

Being a 1st Century Church in 2009: Generous Givers

Wylie United Methodist Church

Pastor Jeff Hatcher – Oct 11, 2009

Acts 4:32-5:11

32 All the believers were **one in heart and mind**. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but **they shared everything they had**. 33 With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. 34 There were **no needy persons among them**. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales 35 and **put it at the apostles' feet**, and it was distributed to anyone **as he had need**. 36 Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), 37 sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet. 5:1 Now a man named **Ananias**, together with his wife **Sapphira**, also sold a piece of property. 2 With his wife's full knowledge **he kept back part of the money for himself**, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet. 3 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have **lied to the Holy Spirit** and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? 4 **Didn't it belong to you before it was sold?** And after it was sold, **wasn't the money at your disposal?** What made you think of doing such a thing? **You have not lied to men but to God.**" 5 When Ananias heard this, **he fell down and died**. And **great fear seized all who heard what had happened**. 6 Then the young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him. 7 About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?" "Yes," she said, "that is the price." 9 Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." 10 At that moment **she fell down at his feet and died**. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. 11 **Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.**

Jesus constantly spoke of money:

- Do not store up treasures on earth. (Matt 6)
- Rich many entering the kingdom of heaven –
 "Easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle" (Matt 19)
- Widows Mite (2 copper coins) (Mark 12)
- Rich mans crop *"This very night your life will be demanded of you"* (Luke 12)

If we want to be a 1st Century Church, we must be Generous Givers.
And Generous Givers...

1. **REALIZE THAT IT ALL BELONGS TO GOD**

(v. 32) All the believers were one in heart and mind.

(v. 32) No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own.

(v. 32) They shared everything they had.

(v. 34) There were no needy persons among them.

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And Generous Givers...

2. **REALIZE IT'S NOT YOUR MONEY THAT GOD DESIRES— IT'S YOUR HEART**

It's not your money that God desires-- It's your Heart.

It's just that Money is an Indicator of the Heart.

"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matt 6:21

Look at your Check Book Registry. Look at your Credit Card Statement.
You've just identified your heart.

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And Generous Givers...

3. **TRUST GOD MORE THAN THEY FEAR POVERTY OR MISUSE**

(v. 34) From time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them.

(v. 35) Put [the money] at the apostles' feet.

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And Generous Givers...

4. **PUT THEIR MONEY WHERE THEIR MOUTH IS**

(v. 35) It was distributed to anyone as he had need.

Examples of Wylie UMC Generous Giving:

Remember...

Grannies House

Sanders Lake Stamford House

Chriesman's House

Stephenson Turkeys

Woman Needing Stove

*"All the believers were **one in heart and mind**. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but **they shared everything they had.**"*

Where does that money come from??

GENEROUS GIVERS!