

Gehazi, Judas, Annanias & Sapphira

by Robert B. Thompson

The sermon explores the stories of Gehazi, Judas, Ananias, and Sapphira, highlighting their common desire to be close to God, but also their mistakes and the severe judgment that followed.

Duration: 1:18:00

Scripture: Acts 5:1-4, Hebrews 6:4-6

Topics: "Spiritual Deception", "Christian Integrity"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of Gehazi and how he betrayed his master, Elisha, by seeking personal gain. The preacher emphasizes that Gehazi's actions were driven by a desire for money and recognition, rather than true devotion to God. The preacher also draws parallels between Gehazi and Judas, highlighting the danger of pretending to be faithful while harboring duplicity in one's heart. The sermon concludes with a call for integrity and sincerity in relationships within the church, emphasizing the importance of avoiding gossip, slander, and betrayal.

Transcript

We thank you for your goodness. Praise your holy name, Lord. We praise your holy name, Lord.

You are so good to us, Lord. You are so good to us, Lord. We just marvel at your wonderful love to us, Lord.

We do praise your holy name, Lord. We pray for each family represented here, Lord. We know their problems and we just pray that you will resolve each one.

We just lift up our voices tonight, Lord, to you for wisdom and help in our families. Lord, we bless your name. We bless your name.

Bless your name. We give thanks to you, Lord, and praise your holy name. Pray, Lord, that you will be with us, Lord, tonight.

That we will pursue exactly what you have in mind, Lord. Exactly what you have in mind, Lord. We ask you to help us now.

In Jesus' name. Amen. I think I'm still in Isaiah 42.

But before I go there, I want to mention something that I was writing on today. And it's a booklet, Mark, that you'll be getting. And it's called, So Near and Yet So Far.

I bet you'd never dream who it's talking about. It's talking about Ananias and Sapphira. And it's something that I had never thought about at all.

If you want to turn your Bibles to Acts 5. Ananias and Sapphira started going through my mind. I've never given much thought of them. I thought they had a red suit and a pork tail and carried a pitchfork.

But I think God showed me something about Ananias and Sapphira and Gehazi and Judas that I had never thought about before. If you notice in Acts 5, verse 1, a man named Ananias together with his wife Sapphira also sold a piece of property. With his wife's full knowledge, he kept back part of the money for himself.

But brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet. So, he was the main doer here. They both sold the property.

It was evidently in both of their names. But he was the one that decided to keep back part of the money for himself. They brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet.

I thought about that, and I thought about that, and I thought, Boy, there's so much there. In the first place, Gehazi and Judas and Ananias and Sapphira had something in common. They wanted to be close to God.

Now, think about that. There's nothing that said that Gehazi had to be a servant to Elisha. There's no constraint on him.

He wasn't sold into slavery. There's no record that he was a slave or anything. He just wanted to do that job and be with Elisha.

The same was true of Judas. There was nothing that said about Judas that he had to be one of the twelve and follow Jesus around and not work. We know he was a thief, but who doesn't have problems? He had problems.

Gehazi had problems. But they weren't massive. They weren't massive.

Because I was going to talk on Isaiah, I don't have my scriptures at hand. How hard would it be to find the scripture in Matthew that talks about Judas throwing the money away? I want to show you something about Judas you may never have thought about. While he's looking it up on the concordance, it's in Matthew.

It'd be toward the end of the book. There may be someone to find it. Lisa was here.

She had it by now. I don't know how she does it. Matthew 27.

I want you to know something extraordinary in the NIV. You know where I'm going with this? These were all good people. They hadn't done the things.

There was people, the Pharisees were way worse than Judas in the things they did. They tried, if you stop to think about it, they tried to kill Lazarus after he'd been raised from the dead. Because Lazarus was such a testimony.

They were going to kill him again. Now that's wickedness. That's down-home wickedness.

And then they called for Jesus' blood. That was way worse than what Judas did. I'm sure there were Israelites that were way worse than Gehazi.

And for sure there were Israelites, there were Jews. Anaracts and the Pharaoh were Jews. They were part of the early church that whenever they assembled they were in danger of imprisonment or being killed.

That cost them something to assemble. They weren't like the Jews that followed Paul around wherever he was in Asia Minor and Turkey and trying to kill him and then trying to tear up the work of the gospel. They wouldn't have done anything like that.

I'm telling you something. These were not bad people. And yet the judgment on them was horrific.

The judgment on Gehazi was what? That he was afflicted with leprosy. The judgment on Judas was what? Inconceivable. It was said of him it was good that he never was born.

That he never was born. And the judgment on Ananias and Sapphira was quick. Unlike the dealing of God in the New Covenant.

They did one thing wrong, bang, they're both killed. So there's something here. These were not people with red suits, horns, carrying around a pitchfork.

They were not wicked people. In fact they were better than most and they had a desire to be with God. There's something we can learn from Gehazi, from Judas, and from Ananias and Sapphira.

There's something to be learned there. Because I'll tell you, in each one of us, there is a Gehazi. In each one of us, there is a Judas.

And in each one of us, there is an Ananias and Sapphira. And God's going to be calling that out in these days because there's a reason why the judgment is so severe. Now take a look at Judas.

Early in the morning, all the chief priests, the elders of the people, came to the decision to put Jesus to death. For those who take, this is Matthew 27. In the NIV, they found him and led him away.

When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse. He had no idea that Jesus was the Messiah. He didn't know that.

Now, Hitler, for all the things he did, there's no account that he was ever seized with remorse. Judas had just... The thing that he did was bad, okay? But a lot of people have done things worse. If he were a thoroughly wicked man, he would not have been seized with remorse.

Wicked people aren't seized with remorse. You remember the rich man in hell? As the agony he was in, he was concerned about his family. We picture the Bible in black and white, and we figure, well, I'm of the wheat, and there are the tares, and never the twain shall meet.

That isn't true. These were ordinary people. The rich man's problem was not that he rejected Christ, it was that he was selfish.

He was selfish. Just like the whole American nation. He was selfish.

That's why he was put in hell. Because the law commands us to be good to the poor. Several places.

Whoever loans to the poor loans to God. We should be thinking about this now, because we're coming into a period of shaking and testing. We're not ready yet.

I'm not talking about Monsignor, I'm talking about the Church of Jesus Christ, and particularly those who desire to be close to Him. That was true of Gehazi, he was the prophet's servant. It was true of Judas, he was one of the twelve.

And I'll tell you something, we've talked about passing from the called to the chosen to the faithful. Judas was chosen. What did the Lord say? Have not I chosen you twelve? And one of you is a devil.

See, things are not black and white. Judas was chosen. And he was of the twelve.

That's about as far into Christ as you can get, except for the three on the Mount of Transfiguration. He was part, he was in there. He was, today he would represent people in the most fervent church on earth.

The twelve who were with Jesus. Have not I chosen you twelve? He chose them on the Mount, in prayer. And Judas, as we see, was not a thoroughly wicked person.

All that happened was he saw that Jesus was condemned. And as far as he was concerned, Jesus was a loser. See, because he wasn't part of the zealots, he wasn't part of those trying to overthrow the Roman Empire.

Don't forget, they had tried to make Jesus king. And Judas' hope, evidently, was that Jesus was going to end up in a high place of power and authority, because the Messiah was supposed to be the ruler. You know, when you read the Old Testament, you can't tell the difference between the first and second coming of Christ.

And he knew that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus said that Peter, flesh and blood is not revealed to some to you. But my father and Judas had heard that.

He knew he was the Messiah, and he wanted to be in his right hand. Yes. You said earlier that Judas didn't know he was the Messiah.

That's right. That's right. But in this context, that's right.

I'm glad you... I'll revise that in my book if I put that in there, because I haven't gone through it yet. I just went through it once hastily today. But you see here, his alarm was not that he had betrayed Messiah.

Look at it. He didn't say, I betrayed the Messiah. What did he say? Innocent blood.

As far as he was concerned, Jesus, at this point, was no Messiah. Because he thought he was... Apparently, the Bible doesn't say this, but apparently, Judas was a thief. Wanted money.

Wanted wealth. And supposed that Jesus was going to come out on top. And that's good, Andrew.

You can do that any time. And sharpen us up. Alright.

Notice what he did with the money. A thief. In verse 5. What did he do? Verse 5. What did he do? Now, I don't know.

I haven't really studied on how much 30 pieces of silver was worth. It might have been enough to buy him a farm or something. He was willing to deal for 30 pieces of silver, so it evidently wasn't a dollar and a half.

It was a substantial amount of money. And he was a thief. But it just took one little thing to cause him to repent.

One little thing. Yes. That may be true.

That may be true. He may have thought he was going to get his money for nothing. That they would never be able to capture him.

That's a good point. Alright. Now, notice.

I have betrayed innocent blood. That was what was concerning him. All of a sudden, see, Satan had used him and then had left him.

You know that Satan does that with us? He moves us into a situation where we do some heinous thing, and then he leaves us and laughs at us. And he was laughing at Judas through the priest. And when Judas came to his right mind as a human being, he said, I have betrayed an innocent man.

I know this man is innocent. I have betrayed him. And that wouldn't have been true of Stalin.

That wouldn't have been true of Hitler or some of the monsters of history or a thoroughly wicked person. He was not a thoroughly wicked person. So Judas threw the money into the temple and left.

Then he went away and hanged himself. He was, I mean, that's repentance to the tenth power. But notice the action of the priest.

What tender hearts they had. What does that do us? That's your responsibility. Tough beans, kid.

They're wicked. They're wicked people. Trying to put Lazarus to death.

Judas didn't do anything like that. So you see, we have here no explanation for why the horrendous judgment that fell on Judas that he should be the symbol of treachery for two thousand years and then have it said of him it would be good of him that he was never been born. He's termed the son of perdition.

He's a forerunner of antichrist. Nothing worse could happen to a human being than happen to Judas. And yet he was a person who chose to follow an itinerant preacher.

A poor fisherman. He had an attraction to things spiritual. Just like Yahazi.

Just like Ananias and Sapphira. We've got to contemplate tonight. What was he lacking? And why was the judgment so severe? Because we've got to equate Judas and Ananias and Sapphira who were worshiping with people who always were in danger of imprisonment.

They were Jews. The first church in Jerusalem was 5000 Jews. They were all Jews.

And they were all keeping the law of Moses. They were all keeping the law of Moses. They didn't know anything about grace.

They were all keeping the law of Moses. And they all believed that Jesus was the Messiah. And this was Ananias and Sapphira.

And let's go back then to Acts 5. And another thing about Ananias and Sapphira. They were not compelled to give. There's no place the Lord told the early Christian community to be a communistic system.

He didn't tell them to sell everything they had. And the only thing that I can figure out is that they were reflecting back on the teaching of Jesus to the rich young ruler. Sell all that you have and give to the poor and follow me.

So that must have come through. And they thought we should all be sharing all of our things because the master was poor and he preached the gospel to the poor. So maybe they went from there.

But I have never seen any scripture here where God commanded the early church to give away everything they had and share with each other like that. Which was a true communal effort there. Does anyone know of any commandment? I don't know of any.

So that's why we're back to Acts 5. Now if you look at it with his rightful knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself but brought the rest and put it at the apostles feet. And when Peter commented on it in verse 4 he said, didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? We didn't pressure you to do it. So we have to ask ourselves why he did it.

And the point is that he did and he probably gave a substantial amount of money. This was a real estate sale. He sold property and it was probably in our time thousands of dollars that he just handed to the church.

So he gave and he wasn't compelled to give. Do you see what I'm saying? I started thinking about this. There's a lot through that story when you think about it.

Now here's another thing. Peter could have handled it in any number of ways. He could have said Ananias and Sapphira you're barred from the fellowship.

Or he could have said you have to give all the money. See there's other things that he could have said. Or he could have said God won't take God wants it all so here's back what you gave.

God doesn't want it on those terms. He didn't have to respond like that. But what he said is very significant and gets to the heart of Gehazi Judas and Ananias and Sapphira.

He said this. He said you didn't lie to men. The judgment that came on him was not because he lied to the apostles by saying that was all and his wife said the same thing.

They said was that the price and she said yes. So they both lied to the apostles but that was not the sin. The sin was there was something wrong with their heart they were living a lie unto God.

Now what was that lie? That's what we have to search ourselves. What was the lie that they were lying unto God? The lie that they were lying unto God was that we love you with all our heart and we're worshiping you. That's the first commandment of the ten.

They were Jews. You have no other God before me. I am the Lord your God.

You have no other God before me. Don't make any graven images. Now here's all the brethren that they were with all people living in jeopardy of their lives turn their back on their religion some of them their families their relatives you know what happened to Stephen and this was really perilous times for them.

So Ananias and Sapphira they didn't have to go with that group there was nothing compelling and after they went to the group there was nothing that said you have to give the money from the property that you sold to the church. There's nothing there that did that. So then what motivated them? They wanted God but yet there was something in them that was insincere that was not single before God.

It was not single unto God. It was halfway there. It was really hypocritical in a sense in that they were among people who had given everything and they were pretending that they had given everything now what in the world motivated them to do that? And why the tremendous anger of God over it? I mean there are very few accounts in the New Testament where God's judgment the judgment of God the action of the Holy Spirit was to slay rather than heal.

You don't see much of it. Yes? If that breaks the mind you can sin and the cost is so great. Luther and Peter said something similar to what Ananias said and the multitude of death and disease were of one heart and one soul so neither the name of the heart of the things which he possessed was his own but they had all things in common.

So they were on Ananias' heart and probably he wanted to be they were doing what everybody else was doing but then he said their heart was not right so they kept that part of it but they just wanted to be gave part of it what he sold that property for and thinking that he could be part of that group in the church that was giving it all but then his heart was not paid for that. That's right. But what we're asking Tony is two things why did he want to? Why did he want to be with religious people? See? That's one thing.

And another thing why did God react so violently? That's what I want to get at. Now let's see where do we go from here? I want to get at those two things. Why God reacted as he did and why what was there in Ananias and Sapphira that they would want to come? Why? Why would people want to come among intense religious people unless they themselves while their heart was not pure? Yes? Just to go to the end of the tour it talks about Barnabas and that whereas Ananias and Sapphira is that and this is where we're going to see I feel that this testing is coming to that I think we're heading toward the greatest backdoor revival in history.

That's what I believe. Yes? It seems to me that the In a minute. What I want to point out to you is when that Peter spoke he didn't say you've never been a Christian in the first place because that comes up today quite often in fact that's one of the favorite views of evangelical commentators especially when they're addressing Hebrews 6 and so on they say these people never were Christians in the first place.

Yeah, Zodiatis says that in Hebrews 6 and here the Bible says they have tasted the good word of God and the Holy Spirit the powers of the age to come he says Zodiatis I believe it was Zodiatis or a commentator like him says they were only professors they had never really been Christians but see that won't wash see one of the prevailing fundamentalist views is that if any person keeps on sinning he never was a Christian in the first place see that's how which if you take that full circle means that the only proof of salvation is righteousness but they don't take it that far they're just trying to prove eternal security that you can never be lost they only go halfway through the cycle but that will not stand the test of Scripture because when you go into 2 Peter he said after having known

the way of righteousness if you then turn back it would be good that you had never been saved in the first place so there are Scriptures that prevent that interpretation so he didn't come in Ananias and Sapphira and say you never were genuine see you don't even belong in this group or anything of the kind and I think that's important to remember because there's been too much of the in the churches of the feeling well those people are really wicked off there and they've always been terrorists and always will be terrorists but I'm of the Lord's sweet and that's there's a self-satisfaction an evangelicalism that is deadly because it gives all the people feel well you're in our happy group so you're perfect the truth is as I said that this problem that those 3 people had 4 people Judas,

Gehazi and Ananias and Sapphira is in all of us and part of it was mentioned back there by someone someone that was addressing it it may have been Audrey or Eddie or somebody has to do with cost see there are many people who speak they've been saved they've been spoken in tongues and prophesied and they're part of the church and they give and they serve and everything but it has never really cost them anything it has never really cost them anything and that's where it hits the fire that's where it hits the fire if we come to the place in the United States and we're no better than the Muslims in Kosovo or any place else but if it ever does come that we go that it's that it's really cost us something to be a Christian we're going to see the greatest backdoor revival in history and it has to

happen because the church of today every time somebody talks to me anymore and the latest one was my brother Jordan was telling me about some of the things that he knows of and other things from David Wilkerson spoken of the church is in an incredible mess brother Jordan was telling me about he knew of some preacher he told me that that was bragging that he paid \$15,000 for his dog weren't you the one that told me that and the people are running up they're not even taking up the offering the congregation is running up and throwing money on the platform I mean this stuff is going on and the preachers I mean these are big evangelical churches 10,000 members and everything and the preachers telling them that God in the end time is going to make every Christian rich with all their bills paid

and the rest of the world is going to be poverty stricken and they're going to have to come to the Christians to get saved so they can even survive economically that is what is being taught and that is so we're not talking about some little cult somewhere we're talking about mainline charismania yes saying the only way that God's ever going to clean this thing up is with suffering yes coming back to this that it isn't those people out there it isn't those people out there it's something that we have to watch in our own heart because we're going to be tested we're going to be tested on this now I want you to see if you can find in the concordance of Colleen works so she gets here late and her penalty is she has to sit up under this spout where the glory comes up alright there's a verse in

Psalms and you'd have to search I think sweet fellowship I want to show you something here that I think is one of the main reasons and you know this whole subject is kind of frightening because it gets it gets to because we're not talking about sinners we're talking about people who have been close to the glory and in the case of Ammonites and Sapphira who chose this and Judas chose it and undoubtedly Elisha but there's a verse in Psalms that you could search I think sweet fellowship and there Jesus in the spirit in Psalms is talking about Judas and I think it's a key it's a key to this we went into the house of God you could search house of God and it only appears I think three times in Psalms that's it now back up to verse 12 back up to verse 12 highlight verse 12 this is the spirit of

Christ speaking about Judas now notice what Jesus what Jesus said and I think this is a key to the reason why God reacted so against people who were not as sinful as the people of the world if an enemy were

insulting me Christ is saying the spirit of Christ I could endure it if a foe were raising himself against me I could hide from him but it is you the spirit is saying talking to Judas it is you a man like myself my companion my close friend that was the problem that was the problem and that tells us that when we pursue God we have to realize God is a person you have not lied to men but to God and see he had been in there those 12 were closer to God than anyone else on earth these were the ones who were chosen to be taught by the master for three years if it was someone else I could

have stood it but not you and how many remember what Jesus said in Revelation that I think it really ties in he said I would rather that you were cold or hot I don't want if you are lukewarm you are going to be vomited out of my mouth and see Ananias and Sapphira were not cold and they were not hot they were lukewarm they were trying to straddle the fence they were trying to get the glory of God and yet keep back just enough so that in the time of catastrophe that they would survive they wanted to pay so much and that's the point he didn't give he did give but he didn't and he could have said I have given you half of the proceeds and it would have been no problem because Peter wasn't asking for any of it remember when someone tried to buy the power from the apostles and your money

perished with you these people were interested in money and all that he had to do but the fact that he came and he said what he did he was judged because in his heart he was lying to God he was saying I love you with all my heart just like the rest of these here and God says you're lying you don't you're trusting you're trying to serve two masters Elisha was trying to serve two masters Judas was trying to serve two masters yes Emily the scripture in Hebrews 6 also has to do with this it says and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come and then have fallen away it is impossible to renew them again to repentance since they again crucified to themselves but that's not what's going on here they Ananias and Sapphira did

not turn back see that's the point it isn't black and white it isn't people who knew the Lord and then said forget you and walked off they were people who were pressing in in the most fervent place possible that's a whole different picture than backsliding it has to do with you and me because we want God with all our heart and we've got to be sure that we're not coming into the midst where God is present God is present in this church He's present wherever people are crying for righteousness and really seeking His face I don't care whether it's a Catholic church in lower Zambia wherever people come together in truth in the name of Jesus and calling God with all their heart God's going to be there how many believe that? now when God is there you better if you want to fall away that's one

thing then you're cold and then you don't get vomited out of the Lord's mouth something else will happen to you but if you're in with fervent Christians you're pressing in you're growing but you'll hold back in your heart something and yet you're fellowshiping with people who have not who know God and God passes in the ranks and He comes to you and He stops and He says wait a minute this man's heart is not pure this woman's heart is not pure you're I don't mean by that that you're not perfect yet none of us are perfect yet so don't worry about being perfect none of us are being perfect I'm talking about deliberately planning your life so that you can have what the fervent Christians have and yet retain your spot in the world that's what I'm talking about I don't know if you get the drift

or not but it's somewhat subtle but it means I'm in here and I'm with all these guys and I'm praying and everything but yet I'm I'm holding something back because you know Y2K or something else and uh I wanna be sure I save me and mine underline me and forget about the rest of the disciples that's why I told you I would never make provision for Y2K myself until everyone in the church has been provided for can

you see the rationale for that? because if we if we are brothers and sisters and we we stand together and we live together and we put our best into serving the Lord bringing His presence down so that visitors will be blessed and delivered and we're standing together and in the back I'm plotting something out here so just in case the church falls or Y2K comes or something else I'm

okay and forget about you God sees that you see what I'm saying?

God sees that integrity is a compound it's compounded from faithfulness and sincerity and if you'll examine Gehazi and Judas and Ananias and Sapphira you'll see that they had everything going for them except faithfulness and sincerity they were not faithful to those that trusted them and they were not sincere all of those four people they all were liars but they all were as close to the glory that you can get there's no closer to the glory of God you can get than Gehazi with Elisha or Ananias and Sapphira at the birth of the Christian church or Judas with the twelve you can't get any closer to the glory and they were called so to speak and chosen so to speak I'm sure Elisha had chosen Gehazi and Christ had chosen Judas he said so and Ananias and Sapphira were chosen and accepted in the

group and they were called of God the whole thing was of God the whole thing was in the fire of God but they were lacking faithfulness and sincerity and that is what the fire of God tests see that is what his fire tests when you're boiled down to the last onion I mean you're down on your uppers as it all said about poor people when your souls wear out all you've got left you look like you're wearing shoes but it's only the uppers they call being down in your uppers that's it but we don't use that anymore but there has been so much of that in the Christian church you can't believe it all the way from the evangelist who wears shoes with holes in them and then gets down and kneels on the platform so everybody can see the holes in his shoes so they give money this stuff goes on all the way up

today to now some of the very sophisticated things oh to make a big show in the church Jesus Jesus oh God send the fire down and then they they get out among themselves and say what was the take tonight you better know it so you won't be disillusioned someday that's why I emphasize so much in this church that is down home it's a family it's just a group of sincere people with integrity they can have ten thousand people in a church I don't want anything if it doesn't have absolute sincerity and integrity because Christ will not accept it sure they do big things sure people get healed speak in tongues thousands get converted you say well doesn't the Lord isn't that the Lord is it he said to somebody you prophesied in my name you cast out devils and worked miracles in my name get out of here

no better to have a hundred people with sincerity and integrity than to have ten thousand and it's just a business and they're all running here and they're playing the religious game because because after all what does it gain us if we lose the whole world and gain the whole world and lose our own soul or our relationship with Jesus Christ what gain is there to us so I believe God is going to purify his church but look at what the Spirit said concerning Judas before he was born and that's why Jesus said it would be good for you man if you never were born but remember he was not in a red suit with a forked tail and a pitchfork he was an ordinary guy who was quick to be filled with remorse just over the fact that he thought that he had backed a loser but he knew the guy was innocent and

being a thief and loving money and losing his soul over money he threw it away and then went and hanged himself and that's not the act actions of a calculating wicked conniving man that's the actions of a person with a certain amount of humanity and sincerity would you agree with that but look what it says about him with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship as we walked with the throne at the house of God

did you ever notice that Jesus never in John 6 he said have not I chosen you and one of you is a devil and he knew of course that Judas was stealing from the common purse see that's one thing do you notice in there one of the commonalities is betraying those who trust you see how Gehazi betrayed Elisha Elisha said where did you go oh I just went around visiting with my friend did not my

heart go with you when you went and lied to the to the man that healed the leprosy but see he betrayed his master betrayed his friend Ananias and Sapphira were betraying the brothers they were betraying them can you see that they say oh yeah we're just like you yes we've given everything we have we sold our property we gave it let us be an example to you all they were betraying that's a terrible thing Judas was betraying the other apostles here they all think you know we'll have everything common so they're putting all their money in a common purse maybe that's why the early church did that because that's what the twelve did and here Judas is pilfering money out from his brothers his friends that's what you call a rat think the original term for that is a rat think at least it used to be

when I was in the Marine Corps that was a rat think as anybody who would act like that with his buddies that's a rat think and Gehazi was a rat think here Elisha had given a pure testimony to that guy yeah I don't want your money take all your camels and go back to Damascus and then here he comes trotting oh my my master really wants some garments spoil the testimony there's an element of that in there and you see that in here with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship why is it going on with this because Jesus is saying you hurt me you hurt me we walked together we were friends you know today David said about Jonathan he said your love is something he says it passes the love of women now today you can't have that between men because of this homosexuality thing has so corrupted corrupted

everything if you see two men together you know they must be gay but when I was in the Marine Corps it wasn't like that it was not like that at all and anyone that has experienced the camaraderie of other men you know what I'm talking about that's not like a love for women it's not the same and it's certainly not the nastiness of homosexuality there's something there where there's a guy there and I had friends like that in the Marine Corps I've got one of them his name is tattooed on my arm Armando Valterno from Pittsburgh we were friends he would have never betrayed me man that guy would have given his life for me and I would have given my life for him we were buddies we were friends we were comrades and in the Marine Corps I don't know how it is today where you're mixing men and women

and it's so ridiculous I don't even think about it I'd lose my sanctification but in a platoon of Marines they should be trustworthy because if one guy messes up there could be the whole platoon there's a relationship there that is not like between men and women and that's what David was talking about he said your love for me passed the love of women he ought to know about the love of women he had about 17 wives but see the relationship with Jonathan was different it was pure it was holy he would have given his life for Jonathan and Jonathan would have given his life for David and here's 12 guys whatever shekels they have they put them in a common pot so they'll all have something to eat and then you've got one of these guys stealing money out of the pot and that is a rat fake I don't

know maybe it had to be a man I don't know I've never in my life seen two women that were buddies maybe there is such a thing could be my wife will tell me about it when I get home sweet fellowship as we walk and you can picture the Jews used to come from every town and Jerusalem of course was in the high point and there would be days journeying up from Bethlehem for example or not Bethlehem not Bethlehem that was close to Jerusalem but from Nazareth for example and there would be days on the road walking and singing and chanting the psalms of ascent some of the psalms if you read your Bible it will say a

psalm of ascent it's the last part of the book of psalms and that was because they were singing those while they were ascending up to the temple and Judas was with the twelve and they

would go up to the temple and they were having sweet fellowship he said but that's if it was my enemy I could endure or a foe I could hide but you you Judas do you betray the son of man not a bad dude as dudes go compared with the Pharisees but look at what happened wait a minute it isn't in this passage there's another passage that goes on about the things that came upon Judas I thought that it followed there but it doesn't well it could be verse 20 my companion attacks his friend he violates his covenant his speech is smooth as butter but yet war is in his heart my companion let's scroll down some more on that maybe it's further on down there's one remember that's quoted in Acts where it says his bishop Rick let another take they got that from Psalms there's no it's not there but

there's somewhere where it goes on and it talks about the penalties that came upon there's a curse that came upon Jesus because he had betrayed his friend now that tells us that in the fellowship of the body of Christ when we say that you know we're one of them you know we meet together there's a camaraderie we trust each other that we can't be giving part we have and I don't mean by that that we should be giving any money I'm not asking for money whatever you know that but in our heart we can't be holding back and protecting ourselves without thinking about the rest of the body because if we do that we're a rat fake that's all you can say about it you're not sincere not speaking out not generally because this is on tape and it will come on the internet soon enough there's no sincerity

there the people don't know they're assuming that you're pure gold and you take care of them one for all and all for one but it isn't the case and you know the reason there's going to be a backdoor revival is because this is the way it's been in the Christian churches and that's the way it is the people all pretend to love each other but in their heart is this duplicity and God doesn't want that He wants absolute integrity no cutting down other people no gossiping no slandering no betraying them total integrity let's take a look at Revelation 17 verse 14 is any of this making sense to you? do you see what I mean when I say that Gehazi is in all of us? and we've got to watch it there are not some evil people out there there are people like you and me that love God but are not all the way

there we're pretending that we're there but we're not all the way there and that won't wash in the days to come it's going to be too intense Andrew? you don't know the story of Gehazi? ok I was assuming that everyone did well we can look at that in a minute let's look first at Revelation 17 verse 14 that's my problem I make a lot of assumptions when I teach alright notice that those who are with Christ when he returns this is the battle of Armageddon and those who are with him that ride with him have three things that are true of them they are called of God they pass from the ranks the general ranks of the called to the chosen but that's just the beginning where the final determinant is is in this realm of faithfulness now what is faithfulness? faithfulness is your and my willingness to

stay true to our commitment when it hurts when it costs that's what faithfulness is faithfulness is not proven when everything is going great faithfulness is revealed when you keep your commitment costs and hurts that's when you know that you have faithfulness those who are with him are called and chosen and faithful so we can be called in a moment and then we are chosen as we follow Christ as Judas did and as Ananias and Sapphira did but then that's just the beginning of determining whether we are going to appear with Christ or not that's just the beginning to be called and chosen is just the beginning where the real issue is is in this realm of faithfulness and you remember that when Christ returns what is there that is written on his thigh? huh? faithful faithful and true remember I

told you that integrity is faithfulness and sincerity which implies truth and if you're not a faithful, true person if there is what do you call it? dis dis, it starts with a dis dissembling in your personality where you are not absolutely straight with your brothers and sisters in the Lord you're not faithful and true you will not be with Jesus because if he's got this army at his back they have got to be people that are so solid with each other that there's no chance of a breaking down within the army where there's jockeying for position well I'm not in the front rank or I feel I should be a first lieutenant or I think we should go to the right instead of the left and so on, it cannot be that there must be absolute faithfulness and absolute truth is there any question about that? yes

um, let's say you're 50 people he didn't say Ananias and Sapphira you're not perfect he said you have lied to God and when you come in the church and you're just an ordinary person and you know you've got all kinds of problems uh, that's entirely acceptable that's what the ministry is all about that's why I preach and everything that's why we have gifts of the spirit that's why we have different ministries in the church is to move us to the point because none of us is there yet we're pressing onward that isn't the problem that's being described here at all that's not the problem that was with Gehazi that he had imperfections that isn't the problem that was with Judas and it isn't the problem that was with Ananias and Sapphira that wasn't the problem the problem was dissembling that is,

pretending you were one thing when you're not I don't mean by that that you have to go around telling everybody you're a sinner I don't mean that at all but I mean when you lie see they had Ananias and Sapphira lied and uh Gehazi, we'll go into that in a minute for Andrew he lied to Elisha Elisha asked him, gave him a chance to say what he had done and he lied and Judas of course lied by going up and kissing Christ and pretending that he was his friend but now in the case of Peter see, Jesus said you're going to deny me and he did but you see it wasn't the same thing because Peter was tested in such a way that Jesus knew he wasn't going to cut it and he needed that because he tended to be evidently pretty cocksure of himself and Jesus wanted him humble and don't worry, Peter never forgot

that and Paul never forgot that he held the coat of those that stoned the first martyr God has his way of making sure you remember you're the chiefest of sinners but it was night it was cold, everybody was weak everybody was scared to death and he knew Peter couldn't cut the mustard he knew that but Peter was not a person who was dissembling at all when he said, though everybody betrays you, I never will that wasn't dissembling, he honestly believed that but the Lord showed him that he wasn't as strong as he thought he was so there was no betrayal of the brothers there Peter didn't run from Christ because it cost him so much and yet pretend that he was in there with the best of them he went out and cried he said, I sure did, I denied the Lord and church history says that he was crucified

upside down he didn't feel he was worthy to be crucified right side up so there's the difference so we're not talking about imperfect people here, not at all we're talking about as we're moving forward in God make sure that you don't reserve see this is what has been so true of the Christian church through the years and I know Hal could describe it to a T and Andrew could describe it to a T and others that have been raised in denomination alike could describe it to a T and they'll tell you that people come in and pretend they're one thing when they're not see, they're holding back and it's called playing the church game and they want to they come into a church like this for example and they want to be seen and known as a totally dedicated Christian they want to be seen and known not as a

perfect person but as a person who's got everything out on the line they're not playing the church game and of course Christians do that it is endemic in fundamentalism that people come and the pastor

preaches about cross carrying obedience and everything and they know that he's not doing it and then they go out and they talk and they joke about it over the lunch table and if he's stepped on anybody's toes then they all criticize him and everything and what I'm telling you is this is not the church this is the Christian religion but it is not the church of Jesus Christ the church of Jesus Christ it includes only people who when they're at home they say the same thing that they say in church what you see is what you get they're totally integrated people sure they have faults sure they're

not there yet but they're playing the old church game and if you listen to them at home or over the dinner table the first one to suffer is the pastor and then the other church people, they're not quite there yet and that's why they reserve a portion into themselves because they don't want to go that length to commit themselves and so they reserve a certain part of their life and I tell you, I think when people are raised in that climate it will be absolutely a miracle of God if they ever escape other people are raised in church scenarios where there's constant criticism and gossiping, constant criticism it's a way of life and I have never seen that I can think of anyone raised in that religious climate that ever really changed that ever really changed and so my greatest hope and your

greatest hope in working with the Lord in building the body and in building the army of the Lord is we've got to get new Christians or young children because those that are raised in Evangelicalism I don't know Brother Jordan what your experience has been but my experience in Evangelicalism has been that people are so it's like a lost generation it's like a lost generation they are so steeped in slander and gossip and playing the game they come and they tell her we give everything to the Lord and we follow the Lord and they're buying property and hoarding money and everything else to protect themselves in case of Y2 or something else I mean they're just not trustworthy they're not what they appear to be there's a fundamental hypocrisy there I think that's what caused the hippie movement

is because they saw in their parents this fundamental hypocrisy and I taught hippies and I'm telling you I mean real Indian headband sandaled hippies from the chain that went from south here, even south of San Diego to Big Sur and when we were in Palo Alto we were on that hippie run and there was a house there where the hippie Christians met and God had taken away from them three things sex music and drugs and they knew it and they talked about it and it was a long time before they would start again with music and when they did their music was powerful, it was strong now these were young people averaging age I would say between 20 and 30 right in there and they had rebelled against their parents they had gone on the hippie thing and now they had decided that that was no where they were

going to serve Christ well I was teaching a bible study near where the hippie house was and it was funny because the guy that owned the house where I was teaching was a retired Wall Street executive I mean he was uptight white square of the uptight white squares I mean he was really conservative and myself who was not exactly a party person you know but I was no match for him he was far more august than I was in his dignity well this is where the hippies came to study the bible and they would sit on the floor Indian headbands, sandals, all the rest of them on this hippie house you would never want to teach a finer group of people in your life they were so utterly sincere, and I knew I couldn't bring them to the charismatic church we attended which was a good church as far as churches went

as fine as any of them but I knew that those hippies would smell the hypocrisy the minute they went through the door and they would have none of it one time we had communion I was told, Stan has heard me say this in Eddie, but it was so funny because in communion what they do, they just have a common cup and they pass it around, and I mean you're talking hepatitis and everything else and so I'm used to

these little cups or at least wipe off the top, not them well that's the time to put up or shut up and so I just I had my test get a blood test but I didn't and I survived but they told brother Gillings the reason we come here is because you have authority and that's what we are lacking, that's what we rebelled against and that's what we want, we need and I heard much the same thing, and so

did Stan and Audrey and a couple of conventions ago when some of the Gen X kids got up there on the platform, you remember and they kept on as though there was some big gulp, and those kids, if they'd listened we're trying to tell them, we want what you got and they were saying, oh we've got to reach out to the Gen X and everything, and here are these Generation X kids who were there, and they had nice ties and dress ties and everything and they wanted to be part of the group and the people on the platform were so into ministering to Gen X they didn't even see what was in front of them so I figured, forget it, the kids will find their way through because they're sincere but see, the churches are so used to this game, that unless you get hippies or children and bring them up or new

converts you're wrestling against this thing constantly because the people are expecting to go on with the gossip and the slander and they get outside and they talk to their friends and well, I guess pastor's having a bad day or whatever because this is the way they've been trained and you don't get it out of them Darlene, don't get into this or Regina, or you that's why I like my young warriors up in front because I want to blow that out of you because Christ won't accept it he will not accept insincerity and this whole thing it's nothing to him 10,000 insincere people all mulling around and criticizing and gossiping and none of them taking up their cross and following Jesus and none of them that can be trusted and they're all playing the Ananias and Sapphira thing that whole thing is

nothing but nauseating to the Lord there's got to be some changes and older people can make it they can do it, they can be a Joshua and Caleb there's nothing stopping them from it but you remember, Joshua and Caleb were very different from the rest of Israel when they were all blathering and doing their church game in the wilderness, Joshua and Caleb were different they said, we can take the land what are you blatant about in your tent, we can do it no, they brought us up here to destroy us we're all dead, we're all dead why even try, we're all dead don't join them keep yourself pure there are such things as sincere Christians don't ever lose your idealism there are such things there's something terribly sincere about Calvary we're talking about faithfulness look at Revelation 2 it must

be verse 10 we'll look at that and then I want to hit Gehazi Revelation 2 about verse 10 don't be afraid of what you're about to suffer the devil will put some of you in prison it isn't God that puts us in prison, it's the devil and the Lord could deliver us but he doesn't he doesn't he says you're going to suffer be faithful be faithful and remember I told you faithfulness is being true to your commitments when it hurts when it costs you something that's what faithfulness is, it isn't proven in flowery beds of ease it's proven when you keep on going when it costs you something and that's what brings out sincerity in your nature and integrity, it's staying in there and see others hedge their bets well, you know, it hurts a little, so let's keep a little back here so we'll be alright if

there's any problems that's Ananias and Sapphira alright, now you're going to have to look up Gehazi I forget what chapter it's in there we go 2 Kings 5 voice from the gallery 2 Kings 5 there's this Andrew, do you remember the story of the leader of the Arameans of the army what was his name?

Naaman Naaman he was commander of the Arameans and he was a leper and he had a little girl, Hebrew servant that he captured in his house and she says, there's a prophet over in Israel where I come from, he

can heal you of your leprosy so Naaman asks the king about it the king of Aram, and he says cool, go, be my ambassador, go talk to the king of Israel and find out if I can heal you of your leprosy now this Naaman was an honorable man he was an honorable man, a good man so he goes over in verse 7 the king of Israel reads the letter from the king of Aram and he says, this guy is trying to take a fight with me and I can't cure anybody out of leprosy so, in verse 8, Elisha heard about the king of Israel had torn his robes and is going on, and so Elisha says to him, what's the matter with

you? send another name that's the way Elisha was, he was a man of few words but he feared nobody he didn't fear the king or anybody else, he did what he pleased, so Naaman, verse 9, went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door, and Elisha didn't even go out to see him now this was a man who was leading a caravan of camels, loaded with the wealth of Aram a high dignitary, he was commander in chief, this was somebody Elisha didn't even give him the courtesy of going out to see him that's the kind of guy Elisha was I'm a great admirer of Elisha and Elijah they are some of my very favorite people but they're lousy on a committee Elisha says go wash yourself seven times in the Jordan well, Naaman doesn't burn on this he's been insulted in the first place God didn't even come out

didn't even have the courtesy to come out himself and see all my camels and all the stuff I brought and we've got rivers back where I come from, shine it so off he goes, but he had some good men with him, good men always attract good men around him, and he had good men around him, and so his servants came to him and said, father, have you told you to do some great thing, you know, Naaman said I want him to strike his hand on it and call on the name of God and do a miracle, you know, what is this this is no evangelistic meeting we got here and they said, look, if he asked you to do some great thing, you know, or taken a lot of money or done something you'd have done, why don't you do what he said and Naaman was very unlike officers in those days he listened to a he listened to a lower man

of the ranks which is not characteristic of generals in those days, or maybe even today because they were not exactly democratic, you could get killed for saying something like that with some of the early generals so he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times if you ever want a first sermon there's a sermon for you, seven times first time he went down up came the chewing tobacco next time he went down, up came a bottle of whiskey so anyway he went down, not once but seven times, he did exactly what Elisha said and so the leprosy was gone because none of us have ever had leprosy so we cannot appreciate what a blessing this was, to look at his skin and it was pink like a child and it was gone, I mean this was one happy camper so they went back to the man of God and Naaman

said to him there's no God in all the world except in Israel please accept a gift, the prophet says I don't want anything from you remember Abraham said that I'm not taking a shoelace from you, I don't need anything the present day accent on money in the ministry is definitely unscriptural but just grant me this one thing when the king, my master goes into worship in the house of Brimmon and I have to go in with him to hold him up please forgive me, and Elisha said way cool, go ahead, and I want some dirt too okay, go ahead take the dirt and be off with you don't try to give me anything, you can't give me anything all the whole hills around here that you can't see are surrounded with the chariots of Israel what I need with your miserable money go in peace, he says Elisha, if you'll ever

notice, was a man of very few words usually all he'd say would be go but here he needed two more words to make the message complete just go in peace he was a yes, yes, no, no man I'll tell you so Gehazi, the servant of Elisha said to himself, my master was too easy on Naaman he wasn't getting off like that, he was looking at those camels loaded with spices everything you could think of probably 40 of them, that's

the way they did things in those days, 40 camels so he went running after him and Naaman, Naaman said running toward him, got down on his chariot everything okay, and we're ready now for the matinee up here and Gehazi, I see him lying the love of money always results in lying two young men from the company of the prophets just come please give them a towel with silver and two

sets of clothing he didn't ask for much he didn't say my master wants two camel loads of stuff and the camels just some clothes and a little spending money and of course Naaman was so tickled you know, he says by all means, take two talents that's a lot of money by the way, if talent was around what was it, huh? how many pounds? 70 or 75 pounds at least he says, one, take two and he tied up them up in two bags with two sets of clothing, gave them to two of his servants and they carried them ahead of Gehazi now see, he ruined the testimony he ruined the testimony see this was, now look at how his mind he figured, well he sure deserved it look what he done for me, but see how clean it was before, I don't want anything from you what's so clean?

Gehazi, I messed it up here, so when Gehazi came to the hill he took the two things from the servants, put them away in the house and sent the men away, see he's hiding he thought he was hiding, run it up a little would you? then he went in and stood before his master Elisha, where have you been Gehazi? see he gave him a chance to say, I went and got some silver just like they did with Sapphira say, tell me, is this what you really paid for the land? and she said yes, he gave her a chance gave her a chance to clear herself and Elisha said I've been in the house all the time making your toast and Elisha said, my spirit was with you, this was no dude to fool with any more than the Apostle Peter or the Lord Jesus, you go kissing the Lord Jesus when you're betraying him bad things may happen

is this the time to take money or clothes or olive groves or vineyards or flocks or herds or menservants or maidservants Naaman's leprosy will cling to you and to your descendants forever hard judgment and yet he was not that bread a person because you find later, and I don't think you can find this one that's kind of a challenge I suppose, but later the king of Israel asked Gehazi later on after Elisha was dead, he said tell us some of the things that Elisha did and if Gehazi had been bitter because of the leprosy and vengeful he wouldn't have said anything, but instead you can find it later on, talking to the king the time that Joab sent the wise woman in because he wanted the king to call back Absalom and Gehazi was talking to the king and telling him about all the great things that

Elisha did and so when that woman came in, he said, well there's the very woman, I guess that was different than Joab huh? 8-4 of 2nd Kings 8-4 that's about all the Spanish I know 8-4, the king was talking to Gehazi, thanks, oh yes this woman yes, this is a different instance, the woman whose son Elisha had restored to life came back to plead with the king for her land, because she'd gone away because of the famine and when she came in the king was talking to Gehazi, and Gehazi was telling the king how Elisha had restored the dead to life, and then the woman came and Gehazi said, this is the very woman that I was telling you about, see he wasn't all burned up with bitterness over Elisha, he was there ready to brag about the wonderful things he did so he wasn't a person in a red suit with

horns and a forked tail and a pitchfork, he was just could be one of, you or me see, but there was just that element in him that made him betray his master and Judas, there was just that element in him that he was willing to barter away he figured, this guy's a loser, I can get some money out of it, he's evidently not going to fulfill the prophecies of the Messiah and then he repented and killed himself, he couldn't stand his own conscience and then Ananias said so far they're all in us people, they're not somebody we can care of there, they're in us and God's going to be trying us in the day to come and what we've got to make sure is

we're not playing church games sure we're not perfect we may have a long way to go, that isn't the issue at all, God loves his babies but he doesn't love

phonies Lord we thank you for your goodness let's stand before the Lord if you think there's something in your heart, I don't like people going off depressed if there's something in your heart that you feel you've been holding back you really haven't been looking all at you pretending to be, you're holding back and I want you to tell the Lord about it right now, because God is talking to you and me and people like us that love him that are among fervent people and we don't want insincerity in our lives the typical church insincerity dear Jesus deliver us oh God purify us Lord purify us with your fire Lord, purify us whatever it takes Lord if you look down tonight and you see in any of us Lord, any element of Gehazi, any element of Judas any element of Ananias and Sapphira I ask you Lord,

if it's me I put myself first in line because I know it, because we have not been faithful, we have been insincere, we have been playing the church game, now I pray Lord you will so cleanse it, from our hearts you do the same we don't want it in us, we're not in those days that have gone by, they serve to bring us to the present hour, we're talking about pure pure of heart and mind serving God with a fervent spirit not in any way partaking of the hypocrisy that has made your church a mockery in America a mockery so that even the unsaved feel that the church is full of hypocrites why? because we don't do all the time what we profess in church Oh God help us and purify us Lord lest we should come so near and yet be so infinitely far come so near as Judas did and Ananias and Sapphira did and

Gehazi, come so near to the glory of Israel and then end up so far away God don't let it happen to us Lord but show us in our hearts where we are pretending, pretending and make us Lord as simple as little children the little children are even of this church who wave their little banners and who are absolutely pure of heart Oh God don't let us ever betray their idealism and don't let us betray you Lord or one another Lord keep your hand on us

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