I'd better go home for a sleep." They might have said, "If we disobey, we're probably going to get beaten up. We could get killed like the Lord Jesus did."

这对你而言听起来像不像一场激烈的交战？使徒和圣徒放胆宣讲大能的真道；宗教领袖们怒吼说“我们必须制止他们”，下令禁止他们讲道并将他们投入监牢；而主却亲自差遣使者打开监门，把他们领出来，吩咐说：“你们去，回到殿里重新讲道！”我认为这实在太奇妙了！我不敢保证自己当时是否有那样的坦诚与胆量重返圣殿去讲道。若换作是我，我很可能会说：“主啊，我太疲惫了，我看我最好还是回家睡个觉吧。”他们本可以担忧：“如果我们违抗禁令，多半会被毒打一顿，甚至可能像主耶稣那样被处死。”

So verse 21 says:

[Acts 5:21 NKJV]

²¹ And when they heard that, they entered the temple early in the morning and taught. But the high priest and those with him came and called the council together, with all the elders of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

所以第21节说：使徒听了这话，天将亮的时候就进殿里去教训人。大祭司和同来的人叫齐公会的人和以色列族的众人老，就差人到监里去，要把使徒提出来。

When did they go to the temple? At the time of the evening sacrifice? No, they went early in the morning. I think if you had been a stranger and you had gone to the temple at six o'clock in the morning, they would have been there preaching when you got there! Bold men who basically said, "We're going to serve the Lord first, and we'll worry about other things later."

他们是什么时候去圣殿的？是在晚祭的时候吗？不，他们天将亮清晨时分就去了！我想，如果你是一个外地陌生人，清晨六点来到圣殿，你一到那里就会看见他们已经在那里放胆讲道了！这些刚强无畏的勇士断然宣告：“我们要以事奉主为先，其余的一切以后再说！”

Now what did they preach when they got to the temple? Verse 20 says the Lord told them to preach "all the words of this life." He didn't say, "You just preach the good things and everything else will be fine." He didn't say, "You just preach the elementary things; don't worry about the advanced things." He said, "You teach them everything."

当他们来到圣殿时，他们传讲的是什么呢？第20节说，主吩咐他们把“这生命的话都讲给百姓听”。主并没有说：“你们只需挑好听的讲，别的事情敷衍过去就行了”；祂也没有说：“你们只讲初级的皮毛就好，深奥的道不必提及。”主乃是吩咐：“把这一切真理全备地教导他们！”

Now that's our responsibility, isn't it? If you come to 16th Avenue Gospel Chapel, what are we going to tell you? We could pat you on the head and say, "There, there, everything's going to be fine. You just do this and make it all really, really simple." And then after a few years, we could have a special class for the advanced Christian and tell him some more things about God. But by the grace of God, we don't want to do that. We want to tell you everything! We've got to tell you everything about heaven; we've got to tell you everything about hell. We've got to tell you about the great blessings that you get when you trust the Lord Jesus as your Savior, and we've also got to tell you about some hard days. The Bible uses words we don't like: tribulation, persecution, difficulties, and trials. Don't get discouraged if you hear a

sermon that you don't like. Remember, as you read the teachings of the Lord Jesus, He taught all the truth of God, and that's the reason that we love Him.

这正是我们的本分与职责，不是吗？如果你来到第十六大道福音礼拜堂（16th Avenue Gospel Chapel），我们会向你宣讲什么呢？我们大可以抚慰着拍拍你的头说：“好啦，一切都会顺遂平安的。你只要照着做，把信仰弄得简简单单就好。”然后过上几年，我们再为“资深成熟”的基督徒开个进阶班，向他们讲授更多属神的深奥事。然而靠着神的恩典，我们绝不愿这样做！我们要把全备的真理毫无保留地告诉你们！我们必须向你们讲透关于天堂的一切，也必须讲明关于地狱的一切；我们必须告诉你们信靠主耶稣作救主所能得着的浩大福分，但也必须据实相告前路必有艰难困苦的日子。圣经用了许多我们本能排斥的词汇：患难、逼迫、困苦与试炼。当你听到一篇令你扎心或不舒服的讲道时，切莫灰心沮丧。请记住，细读主耶稣的教训，祂总是毫无保留地教导神一切全备的真理，这正是我们深爱祂的缘故！

So I sometimes say to people at 16th Avenue Gospel Chapel: we want to come through the front door; we want to tell you all the truth. The devil doesn't like to come through the front door and tell you all the truth, so he often sneaks in the back door or crawls in a window. In a way, I call the devil the inventor of the "buy now, pay later" program. The devil tells part of the story: he says, "This is what you get if you buy now"; he doesn't tell you about paying later. But the message of the Lord is: believe now, and later when you get to heaven, it's going to be so marvelous you won't be able to believe it! But in the meantime, it could be difficult, because your responsibility will be to obey God and to say no to sin. And sometimes that's hard.

所以我常对第十六大道福音礼拜堂的弟兄姐妹说：我们要堂堂正正走前门，把一切真理原原本本地摆在大家面前。魔鬼绝不肯走前门告知你全部真相，它往往从后门溜进来，或是从窗户翻进来。从某种意义上讲，我把魔鬼称为“先享用、后付款”骗局的发明者。魔鬼只说一半的话，它诱惑说：“只要你现在享用，就能得到这些”，却绝口不提日后要付上的惨痛代价。但主所传的信息却是：今日当悔改信靠！将来到了天堂，那荣耀将美好得令你难以置信！但在今生此时，道路或许布满艰难，因为你的责任是顺服神、向罪恶坚决说“不”；而有时这确实极其不易。

So verse 21 again. It says:

[Acts 5:21 NKJV]

²¹ And when they heard that, they entered the temple early in the morning and taught. But the high priest and those with him came and called the council together, with all the elders of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

So early in the morning, two things happen: the group of prisoners goes to the temple to preach, and the judges and the accusers get together for a conference. And then they send the officers to bring the prisoners. Verse 22:

[Acts 5:22-23 NKJV]

²² But when the officers came and did not find them in the prison, they returned and reported, ²³ saying, "Indeed we found the prison shut securely, and the guards standing outside before the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside!"

我们再看第21节：使徒听了这话，天将亮的时候就进殿里去教训人。大祭司和同来的人叫齐公会的人和以色列族的众人老，就差人到监里去，要把使徒提出来。因此，清晨一早发生了两件事：本该在押的囚徒们进到圣殿放胆讲道；而审判官与控告者们齐聚一堂召开公会审讯。接着，他们差派差役去监牢押解犯人。第22至23节说：但差役到了，不见他们在监里，就回来禀报说：“我们看见监牢关得极妥当，看守的人也站在门外；及至开了门，里面一个人都不见！”

It must have been very disappointing, but very scary: what happened to these men? Verse 24:

[Acts 5:24 NKJV]

²⁴ Now when the high priest, the captain of the temple, and the chief priests heard these things, they wondered what the outcome would be.

They said, "Something has happened! What's it going to turn out like?" Verse 25:

[Acts 5:25 NKJV]

²⁵ So one came and told them, saying, "Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!"

这必定让他们大失所望，同时又感到无比惊恐：这些人到底去哪儿了？第24节：守殿官和祭司长听见这话，心里犯难，不知这事将来如何。他们惊诧道：“出大事了！这局势究竟要演变到何种地步？”第25节：有一个人来报告说：“收在监里的人，现在站在殿里教训百姓！”

I think that's absolutely wonderful! What would you have done if you were one of those priests, one of those who had called for them from the prison? What would you have done at that point? You would have said, "There's only one way these people got out of prison: that was God! There's only one way they were bold enough to keep preaching: that's the Lord! I am not going to fight this thing anymore; I am going over to God's side."

我认为这实在是太绝妙、太奇妙了！设身处地想一想，如果你是公会里的祭司之一，是下令去牢里提人的当权者之一，此时此刻你会作何反应？你本该幡然悔悟说：“这些人能从戒备森严的监狱脱身，唯一的解释就是——这是神的作为！他们竟有如此胆量继续无畏宣道，完全是靠着主的力量！我绝不能再顽梗与神抗拒了，我要归顺到神的阵营这边来！”

The problem with all these meetings is that you get to the middle of the story, and the time is gone. It's our responsibility to stick to the schedule, and that's what we will do tonight. We apologize, but that's as far as we can get tonight. Next week, Lord willing, we'll get to verse 26. God was working then! What does that teach us? Number one, it teaches us that the foundation is solid. Number two, it teaches us that if we follow the Lord, He will do the same for us: He'll bless us too when we obey and preach His word.

我们查经聚会总有这样一个遗憾：讲到故事的高潮正精彩处，时间却到了。准时结束是我们的责任，今晚我们也当守时。向大家致歉，今晚我们只能查考到这里。下周若是主愿意，我们将从第26节继续深入。神在当年大施行事！这教导了我们什么呢？第一，它教导我们真理的根基极其稳固坚实；第二，它教导我们，只要我们坚定跟随主，神也必照样与我们同在——当我们顺服神并放胆传扬祂的话语时，祂也必大大赐福与我们。

Closing Prayer

All right, let's have a word of prayer and then we'll go.

好了，让我们一同祷告，然后结束聚会。

Lord, we thank You for these stories; they're absolutely amazing. And we're thankful that Your church is to be a church without the lying and cheating that Ananias and Sapphira attempted to bring. We believe, Lord, that Your church could be and will be with us a church of power as we walk humbly with our God, as these apostles did. So Lord, as Barnabas was an encouragement to all those around, so we pray that we will be an encouragement, and that we will be encouraged by these great men of God in the book of Acts.

主啊，我们为这些经文记载向祢献上感恩，它们实在太奇妙了。我们感谢祢，因为祢的心意是要建立一个纯洁的教会，不容沾染亚拿尼亚和撒非喇企图带进来的谎言与欺骗。主啊，我们坚信，当我们如昔日使徒那般谦卑与神同行时，祢的教会在我们中间也能成为、且必将成为大有能力的教会。正如巴拿巴成为周围众人的

劝慰与鼓励，我们也祈求祢使我们成为别人的激励，并让我们从《使徒行传》中这些属神的伟人身上汲取极大的勉励。

Thank You, Lord, for bringing us all together tonight. We commit the next week to You and pray that we will be faithful witnesses, as these apostles were. May we not be discouraged or silenced by the persecution and the tribulations that we fall into. Lord, bring us back next week, we pray, and keep us in Your love and fear this week. And we ask it all now in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

主啊，感谢祢今晚带领我们众人同心相聚。我们将接下来的一周交托在祢手中，祷告求祢使我们如昔日使徒一样作忠心的见证人。当我们遭遇逼迫与患难时，愿我们不灰心沮丧，也绝不缄默不言。主啊，求祢保守我们下周再聚，并在这一周里将我们保守在祢的慈爱与敬畏之中。我们这一切的祈求，都是奉主耶稣基督得胜的名。阿们。

Very good! Thank you! May the Lord bless you!

太好了！谢谢大家！愿主赐福你们！