# The Leading of the Spirit 5. Inspiration to deal truthfully Acts 5:1-11

# The story of Ananias and Sapphira

## Some want this story to be legendary

## Others say it was a way of explaining the first deaths in the church

## Some say it didn't really happen because God isn't like that

### But we cannot choose the stories we like and leave out the bits we don't like

## If we want to be inspired by the Spirit and led by the Spirit then this story should form part of our training

# The Holy Spirit inspired generosity

## Money, wealth and possessions had been put in their rightful place

### Ananias & Sapphira were Christians inspired to give by the Holy Spirit

#### They responded in obedience

#### It was their property to do with as they wanted

#### Then they messed with truth

# God and truth are inseparable

## God and truth go together

### But God does not use truth to undermine people

### The Holy Spirit will not inspire you to lie

### Ananias and Sapphira wanted a good reputation and messed with truth to get it

# God wants you to deal truthfully

## God's church was moving in that direction

### God disciplines His people to keep the church moving with God

### God used them to warn us

## God hates hypocrisy

### Hypocrisy defined: play-acting

#### Hypocrisy almost ruined their fellowship

#### Hypocrisy almost ruined their witness

### If God had not stepped in the church would have been full of hypocrites

#### This shows the importance of the human conscience

## Dealing truthfully

### With yourself

#### Through self-appraisal and prayer

### With others

#### First see the good

#### Second be on their side

#### Then look at the single issue which shows inconsistency

### In the church

#### Too strict and everyone lives under a shadow of condemnation

#### Too lax and anything goes and there’s nothing that separates the Christian from the world

#### This story has been fundamental to where people stood on church discipline

# God wants you to be a good example

## The audience is God

## The Lord's Table is open to penitent sinners

## God wants us to have a good reputation

# Homegroup/Private study questions

# The story

## In what ways do you think this story was necessary for the early church?

### What message did it give to the early believers?

## If it were not included how would the message to early converts have been received?

### How does this story change your view of forgiveness and of the character of God?

# God and truth inseparable

## How does this impact your view of telling ‘white lies’?

# God and hypocrisy

## What’s the difference between an actor and one who engages in real life?

## How far do you agree that God hates hypocrisy but does not hate hypocrites?

### Explain your answer

# Church discipline

## For what offences should we discipline church members?

## How should we discipline them?

## Why should we do it?

# A good reputation

## How far do you agree that a good reputation is hard to gain but easy to lose?

## How does someone build a good reputation?

### What are the key points?