

Acts 028

Body Life

Acts 4:32-37

October 25, 2023

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Amen. Well, let's open our Bibles this evening to Acts chapter 4. Acts 4:32. And we're continuing our verse-by-verse teaching through the book of Act, Wednesday evenings. So, in Acts chapter 4, we've seen the apostles arrested, Peter and John. They're examined. The Sanhedrin gives them a gag order not to teach any more concerning Jesus and His resurrection. Last week we saw Peter and John report that to the rest of the apostles, and there's a tremendous section there on prayer that we saw last time, verses 23 through 31. And tonight, we're going to try to look at verses 32 through 37. Finish the chapter, Lord willing. I call this kind of the pre-Ananias and Sapphira section.

Acts 4:1–5:11 Summary

- I. Apostles Arrested (4:1-4)
- II. Apostles Examined (4:5-12)
- III. Sanhedrin's Decision (4:13-22)
- IV. Apostles' Prayer (4:23-31)
- V. Pre-Ananias and Sapphira (4:32-37)**
- VI. Ananias and Sapphira (5:1-11)

It's sort of a portrait of what the early church was doing *right*, at the end of chapter 4, before we start to study next week what Ananias and Sapphira in the early church did *wrong*. So, everything that goes wrong in chapter 5, verses 1 through 11, is sort of held in juxtaposition to what the church was doing right at the end of chapter 4. So, chapter 4, what they were doing right. Chapter 5, what went wrong. You can't understand what went wrong until you understand the standard of what they were doing that was pleasing to God.

So, this particular section has two parts. We have the community of the saints, verses 32 through 35. And then you have the very positive example of a man named Barnabas, verses 36 and 37. So the community of the Saints, verses 32 through 35. We have the characteristics of the church, verses 32 and 33. And then the community of the church, verses 34 and 35.

V. Pre-Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 4:32-37)

A. **Community of the Saints (32-35)**

B. Barnabas' Positive Example (36-37)

1. **Characteristics of the Church (32-33)**

2. **Community of the Church (34-35)**

So, notice the characteristics of the church. Look at verse 32, it says: *And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them obtained-- Not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them.* So, the first thing you see is a growing church. The last numerical count that we had; I believe it's back in verse 4. The number of those who claim the name Jesus Christ had grown to 5000 people. And so, what you see these 5000 people do is they're congregating and they're meeting. So, the church is growing. This is important because Luke is trying to present his addressee, Theophilus, with an orderly account of the birth and the growth of the church. He's trying to show Theophilus that God's hand was in the whole thing so he could have confidence in the message through the church that finally got to him through Rome. So, one of the ways that Luke does this-- talks about the birth and the growth of the church-- is he documents the church and its growth through what are called numerical progress reports.

You can sort of take this as a progress report, numerically. *And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul.* The congregation is an assembly. We have here a growing assembly. And how do you become a member of the congregation? You've got to fill out a card and walk an aisle. No, it says it right there midway through verse 32. *They believed.* Anyone that's put their trust in Jesus for our personal salvation is now inducted by the Holy Spirit into this vibrant group that's growing in Jerusalem. As you know the Bible over 150 times conditions salvation upon believing only. Some of the classics: Genesis 15:6, Abraham believed God, and it was

credited to him for righteousness. John 3:16, For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish, but has eternal life. Acts 16:30, The Philippian jailer. What must I do to be saved? Paul and Silas say, believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved. Now you say, well, what about the word repent? Didn't. Peter, back in Acts 2:38 tell them to repent? Should they repent or should they believe? And the answer to that is those are synonyms. Believe means to trust. Repent means to change your mind. *Metanoia*. It's a Greek word meaning *meta* - change, *noia* - mind. That's why when you see the word repent in the book of Acts, it's always accompanied with the word believe.

Acts 2:38, they repented. But then you go down to verse 44 and it says, *and all those who believed*. There are two sides to the same coin. And on our recent trip, when we were in Greece and that part of the world, we had a Greek speaking tour guide. And I was teaching some of this to the folks on our bus. And at that point, the Greek speaking tour guide took the microphone and I'm like, oh no, what's she going to say? She said, everything that he just said is right. *Metanoia* means to change your mind in Greek. At which point I went, whew! Because it would have been kind of embarrassing if she said no, that's completely and totally wrong. And what is happening here is you're seeing the development of the body of Christ. Paul, who hasn't even been converted yet. We don't even know who Paul is yet until Acts 9. He is going to, in his epistles, explain what's happening right here, he says later in First Corinthians 12:13, *For by one spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit*.

When you believe, you are baptized, meaning identified with this new man called the church, that's up to 5000 people. So that's how you become a member of the universal church. There's a single step that God requires, which is to believe. And then you see them sharing everything, verse 32: *[they] were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them*. Communal living situation. It's the same thing that was going on in Acts 2. There in Acts 2, you've got about 3000 saved. They start to meet together. They have all things in common. They're sharing their lives with each other, including their personal property. There are some misunderstandings about this that I'll try to cover a little bit later in the chapter. But for now, it's this idea that they said, I don't really own anything. It belongs to the Lord. And so, anybody that has a need in this flock, the

members were sharing with one another. One of the reasons they were sharing with each other relates to the fact that these things were connected to the day of Pentecost. Acts 2 happened on the day of Pentecost. And on the day of Pentecost, you have Jews, (in Acts 2) from all over the known world showing up on a feast day, which is what their Hebrew Bible told them to do. It's just this time around, the Holy Spirit had a surprise for them. They heard the gospel for the first time, and they believed, and they were brought into this new body by the Holy Spirit. And there's no Bible yet. There's no New Testament yet. And they wanted to stick around Jerusalem and learn from the apostles, who were the only ones you could really learn this new way of life from. Most of them just had resources to be in town for a brief time. They had no intention to stick around for a long period of time. But now that they had repented and changed their minds, they wanted to stay longer. Typically, the way it worked on the day of Pentecost is you came to Jerusalem, you did your thing, and you went right back to where you came from. But these folks wanted to stick around longer to learn this new way of life, this new truth. And if your bags are only packed for a couple of weeks, you run out of money and you run out of resources. So those in Jerusalem that had resources started to share with those who had limited resources. That's sort of the context of this communal living that you see highlighted at the end of Acts 2. In Acts 4:33, you see that the apostles were witnessing. It says: *And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.*

The apostles were up front. The apostles were leading, and the apostles were talking about the resurrection right there in verse 3. You'll see the resurrection; the resurrection of Jesus is a big deal. Because Paul will later write in the resurrection chapter, first Corinthians 15:14, *if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.* So that's why when you look at these different sermons in the book of Acts that we've studied so far, there's a huge emphasis in the resurrection of Jesus. Peter mentions it in Acts 2:24. Peter, when he speaks again in Acts 3, mentions it in Acts 3:15. And this is why they were persecuted. Because the religious group that had control over the temple area, and Jerusalem in general was a group called the Sadducees. And as I've said before, the Sadducees were always sad-you-see. And one of the reasons they were so sad, in my opinion, is they only believed in the first five books of the Bible. They didn't believe in angels. And they didn't believe in the resurrection from the dead. You could see how this doctrine that the apostles are teaching concerning the bodily resurrection of Jesus was upsetting to the Sadducees.

And that becomes the reason why the early church has come into persecution very, very early. Why a gag order has been put on them not to talk anymore about the resurrection.

So, what do they do? They go right back out and they talk about the resurrection. So here is an example of civil disobedience, an issue that we're going to talk about as we continue to progress through our study in the book of Acts. Because that's starting to become a major issue for Christians in the United States. If the government says, don't go to church, and if you do go to church, don't sing because you can spread a virus. Now, for the first time, we're having to figure out: Who am I supposed to obey here? I'm supposed to obey God who says, do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, as is the habit of some. Am I supposed to obey God who indwells the praises of His people? Or am I supposed to obey some unelected bureaucrat acting outside of legislative authority? Because all these things that happened in 2020 were not laws. They were executive orders, so they didn't go through the normal legal process a law is supposed to go through. And it was all done under the guise of: This is an emergency. So now we're having to figure out who am I supposed to obey here? The government or God? And what you're seeing in the book of Acts is over and over again when there's a conflict between the two, the early church decided to obey God and suffer the consequences. So that's how the book of Acts is now becoming very relevant to North American Christians and Canadians in the year 2020 and beyond, because now we're having to face things that we really haven't faced before. We're having to carefully think through these issues.

Verse 33, the very end of it, as the apostles are giving testimony to the resurrection of Jesus, It says *and abundant grace was upon them*. The Greek word for grace is *charis*. It basically means unmerited favor. Favor coming to you that you don't deserve. And the reason they had this is because their standing before God was based on believing only. We saw that earlier back in verse 32, in the congregation of those who believed. It was not based on their works. It was not based on works they did on the front end or the back end. The only thing that gave them standing was the work that Jesus did for them in their place on the cross. And He authenticated it through His bodily resurrection from the dead. And they trusted in that. It's not a workspace salvation. And so that's why the grace of God was abundant on this group of 5000 people.

So, we move away from the characteristics of the early church. And then you also have here the community of the early church body life. What is body life in the body of Christ supposed to look like? You see three things there in verses 34 and 35. Provision, verse 34. Secondly, the means of provision, verses 34 and 35. And then communal living, verse 35. Notice, first the provision. It says: *For there was not a needy person among them...* Every single need was met. The book of Philippians 4:19 says, *And my God will supply all your greeds--* oh, I'm sorry, it didn't say that. I wanted to say that. It doesn't say that. *And my God will supply all of your **needs** according to His riches in... Christ Jesus.*

One of the things that Anne and I noticed as we were in Missouri last weekend-- and by the way, that should be my last trip for a while until March or something like that. So, you guys are stuck with me for a while anyway. But one of the things we noticed when we went to Missouri, went to stores and things like that, is we noticed how nervous everybody was. Everybody was looking at the price tags in the Walmart and that kind of thing. We had never really, you know, it's just something we just haven't seen for a long time. And the reason everybody's so nervous is because the value of the dollar is shrinking. You could be getting a tremendous raise, and your standard of living could still be going down, because of the purchasing power of the dollar through inflation. Too much money. Chasing too few goods causes the purchasing power to shrink. We're living in this sort of economic environment where people are facing this. And it's in that environment we need to stand on the promises of God. That God will provide for your needs. He doesn't really say how, but He says He will.

You see this in Exodus 16, where for forty years, God provided on the dot every single day. The only exception was the Sabbath where they weren't supposed to work. But He provided for them with manna from heaven every single day. And that was for children of Israel as they came out of Egypt, where at least it was secure. Although they were slaves, at least they knew where their next meal was coming from. Now they're in the Sinai Peninsula, having crossed the Red Sea, where they were having to totally look to God for provision. And God provided for them with manna from heaven every single day. "Give us this day our daily bread." That's what that's based on. For forty years, it was like clockwork. Every day it was there. And the manna kept coming for forty years until they entered the Promised Land. And then at that point they no longer needed the

manna because they were in the land of milk and honey. That's Exodus 16. First Kings 17:2-6, God provided for the prophet Elijah with ravens. You really don't know how your provision is going to come. Is it going to come through my retirement plan? Is it going to come through my job? Maybe. But what you'll discover is God is very creative. He's not bound to provide for you in a set way. He just says, I'm going to do it. You see that in 1 Kings 17:2-6. Psalm 37:25 David says, I was young, and now I am old. And here's one thing I've never seen. I've never seen the righteous forsaken nor their seed (children) begging for bread. And then there's Matthew 6:25-34 where Jesus says, consider the birds of the air. Consider the lilies of the field. Does God not abundantly clothe and provide for them? And you're worth much more than they. So, what are you so uptight about money for? These are just promises that we're going to need to dial into as we're living in these kinds of tight economic circumstances.

Every single need in the early church was met. And it says, verse 34: *For there was not a needy person among them--* And then you have the means of the provision: *for all those who are owners of land or houses, would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales and lay them at the apostles' feet.* So those that had means liquidated their assets to help people that were there out of town on the day of Pentecost so that they could stay and learn apostolic truth. And that's how needs were met in the early church. And you'll notice where the money went. It was laid at the apostles' feet.

Now, I've seen churches do this kind of thing. All your giving has to go through the local church. You know you can't just give to someone on your own. You need to give only to the church. And then the church will distribute the funds. And they quote this verse here: "Look everybody gave their resources to the apostles." Well, the problem is with that line of thinking, the apostles are all dead. Right? We don't have apostles today. I've run into people that tell me they're apostles. And I usually say, wow, you look good for your age because you ought to be about 2000 years old by now. Ephesians 2:20 tells us that the apostolic ministry was a foundational ministry. I mean, the foundation of a building is a big deal. But you only lay a foundation once. Ephesians 2:20 says: *having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone.* So yes, funds went through the apostles. But people today in the church age, 2000 years later, can't use this verse. You know, elders and pastors can't use this verse and say, all your money that you're going to give to benevolence has to come through the local church. That's taking on yourself an

apostolic mantle that doesn't belong to anybody today. God is not relaying the foundation of the church. What He's been doing the last 2000 years is building on the structure as many people have come to saving faith in Christ. And I would argue that right now, today, God is not laying the foundation of the church again. He's putting on the roof. Because it looks to me as if the building is almost complete. Because one of these days, in God's providence, the building will be complete. The very last sinner that's ordained to come to Christ in the church, age will be reached. The body of Christ will be made complete, and the church will be translated to heaven.

And Arnold Fruchtenbaum has a comment here on what is happening. He says, "Wealthier believers sold their possessions, whether they were land holdings or houses, and all of this money was laid at the feet of the apostles. [This was a clear recognition of apostolic authority] Nowadays, believers do not lay their financial possessions before the feet of others because there are no apostles anymore. The apostles had a unique authority, and in recognition of this, the saints brought them whatever they made from selling their possessions. The Greek tense allows for the translation to read, 'Selling, they brought from time to time, as it was occasioned by reason of need. In other words, the believers did not necessarily lay their entire profits at the apostles' feet all at once. They would sometimes do it bit by bit as needs arose."

It's not like the apostles are saying, all right, sell your house and give me all the money. What was happening is, is people felt compelled by the spirit when they saw a need arise, and they would liquidate their holdings, bring them those proceeds to the apostles on a piecemeal basis, not a one-time basis. And then the apostles would distribute funds to those who had need. By the way, I'm completely in favor of providing for your local church, obviously. I think when you give, the first place you should think about is the place where you're getting fed, which is your local church. But a local church doesn't have the right to exert authority over people and say, thus saith the Lord, bring your money to us first. The apostles could do that because they were apostles. And we don't have apostles today. So, you have the provision, then you have the means of the provision, and then you have this statement here again on this communal economic living that's going on here. It says at the end of verse 35: *and they would be distributed to each as any had need*. Now we're living in this time period where all our kids and grandkids are being brainwashed into Marxism or social justice type of thinking. And you have the rise of Bernie Sanders today, where all these college kids go

out and they vote for someone that's a flagrant socialist, or in some cases a communist. And everybody thinks communism is great. And after all, communism is practiced in the Bible, right? It's right there in verse 35.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum has some helpful remarks here on this. Why what is happening here is not Marxism. "Some have tried to base a doctrine of communism using this passage, but this was simply charity built on the teaching of Yeshua. It was not communism for five reasons. [And you should probably write these down because your kids and your grandkids are being pulled into this mindset.] First, according to Acts 5:4, this giving was a voluntary act of the believers in Jerusalem." When communism takes over and they distribute the wealth, it's not optional. Right? April 15th, Tax Day is not optional, right? This was optional. This was people doing what God had put on their hearts. "Second, as was pointed out, the Greek tense of verse 34 indicates that varying portions were sold according to the conscience of individuals; it was not a one time act. Third, this action was largely based upon a misconception concerning the Second Coming. Jewish believers felt strongly that Yeshua would return in their lifetime, although He had clearly indicated that this would not happen. In fact, Yeshua prophesied in John 21:18-19 that Peter would die before his second coming."

Now, that point that he makes there, I don't know if I'm totally in agreement with it. I do think that they felt Jesus could come back at any moment. "Fourth, this practice was limited to the Congregation of Jerusalem; it did not spread to the other churches. Fifth, [And I found this point very interesting] it proved to be a mistake, because it caused the Church of Jerusalem to become poverty stricken;" Did God use it? Yes, He did. Did God command it? No, He didn't. After everything had been sold and distributed, there was nothing left in the common pot. The poverty of the congregation caused Jewish believers to fall in need from Gentile churches that did not follow this procedure of having all things in common. Paul, all the way as you go through the New Testament, is collecting an offering for the suffering saints in Jerusalem. They're suffering economically. Why were they suffering economically in Jerusalem? Well, one reason is that there was a famine in Jerusalem. Acts 11 talks about it. But another reason is they drifted into this sort of economic system where God never specifically said: "Do this." And that could be the reason why the Jerusalem church was so needy. Fruchtenbaum says, "Thus there is no basis in this passage for developing the doctrine of communism. A very important principle of biblical interpretation is to distinguish between what is

descriptive and what is prescriptive." Descriptive just tells you what they did. Prescriptive is thus saith the Lord, you should do this or that. "Historical accounts are descriptive. simply reporting what has occurred, but there's no command to forward the practice. Only when a specific command is given does it become prescriptive and an imperative to follow."

Now, I'm not saying read this and throw it out. You can learn a lot here about generosity. And how my money is really not mine. It belongs to the Lord. And sometimes God wants to use my resources to meet the need of somebody else. You can learn a lot here about having respect and authority for the local church, but you can't go into this as a lot of people do and-- you know, there's this Acts 29 movement, which is always confusing because there's only 28 chapters in the book of Acts. Some want the book of Acts to continue into chapter 29, usually very young people. They want to go back to this exact kind of arrangement. There's nothing in the Word of God that says, we do this. It's just explaining what transpired. And if you want to go back and do what's in the book of Acts, you got to go back into chapter 27 also, and you got to get stuck out in the ocean too. We were on our cruise going through that exact area. And I thought to myself, Thank God we're not in Acts 27 because we would be stuck out in the middle of the ocean. And you would have to get bitten by snakes also on Malta. You see how crazy we can get with demanding that the church today follow this identical practice? I mean, it worked for them in Jerusalem. It was good for them. But it's not some kind of mandatory, you know, binding thing on the church as a whole. You can certainly learn a lot of wonderful principles here. But you can't use descriptive literature in a prescriptive way. So that's the basic answer to the youth of today that want to develop communism, either in the church or in the United States from a passage like that. This is at the same time a wonderful description of the community of the saints.

V. Pre-Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 4:32-37)

A. Community of the Saints (32-35)

B. **Barnabas' Positive Example (36-37)**

1. **Barnabas' example (36)**

- a. Name (36a)
- b. Tribe (36b)
- c. Citizenship (36c)

2. Barnabas' work (37)

And then from there you go into verses 36 and 37 where you now have the positive example of Barnabas. We have Barnabas's example, verse 36. And Barnabas's work, verse 37. Notice his positive example. First, notice his name. It says: *Now, Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement)* So Barnabas's name in Hebrew is Joseph. His Aramaic name is Barnabas. You'll notice we've got a Hebrew name and an Aramaic name. And as you keep reading the New Testament, you'll find that people didn't just speak Hebrew. They didn't just speak Aramaic. They spoke another language called Greek. *Koine* Greek is the language that the New Testament was recorded in. And if that wasn't enough, they probably knew some Latin because Rome had come to power in the Land of Israel beginning in about 63 BC. And Latin was what's called the *lingua franca*, the common language of Rome.

If you were alive in biblical times, you probably spoke four languages. Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Latin. And over the crucified Jesus, when He was mocked in the Gospels, He was called King of the Jews. As you go through Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, they record the sign that was hanging over Christ's head by way of mockery as he was being crucified. You'll find that one gospel writer says the sign was written in Greek. Another gospel writer says the sign was written in Hebrew. Another gospel writer says the sign was written in Aramaic. Another gospel writer says the sign was written in Latin. So that's not a contradiction. There were probably four signs where "King of the Jews" was written and underneath that, different translations. And so right up to the crucifixion of Jesus, you see these four languages.

His Hebrew name is Joseph. His Aramaic name is Barnabas. In Aramaic, Barnabas means Son of Encouragement. Son of Exhortation. Barnabas got this name because he was the type of person that came alongside people and encouraged them. He exhorted them. In fact, when you talk about spiritual gifts, body life-- every believer has at least one spiritual gift. And we're to use those gifts in the context of fellow Christians. One of those spiritual gifts is the gift of exhortation, which is what Barnabas's name is named after. Romans 12:8 it says, *he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness*. It describes how all of the different gifts of the Holy Spirit are to be used. And one of those gifts of the Holy Spirit is exhortation. It's the ability to exhort, encourage others in the body of Christ. And if you wanted to go home this evening and

study spiritual gifts, there's an easy way to do that. You just remember the mnemonic device 12, 12, 4, 4. That stands for Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, 1 Peter 4, and Ephesians 4. If you were to go home tonight and read those four chapters, you would have all the New Testament data which tells you what the different kinds of spiritual gifts are. And how we need that gift of encouragement in the body of Christ. We need that used because Satan wears us down. And when you're around people with the gift of encouragement or exhortation, it's kind of like after you talk with them, you feel better than when before you started talking to them. Unfortunately, not everybody is like that. Some people are kind of like, I don't know, emotional leeches where they get inside of you and just suck everything out, you know. And you leave the conversation just fatigued. I'm sorry to be so crass about it, but just tired, like, oh, I wish I'd never picked up the phone or read that email. But there are people that have the gift of exhortation when you walk away from them, and you feel better about things than before you started talking to them.

Enumeration of Spiritual Gifts (Rom 12:6b-8)

1. "Prophecy" (6b)
2. "Service" (7a)
3. "Teaching" (7b)
4. **"Exhortation" (8a)**
5. "Giving" (8b)
6. "Leading" (8c)
7. "Mercy" (8d)

I'm not trying to get into politics, but I do remember Ronald Reagan. I remember watching him speak and every time I saw him speak-- I mean, the whole country could be falling apart, but you listen to him speak and you feel better about things after listening to him speak than before. That's kind of what the gift of exhortation is. I think in my life, Pastor Jim has been used very significantly in this regard just by way of exhortation and encouragement. And Barnabas was so effective at this, they gave him this Aramaic name, Son of Encouragement. You'll notice that the Tribe of Barnabas is given. He's from the Tribe of Levi. And here we are with all this stuff going on in Israel. And the world turning on Israel. Evangelicalism to some extent turning on Israel. I saw one guy-- I'm going to mention this on our Pastor's Point of View show this Friday-- but one guy who's supposedly a conservative says that the star of David Israel's star is

really satanic. You know, it's from the pentagram and all that stuff. And what people are saying is the Jews in the land right now are really not true Jews. They're usurpers. That's an old theory. It's called the Khazar theory if you're interested in that. But I'm looking online and I'm seeing more and more people saying stuff like that. And after all, Israel is satanic. Look at the star, you know. It comes from the satanic pentagram and all this kind of stuff.

And one of the things they're saying is the tribes are all scattered. I mean, everybody knows the tribes were scattered in 722 BC-- Right? --by the Assyrians. So, there's no Levites left. I mean, if you think people over there could be actual Levites or any of the other tribes, you're crazy because we all know they were scattered. Well, if the tribal identities were lost in 722 BC, how come everybody knew that Barnabas was a Levite? How is it in the book of Revelation, you've got 144,000 evangelists that come from the twelve tribes. I mean, maybe they're lost to man. They're not lost to God. God hasn't lost the tribes. "Oh, my goodness, the tribes are scattered!" The Apostle Paul in Acts 26:7 says the promise to which our twelve tribes hoped to attain. And then there's a woman named Anna who's waiting for Jesus in the temple. And her tribal identity is given. She's from the tribe of Asher.

At Chafer Seminary, we did have a presentation on this. The fellow's last name is Greenspan. Can't remember his first name, but he's a PhD genetic authority. And he gave us a lecture on why the Jews in the land of Israel today are really Jews. And their tribal identity with modern day genetic understanding can all be ascertained. And you can find that, if you're interested, on the Dean Bible Ministries website where the various Schaefer Conferences are archived. And that's important to understand because of this propaganda, anti-Israel mindset that we've been pushed into now because of what's happened over there since October 7th. You see all this anti-Semitism rising to the surface. And one of the things people are saying is, well, those are not really Jews over there. There's no Levites over there. And we all know the Star of David is a rip off from Satan's pentagram.

If you want to know where the Star of David came from, it comes from Numbers 24:17, where the coming of Jesus through Jacob (who's Jacob? --Israel) is analogized to a star. That's where the Star of David comes from. It doesn't come from some sort of satanic, you know, Illuminati mindset, trying to pretend the Jews over there, or Jews

when they aren't there aren't really Jews. That's just idiotic, inane, stupid, waste of your time propaganda. Don't waste your time with that kind of stuff. Just stick with the pages of God's Word and you'll be just fine. Amen?

And then you see Barnabas citizenship given it says: *Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement)*. Cyprian means he was from the island of Cyprus. And there's where the island of Cyprus is, right off the coast of Israel. In the Mediterranean Sea. I was just there. I looked for Barnabas, I couldn't find him. But there's a lot of neat things going on in Cyprus. In fact, that's the general area where we got word that we weren't going into Israel because of the war and the political situation there. There's Cyprus there in the West. It's a real island. Paul on his first missionary journey, once he got outside of the borders of Israel and he evangelized, started going from coast to coast. Beginning top to bottom of the island in his evangelism. And you'll see that in Acts 13. And this is where Barnabas was from. He was from Cyprus. Some other fast information about Barnabas if I can give this to you.

[Fruchtenbaum] says, "Additional facts about Barnabas can be gleaned from other passages of Scripture. His name appears 23 times in the Book of Acts, and this is the first time he is mentioned. Furthermore, he is mentioned five times elsewhere in the New Testament...He was the cousin of John Mark, who was the author of the gospel of Mark (Col. 4:10). He was the man who persuaded the Church of Jerusalem to receive Paul (Acts 9:27) when Paul returned to Jerusalem from Damascus, claiming to have become a believer. Later, Barnabas was sent by the Church of Jerusalem to investigate Gentile salvation in Antioch (Acts 11:19-24). He was full of the Holy Spirit (Acts 11:24), which means he was a man who was controlled by the Holy Spirit. He brought Paul from Tarsus to Antioch to begin his ministry there (Acts 11:25-26). According to acts 14:12, he was of commanding appearance, as he was taken by the people of Lystra to be the god Jupiter or Zeus. [That must be kind of flattering when people mistake you for Zeus.] Finally, he also had the gift of apostleship (Acts 14:14) and was of that second category of apostles, like Paul or James, the half-brother of Yeshua. The only prerequisite for this category of apostleship is that they had seen the resurrected Messiah."

He wasn't part of the original twelve, but he had seen the resurrected Messiah. Apparently, Barnabas was among the five hundred that saw Yeshua or Jesus after His resurrection. And then we conclude here with Barnabas's work, verse 37, *who owned a tract of land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet*. He was a property owner? Uh oh. We have a problem. Levites aren't supposed to own property. I guess the Bible is full of filled with contradictions. I guess we can close it and go home. The Bible is false. Because after all, it does say in Numbers 18:20, Aaron, you shall have no inheritance in the land, nor any portion among them. Numbers 18:23, Levites-- Barnabus being one --shall have no inheritance. Deuteronomy 10:9, Levi does not have a portion of inheritance with his brothers. And here's Barnabas as a property owner. Well, we get an escape hatch when we learn that Barnabas was from where? Cyprus. Outside the borders of Israel.

Dr. Toussaint, in the Bible Knowledge Commentary, says, "Whereas the Levites were not told to hold land in Israel, they could own land elsewhere. Apparently, Barnabas, being from the island of Cyprus, owned land there. It was also possible that his wife owned land in Israel and that they together sold it." So rather than just saying, oh, the Bible is wrong, it contradicts itself. There are easy resolutions when you understand that yes, he was a Levite, but he was from Cyprus, and it was okay to own land outside of Israel's borders.

VI. Pre-Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 4:32-37)

C. Community of the Saints (32-35)

D. Barnabas' Positive Example (36-37)

1. Barnabas' example (36)

2. **Barnabas' Work (37)**

a. **Owned field (37a)**

b. **Sold field (37b)**

c. **Donation (37c)**

What does he do? He sells this field. And that's good. Because that's what everybody else was doing with their money to help the needy in Jerusalem. And it was within his rights to do that. He was a man of encouragement. He was a man of generosity. The Holy Spirit convicted him to sell his property and give it away to out-of-townners who were in need. And he did the right thing. He went through the right

procedure. He brought the money, and he laid it at the apostles' feet. And we've talked about how that's how they were doing it then. So, he's doing everything absolutely right. He owns a field, he sells a field, he makes a donation, and then the chapter ends. Why does it end on this high note? Because it wants you to compare the positive example to the negative example that's coming in chapter 5, where two people: Ananias and Sapphira didn't do it right. They misrepresented their generosity. They lied to the Holy Spirit. And they were, as we'll see next time (Acts chapter 5:1-11) slain in the Holy Spirit.

What you have to understand is a newborn, when it gets a virus, the newborn is vulnerable. I mean, if I get a virus, I've already got an immune system to fight it off. A newborn doesn't. That's why when a newborn gets sick, it's kind of a frightening, scary thing. That's what the early church was like. It's newborn, and any virus in the church could destroy it. And that's why God does what He does. When sin comes into this body in Acts chapter 5. And so that's what we're going to study next time. You might want to read verses 1 through 11 next time. And think of the negative example that's used there in light of the positive example at the end of Acts chapter 4.