

Sermon Based Small Group Guide
For November 1, 2020 sermon:

Empowered (Book of Acts): "It was an inside job"

Warm up: (Questions for discussion)

- What is God doing (in my life/family)?
- How am I doing?
- Where am I growing?
- What might be my next steps of faith?

Digging deeper: (20-30 minutes)

1. Generosity is a BIG DEAL in the Christian life. Read the following passages and talk about the "who" (Who is being generous or receiving generosity?) the "how" (How are they showing or being shown generosity?) and the "why" (Why is the helpful, necessary, God honoring?) when it comes to being open-handed in the way we approach our possessions:

Matthew 6:1-4	Luke 21:1-4	Acts 20:33-35
1 Timothy 6:17-19	2 Corinthians 9:6-10	James 2:14-17

2. Luke (the author of Acts) loves to use "contrast" in his stories. Chapter 4 ends with the example of Barnabas' Spirit-led generosity and Chapter 5 begins with a couple who gives Satan's ideas room to grow in their hearts. Satan cannot "make" anyone sin, but his temptations and suggestions are always tailored to what he knows we've struggled with in our lives. He will do whatever it takes to put distance between you and God. Read and talk about these passages concerning our spiritual enemy's strategies and techniques:

Genesis 3:1-7	2 Corinthians 11:13-15
1 Peter 5:8-9	James 4:1-7

3. Acts 5:3-4 is very important in this story. The sin Ananias and Sapphira were judged for was not their obvious envy of Barnabas or their decision to withhold some of the money from the sale of their property for themselves. Peter is very clear- they were attempting to lie to God. Talk about the concept of "lying to the Holy Spirit"...how do we do this today? When Christians act hypocritically by pretending a devotion that is not there or a surrender of life that they have not really made, what sort of words or actions might they use to fool others (and foolishly think they are fooling God too)?

Apply it: (10 minutes)

It is naïve to think that Satan is not trying to tear at the fabric of the church by sowing jealousy, envy, greed and disunity among us. How, in this overheated political season, have we let party and candidate become more important than the bond we have in Jesus. Read John 17:20-21 and "pray it" for our church so Satan won't win!