I like Church… I Can Be Real! Acts 5:1-11

Small Group & Personal Bible Study Lesson: Pastor Dennis Hadley

Daily Scripture Reading:

1. Acts 5:1-11
2. Acts 5:12-16
3. Acts 5:17-42
4. Acts 6:1-7
5. Acts 6:8-15

- **What has God revealed to you from the book of Acts this week?**

Model Integrity

Reflect on the story in Acts 5:1-11. How do you think today's press would pick up on this story? It would most likely capture the headlines. There's action, a touch of the spectacular, and when there's sin in the church it always makes for strong reader interest. Think of the headlines you have seen about churches in the past few years. Almost without exception the world reports on the mistakes of the church. Yet we are called to be genuine and model integrity. When we do that as a church, the world can find no fault and God is glorified.

I have heard a Christian worship leader say, "Christians worship God with their mouths, but then they walk out the door and don't honor him with their lives. That is what an unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable." Ananias and Sapphira were not a good reflection of the church and their lives did not glorify Christ. What about yours?

Small Group Lesson: Psalm 15

1. Review the qualities of the person who may dwell in God's sanctuary. Which ones mark your life?

2. Which characteristic do you have a hard time living out?

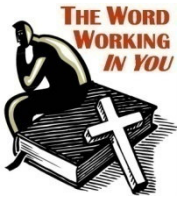
Read Ephesians 4:20-32

3. What observations do you make in this passage?

4. How would our church change if all our people obeyed these words? Who would notice?

Optional Lesson: Models of Integrity by Jim Autrey
(Copies Available in Lobby)

Action Step #3 Get Rid of Personal Garbage That Pollutes God's Church



The church's integrity starts with our own. Each of us has garbage, stuff that does not glorify God. But instead of taking out the trash, we often let it pile up. We may get used to the foul aroma, but those we come in contact with whom are seeking God can often smell it a mile away.

What "garbage" are you allowing to pile up in your life, whether visible or hidden? Whether action or attitude?

One thing that seems to be true about the garbage we allow to pollute our lives is this; that it never becomes less and always becomes more in our lives. We allow the garbage to become our idol. In other words, if I have a problem with alcohol, it will get worse and consumes your life. If I struggle with lust or pornography, it will consume my thoughts and actions and the problem will worsen continuously. If I struggle with greed my greed will become my pursuit in life. If I am easily angered, I will find myself living a life or anger and revenge. Not until I repent and turn it over to God can I finally experience victory.

Do any objects in your life inhibit the kind of wholeness God wants for you? If so, repent and literally put them in the trash. And don't stop with the physical garbage. Greed, grudges, jealousy, dishonesty and lust can also foul up our lives. You might toss some symbolic object representing this spiritual

garbage. By discarding these "idols," we reaffirm our devotion to the one true God and signal that we want nothing to get between him and us.
Of course, it's the Lord who actually gets rid of our spiritual trash. Jesus' blood cleanses us from sin, but he asks us to turn away from those misdeeds, to repent. Then the sweet aroma of Christ's presence will fill our lives and our churches.

Directions: With the help of the Holy Spirit, identify and evaluate those behaviors, involvements, or attitudes that are polluting your life and God's church. If there are physical objects associated with these sins—books, videos, clothing, etc., throw them away. If there are no physical objects, see if you can find a symbolic object to throw out, such as a picture or mirror to represent vanity or a voided check to represent greed. Or simply write down the behavior on a piece of paper and destroy it in some way. Whatever method you choose, make it an act of worship, renouncing these hindrances in order to follow Christ more fully.

Action Step Follow-up

- I am asking the Holy Spirit to help me identify pollution in my life and I am prepared to repent and throw it away
- I am prepared to meet with My King in worship this week
- I am praying the looking & listening with Jesus Prayer

The Looking & Listening With Jesus Prayer

Lord, I long to be part of a caring church family,
But often I'm not sensitive to how people are really suffering.
Please teach me to see people like you do and to listen with your ears of compassion.
I pray for [FILL IN A NEED YOU'VE HEARD RECENTLY].
Lord, help me respond with a heart that cares the way you do. Amen

Reflection: What garbage remains in your life that God revealed to you this week?

Evergreen Valley Church
Developing Eternal Relationships with God, His Word, and People

October 12, 2008 *Pastor Tim Wood*

I Like Church: I Can Be Real
Acts 5:1-11

(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. (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.

1. What lessons should we learn from this story?

2. Freedom to be real

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. Ephesians 4:25