



Leader's Guide

Week of April 23

Leader Check-In

Leaders,

Welcome back! I was deeply encouraged by the time of Easter that we shared together as a church celebrating the death and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. These last eight weeks are truly going to fly by. If there is anything that you haven't done in your Life Group yet that you've wanted to do, I want to be the "son of encouragement" to you and say: DO IT! Be bold and step out of the comfort zone to create encounters with Jesus for your group members.

The Big Idea

In another snapshot of the early church, we see two examples of devotion to God. One good, one bad. The clear message: be like Barnabas and have genuine commitment to God's mission.

Getting Started

1. What are some of the "backwards," or counter-intuitive dimensions of following Jesus?
***Leader's Note:** There are many: first shall be last, last shall be first. Whoever wants to keep their life will lose it and lose their life will find it. Blessed are the poor, meek, etc. God's strength is shown through our weaknesses. All these display the "upside-down" nature of the Kingdom of God, which runs contrary to nearly everything in the kingdom of humans.
 2. Which of these dimensions is the hardest for you to incorporate into your life? Easiest?
***Leader's Note:** For many Americans, they struggle with the material dimension. Nation-wide, Americans.
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Digging In

Spring 2017

1. Read **Acts 4:32-35**. Are these verses descriptive (just telling a story of something that happened in the past) or prescriptive (telling us how we should live our lives)? What is your knee-jerk reaction to someone saying it is prescriptive?

2. Read **Acts 4:36-37**. Imagine what this would look like today. What would it take for you to make a decision like Barnabas did?

***Leader's Note:** Many times we look at these verses and think that it doesn't apply to us at all. However, there are certainly things we can learn from characters like Barnabas.

3. Read **Acts 5:1-11**. What was wrong with what Ananias and Sapphira did?

***Leader's Note:** It's important to note that it wasn't that they didn't give enough. It was because they both lied about what they did give. They tried to seem "spiritually superior" rather than be truly selfless. This grieved the Holy Spirit.

4. Why doesn't it seem like God strikes people dead in the same way today?

***Leader's Note:** We don't have a solid answer to this, but one likely answer is that during this early phase of the church's life, Ananias and Sapphira were uniquely positioned to derail the mission of the church through their hypocrisy. Therefore, God

made an early example to keep the early church healthy. Today, the church is established enough that individuals cannot single-handedly derail the mission.

Looking Around

1. Do you ever face the temptation to lie (to others, the Holy Spirit, or yourself) about your true spiritual fervor?
 2. How can you avoid being like Ananias and Sapphira?
 3. What steps can you take to be more like Barnabas?
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Pray

Lord, may we be like Barnabas in everything we do. Forgive us for the times we've hypocritically kept things from you, teach us to fully obey and follow you.