

## Introduction

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This week in Acts, we continue to see the early church grow and flourish. Over and over, people were generous in their dedication to the mission, and the community thrived. Additionally, we are also told about two specific acts of generosity. While both appeared similar on the outside, we come to find out their hearts could not have been more different. We also learn this difference comes with some startling consequences.

In this week's questions, we'll focus on stewardship and why the intent of our heart matters to God.

## Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

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Here are some suggestions to get your conversation started:

1. Share about one product that you would recommend or do recommend often. What about that product makes you so loyal?
2. On the other hand, have you ever had buyer's remorse (expectation vs. reality)? What was it, and why didn't it live up to the hype?

## Getting Started

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Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
    - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
    - b. For openness to what you're learning together
    - c. For friendships to deepen and grow
  - 2) Invite someone to read the passage in the group.
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## Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1) **What truth or application did you take away from the sermon this week?**
  
- 2) In 4:36-37, Barnabas sells land as a response to the needs of their community. In 5:1-2, Ananias and Sapphira try to present themselves as equally responsive. However, behind the scenes, we learn the couple embezzled some of the money.
  - a. **When it comes to your spirituality, think about a time that you tried to make yourself look more spiritual than you actually were. Can you share a specific example?**
  
  - b. In the example you provided above, think about the situation, your feelings, and your motives. **What did you hope to accomplish, and why did you think presenting yourself that way would help?**
  
  - c. **What lessons have you learned (or could you learn) for when that situation comes up again?**
  
- 3) Ananias and Sapphira were likely believers, and they were also part of the church. Yet, both Peter's rebuke and God's punishment are severe. Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-11.
  - a. **Why do you think God reacted so strongly to inauthentic faith and two-faced actions?**
  
  - b. **What is necessary from all of us if we want Berean to flourish as the early church did in Acts?**

- 4) God is after our heart, not our stuff. When He has our heart, we find ourselves more missional with our possessions. However, all too often, instead of making God our King, we let our stuff rule our hearts. Read Matthew 6: 19-24.

**Take 10 Minutes and look at your calendar and bank account/credit cards from the past three weeks. Make a list of the ways that you've invested your time and money. (*To get the most out of this exercise, be thorough.*)**

Take your list and do the following: 1) Circle the things that will last forever, 2) draw a thin line through the things that won't, 3) star what you believe has the best heavenly return on your investment.

- a. **What does this list reveal to you?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. **What themes do you see in your spending? What investments do you want to keep, and what would you like to change?**

If you would like to learn more about opportunities to witness or participate in God's kingdom in Lincoln and around the world, contact [outreach@lincolnberean.org](mailto:outreach@lincolnberean.org) or checkout this Facebook Group: [www.facebook.com/groups/lincolnbereanlocal](http://www.facebook.com/groups/lincolnbereanlocal)

### **Prayer** *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

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Before your group meets, take some time to examine your heart. Are you truthful and open with where you are at in life? Or about your relationship with Jesus? Are you being honest or just putting up a fake facade? Are there prayer requests or struggles you are afraid to share? If so, ask God to reveal why. Also, ask if He wants you to be honest with your group.

We often struggle alone with our burdens even though others would love to help us carry the load. So, if you haven't already, try being open this week!