

At the start of the Reformation of the Church in Scotland in 1557, John Knox wrote to his congregation before going into exile and said,

“You are bishops and kings; your wife, children, servants, and family are your bishopric and charge. Of you it shall be required how carefully and diligently you have instructed them in God’s true knowledge . . .

And therefore I say, you must make them partakers in, exhorting, and in making common prayers, which I would in every house were used once a day at least.”

Let’s Worship God

26th-31st January 2015
Acts



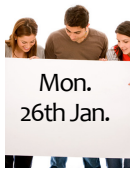
Let's Worship God is a ministry of



Airdrie Reformed Presbyterian Church

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Family worship, a joy to be experienced every day!



Mon.
26th Jan.

Let's Worship God

Verse To Learn
But Peter and the apostles
answered, We must obey God
rather than men.
Acts 5:29

reading notes

Acts 5:1-11 - Don't Mess With God!

We read in this passage that a man called Ananias and his wife Sapphira sell property and bring *some* of the money they receive from the sale and give it to the apostles. However, in doing so they pretend to the apostles that what they are giving them is all the money from the sale. So, for Ananias and Sapphira it's not a matter of giving the money to help other people in the church - it's all about making themselves look good to other people.

But God isn't having it. God doesn't send His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world to die at Calvary simply to provide a place where people can lie and pretend that they are something which they're not. The Church is a community of people saved by God's grace, and those people are to live openly and honestly together.

Ananias and Sapphira lie to the apostles, and in lying to the apostles, they are lying to God. Lies destroy! Where lies exist, no one can trust anyone. God acts. He put Ananias and Sapphira to death, and in so doing He sent out a clear signal to everyone not to mess with Him, or they would suffer the consequences.

This is a huge challenge to all of us who have made public vows of commitment to God as members of the Church.

questions

1. How did Ananias and Sapphira sin?
2. Who did they lie to?
3. What was their punishment?
4. Should we take seriously what we say to God?

praise pray

- Ps. 100B:all
1. Pray that God will help us keep our promises to Him.
 2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
 3. Pray for family matters.



Sat.
31st Jan.

Let's Worship God

Verse To Learn
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Acts 5:29

reading

Acts 6:8-15 - Stephen - the First Martyr

notes

In this passage God introduces us to the first person to be killed for believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. His name is Stephen, and although we don't know a lot about him, where he is from, what his job is, etc., we do know from Acts 6:5 that he is one of seven men chosen as deacons, and from Acts 7 that he is a man that really knows the Bible and is totally committed to God. In fact, his faith in and commitment to God has resulted in God giving him the ability to do miracles and to speak with power about Jesus.

Just as the apostles have faced opposition for speaking about Jesus, so now does Stephen. We read in verse 9 how some men have argued with Stephen, and how Stephen, with the help of the Holy Spirit, has been too smart for them. But the men won't let it go. Realising that they are losing the argument, they secretly persuade some other men to tell lies about what Stephen has said. This in turn has caused a real row, and Stephen is brought before the Sanhedrin. Then at his trial, Stephen's opponents bring in more people to tell lies about what he is supposed to have said. They accuse him of blaspheming God. Through it all, though, Stephen has remained unmoved, in fact we read, All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel (Acts 6:15)

questions

1. What two things was Stephen well known for doing?
2. What did the men in the synagogue do when they couldn't win the argument?
3. What did Stephen's face look like?

praise pray

- Ps. 102A:19-25
1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
 2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
 3. Pray for family matters.



Let's Worship God

Verse To Learn
But Peter and the apostles answered, We must obey God rather than men.
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reading notes Acts 6:1-7 - A New Office in the Church

As well as preaching and teaching in the early church, the apostles also have to look after the physical needs of the people. This passage shows us that having to do two different jobs in the Church is neither easy nor good for the apostles and the people.

We read of the Greek speaking Christians complaining about the fact that the widows in their families are being overlooked in the daily distribution of food to those in need.

The apostles have a choice to make, they either keep on trying to do two jobs at once or get other men to help them do one of the jobs. Having decided what to do, the apostles call a meeting of the church and explain to the congregation that their job as apostles is to preach and pray, and that they just don't have the time to do everything else. They then propose to the congregation that a new office be established in the church to deal specifically with the physical needs of members. The apostles make it clear that the men picked for office must be men full of the Holy Spirit, that is, spiritually mature, and wise. The congregation chooses seven men and the apostles pray and ordain them as deacons.

Note what happens when these men start fulfilling their role: the Word of God spreads, the number of disciples increases rapidly, and a large number of priests are saved.

- questions**
1. Who had been distributing food to those in need?
 2. What was the problem with this arrangement?
 3. Who solved the problem and how?

- praise pray**
- Ps. 102A:13-18
1. Give thanks for our deacons.
 2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
 3. Pray for family matters.



Let's Worship God

Verse To Learn
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Acts 5:29

reading Acts 5:12-16 - Results of God's Discipline

notes It's amazing to read in this passage that people are actually afraid to join the church (Acts 5:13). When was the last time you heard about someone in Airdrie who was afraid to join the church? So why is this the case in the early church? Well, having heard about what has happened to Ananias and Sapphira, people are now thinking twice before joining the church. They aren't going to rush into it without making sure that they really know what being a Christian means.

God's judgement on Ananias and Sapphira is therefore having a very definite effect on people who are thinking about joining the church. Only those people who are really prepared to commit themselves wholeheartedly to God are now joining the church. Note - many do!

So God is in control in the early Church, building a community of people who are totally committed to Him and to each other. The effect is amazing. We read of people who bring their sick relatives into the streets so that Peter's shadow will fall on them. Not because they are superstitious but because they have come to respect and trust in the power of God because they can see that it is real.

1. Why were unbelievers afraid to join the church?
2. Were many or few becoming Christians?
3. Is there a lesson in this for us and our church?

questions

- Ps. 101:all
- praise pray**
1. Pray that God will be gracious to our church and make it known as a place where God is powerfully at work.
 2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
 3. Pray for family matters.



Wed.
28th Jan.

Let's Worship God

Verse To Learn
But Peter and the apostles
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rather than men.
Acts 5:29

reading Acts 5:17-32 - We Must Obey God and Not Men!

notes All this good work that the apostles are doing once again gets them noticed by the Sanhedrin (ruling Jewish court). Filled with jealousy, the Sanhedrin have them arrested and put in prison.

Then, in the middle of the night, an angel of the Lord comes to the prison, opens the doors, and releases the apostles. The angel tells the apostles to go and preach about Jesus in the temple courts. So the next morning the apostles do just that.

Later that same morning when the Sanhedrin meets, they send for the apostles, but of course they can't be found. Everyone is mystified as to what can have happened to them, and then word comes to the Sanhedrin that the apostles are actually teaching in the temple courts! The soldiers are immediately dispatched to get them, and once again the apostles find themselves before the Sanhedrin.

The high priest is very angry. We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name (Jesus), yet you filled Jerusalem with your teaching. But Peter and the other apostles don't panic, their answer is clear and simple, We must obey God rather than men! and then they go and preach the gospel to the Sanhedrin. How are they able to do this? Because they really believe that God must come first in their lives.

questions

1. How did the apostles escape from prison?
2. What did they do after escaping?
3. When challenged by the high priest what reason did the apostles give for their disobeying the Sanhedrin's orders?

praise pray Ps. 102A:1-6

1. Pray that God will help us to obey Him no matter what.
2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
3. Pray for family matters.



Thur.
29th Jan.

Let's Worship God

Verse To Learn
But Peter and the apostles
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Acts 5:29

reading Acts 5:27-42 - Suffer for Christ and Rejoice

notes The apostles' refusal to obey the Sanhedrin enrages them so much that they want to kill the apostles. Gamaliel, a highly respected Jewish teacher, rises from his chair to speak. Even though he is a Pharisee and not a Sadducee, it is obvious from what we read that he is a very influential member of the Sanhedrin. Gamaliel advises the court to take great care for two reasons.

- He reminds them that, in the past, when leaders of rebellious groups are killed, often their followers just give up and don't pursue the cause any longer.

- He also reminds the Sanhedrin that if the apostles' beliefs are not from God, then they won't last anyway, so why worry - but if they are from God, then no matter what the Sanhedrin does, they won't be able to stop it because they'll be fighting God, and you can't take God on and win.

Persuaded by Gamaliel's speech, the Sanhedrin decide not to kill the apostles, instead they have them flogged, and after ordering them once again not to speak in Jesus' name, they let them go.

Although sore from the flogging, the apostles rejoice because they have not buckled under the pressure from the Sanhedrin. They have stood up for Jesus and will continue to do so.

questions

1. What did the Sanhedrin want to do to the apostles?
2. What did Gamaliel say to the Sanhedrin that changed their minds?
3. What did the Sanhedrin do to the apostles?
4. How did the apostles respond and why?

praise pray Ps. 102A:7-12

1. Pray that God will help us rejoice when we suffer for obeying Him.
2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
3. Pray for family matters.