

MAIN IDEA: We function as the church as each of us pursues real faith.

I. Introduction

**Following Jesus is not about EXTERNAL CONFORMITY to RELIGIOUS EXPECTATIONS rather following Jesus is about INTERNAL FREEDOM AND RENOVATION OF THE HEART.

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What we are going to see today is another snap shot picture of the ideal - what it looks like when the people of God function as the Church and then we are going see two examples of how people decided to live out their faith then evaluate our own faith.

II. Acts 4:32-35

IMPORTANT: This is not communism - socialism. There was no mandate that had to sell everything and all goes into a central pot to be distributed among everyone.

NIV v.34 captures the heart of what is happening here “that there were no needy persons among them. *For from time to time* those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales”

REAL FAITH- Two things happen

- 1. Tightened relationship to God and people**
- 2. Loosening relationship to our possessions, things, this world.**

III. Evaluation: Do you have real faith?

A. Barnabas (read Acts 4:36-37)

Real faith - not about me - tightening to God and people loosening of things.

B. Ananias & Sapphira (read Acts 5:1-11)

They were lying to God - pretending to appear on the outside as religious - when internally they were not committed to God they were committed to themselves.

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IV. So What? How do I respond? How can we be the Church?

READ EPHESIANS 4:1-6

We do this by each of us :

- 1. Personally growing in our relationship with God. (Devoted, Vine, Apprentice)**

- 2. Obey God as He leads you to do something.**

V. Conclusion

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