**Series: ACTS: Spirit. Mission. Drama**

**Today: A Tale of Two Gifts**

Speaker: Ronnie Norman Senior Minister

1. Ministry Is Sustained By Generosity.

***Acts 4:32-37***

*32All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. 33With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God’s grace was so powerfully at work in them all 34that 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 35and put it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need.*

*36Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means “son of encouragement”), 37sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles’ feet.*

* Barnabas lays money down and picks people up.

2. Ministry Is Stained By Hypocrisy.

***Acts 5***

*Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. 2With 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.*

*3Then Peter said, “Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? 4Didn’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? You have not lied just to human beings but to God.”*

*5When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. 6Then some young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him.*

*7About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8Peter asked her, “Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?”*

*“Yes,” she said, “that is the price.”*

*9Peter said to her, “How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also.”*

*10At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. 11Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.*

***Acts 5:11 (The Message)***

*11By this time the whole church and, in fact, everyone who heard of these things had a healthy respect for God. They knew God was not to be trifled with.*

3. Five Lessons

A. You can be generous because God has been generous to you.

B. We cannot hide from God.

C. There is a place for a healthy fear of God.

D. Don’t turn community into a contest.

E. A lack of holiness prevents God from doing in our lives what He wants to do.

***2 Timothy 2:19-21***

*19Nevertheless, God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: “The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.”*

*20In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for special purposes and some for common use. 21Those who cleanse themselves from the latter will be instruments for special purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.*