

TUESDAY, MAY 28 | The transaction, 4

5When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. 6Then some young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him. 7About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?" "Yes," she said, "that is the price."

After reading these verses over and over, my mind just races. Narrowing this down to one topic is difficult! First, the young men who wrapped up their bodies. Most likely these were not paid men but some of the strongest young men who were part of the congregation, present and made themselves readily available for such services. They wrapped their bodies up quickly, probably in the person's own robes, and took them out. Customarily, graves were ready at all times and only a stone needed to be rolled to seal the grave. Without all of the preparations we use to prepare a body today, besides the wrapping of the body and applying spices, there wasn't much that needed to be done for burial. It was done very quickly, especially in the heat.

Where my thoughts go next is the relationship of Ananias and Sapphira. Let's first visit the last part of verse five for just a bit. Picking up with, "And great fear seized all who heard what had happened."

I want to point out this shows us there was a crowd. Even though this reads 'a crowd' my mind pictures Peter, maybe a couple of other disciples standing there, the few men who take their bodies out and Ananias. But they were there among an assembly of people. There was a crowd, multitude, mass, or a gathering of people. I have to rewind my mental video and start over. Now I see them standing before a large group of people having this inquisition. Ananias was pressured even more to save his reputation. But he was actually losing it and publicly. There would be no rumors regarding this situation. God made sure everyone saw firsthand what would happen for this type of rebellion.

Move forward to verse seven, "About three hours later his wife came in...". This timeframe is interesting. This could be the next hour of prayer and is why she came in at this interval. Maybe they lived far away and it took her this long to get there? I have no other explanation, just guesses. Whatever the reasoning, she had plenty of time to rethink what had been done. Time for the Holy Spirit to quicken her heart and convict her. Still, when she came into the assembly and was asked if this was the price they were given for the land, she stood firm.

Now, I believe a husband and wife should work as a team. Right? A marriage or any Christian relationship should spur one another to good deeds, strengthening and help each other instead of turn into a team of deception and sinful ways. They became a team of deceit that day. Since she came in separate from her husband, she was given a chance to tell the truth too.

Relationships are tough, guys. Marriages, friendships, parent-child, siblings, all of them have their ups and downs. Praying for spiritual discernment and wisdom are two of the most needed abilities. I'm not separating them from the fruit of the Spirit or any other ability. But taking a lesson from this couple, discernment and wisdom would have saved them both from their demise. Discernment in who a godly friend or future spouse should be will save both of you from heartache as will having wisdom in current relationships.

I have a friend that comes and goes as she pleases. It hurts. But I pray for wisdom for God to allow me to be there for her, not to be used by her. I want to be the friend God wants for her. In his strength not mine. He will provide the friendships for my life and for yours to uplift us and for us to pour into.

I am praying for wisdom and discernment for you today and as you move forward in the relationships you have and in future ones. I pray that you are seeking to honor God in your relationships. I ask for strength to help you move forward in whatever decisions God is asking you to make and that you will be able to make any decisions in the grace and love of God. May your relationships be fruitful for the kingdom of God and for your and their walk with Christ.

Q. Are you in a relationship that needs evaluating? What is God showing you about that relationship?

MEMORY VERSE Hebrews 4:13 – *“Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”*