

# ***Consequences for Loving Money***

## ***International Bible Lesson***

**Acts 4:32-5:11**

**Sunday, September 13, 2015**

**L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.**

*“‘Ananias,’ Peter asked, ‘why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land?’” (Acts 5:3—NRSV).*

Not everyone who claims to be a Christian is a Christian. Ananias appeared to be a Christian. He went to church with the Apostle Peter, and he even gave some of the proceeds from a land sale to the church, but he sold the land for more than he said and kept the difference. Peter then explained that personal property and money belong to Christians to save, spend, or share as they choose. No Christian is under compulsion to give any of his money or property to the church. Ananias and Sapphira lied and gave because they wanted people’s praise for their giving, but Jesus taught that the best giving is done secretly (Matthew 6:3-4). Ananias committed a great sin by lying to the Holy Spirit and to the church, but why did Satan fill his heart to lie? Jesus taught, “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money” (Matthew 6:24). Ananias loved money; so he came to hate and despise God just as Jesus warned. Therefore, Satan filled his heart and left no room for the love of God. Ananias became similar to Judas. Because Judas loved money he came to hate and despise Jesus; therefore, Satan entered him (John 13:27). Both proved that “The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs” (1 Timothy 6:10).

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## **Thinking Further**

1. Regarding church finances, how did the early Church in Jerusalem follow the example of Jesus and His disciples when He conducted ministry on earth?
2. What might you say to someone who asked you to do as the early church members did and give all of your possessions to their church or group to become a member?
3. Did Peter get rich and wear fancy robes as the leader of the apostles after people put money at his feet? Give a reason for your answer.
4. Read Malachi 3:3. Do you think this prophecy has been or was fulfilled? Give a reason for your answer.
5. Why do you think Satan entered Ananias’ heart?