

# Satan's Strategy and Unintended Outcome

## Session Four

Pentecost was followed by \_\_\_\_\_.

Satan's three-pronged attack against the Church:

- 1) persecution/physical violence—first and crudest tactic
- 2) moral corruption/compromise—intent is to destroy church from \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_—the most subtle attack of all!

“Something I have learned about [the devil] is that he is peculiarly lacking in imagination. Over the years, he has changed neither his strategy, nor his tactics, nor his weapons. He is still in the same old rut.” (p. 105)

Luke not only documents Satan's tactics, but how they were each overcome.

### Satan's Tactic Type

### The Divine Outcome

- 1) physical—Gamaliel restrains the Sanhedrin from killing the apostles (5:17-42)
- 2) moral—Ananias and Sapphira's fate nurtures a fear and reverence of the Lord (5:12-16)
- 3) professional—widows' complaint results in delegated tasks, renewed focus (6:1-7)

### Acts 4:32-37

Is this section about life in the Church descriptive or prescriptive?

What did Barnabas (“son of encouragement”) do that was so encouraging?

### Acts 5:1-11

“Ananias is to the book of Acts as Achan is to the book of \_\_\_\_\_. In both narratives, an act of deceit interrupts the victorious progress of the people of God.” (F.F. Bruce)

“It was not on the sin of embezzlement that Peter concentrated, however, but on the other hypocrisy. The apostle's complaint was not that they lacked honesty (bringing only a part of the sale price) but that they lacked \_\_\_\_\_ (bringing only a part, while pretending to bring the whole). They were not so much misers as thieves and—above all—liars. They wanted the credit and the prestige for sacrificial generosity, without the inconvenience of it... Their motive in giving was not to relieve the poor, but to fatten their own ego.” (p. 109)

### Acts 5:12-16

This section, in both its content (miraculous healings) and setting (temple, Jerusalem), shows a dramatic expansion of the miracle of the healing of the lame beggar in Acts 3.

### Acts 5:17-42

What is the motive/emotion of the Sadducees (v. 17)?

What is the “line in the sand” when it comes to civil disobedience as the people of God?

The Pharisee Gamaliel gives wise advice (v. 35-39). Paraphrase it. Do you think his advice is still applicable to the Church as a movement today? Why or why not?

What was the apostles’ reaction to being beaten (v. 41)?

“Kill us, torture us, condemn us, grind us to dust...The more you mow us down, the more we grow; the seed is the blood of Christians.” (Tertullian [160-220 AD, early Christian apologist and author], addressing the rulers of Roman Empire)

What was the content of the apostles’ message (v. 42) ?

### Acts 6:1-7

Without proper attention to and time in the Word and prayer, how effective would the apostles’ ministry have been?

Schedule creep...abundance of meetings...tending to the urgent rather than the important...inward focus and/or unrealistic expectations. There are many ways in which the pastor and the Church can be distracted from the mission. How can we get our priorities straight—accomplish the mission of reaching the lost and still tend the flock?

Other thoughts, questions, comments...