

A church of love and fear

Acts 4:32 – 5:11

Slides from John Percival's sermon at the morning service
Sunday 25th January 2026



1. Gospel-driven generosity (4v32-37)

Acts 4v32

All 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.

Acts 4v34-35

³⁴ 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 ³⁵ and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need.

Acts 2v44-45

44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

2. Harmful hypocrisy (5v1-11)

Acts 5v1-2

¹ Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. ² 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.

Acts 5v11

Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

2. Harmful hypocrisy (5v1-11)

- Hypocrisy *prevents us from receiving God's grace*
- Hypocrisy *harms Christian fellowship*

“Falsehood ruins fellowship. If the hypocrisy of Ananias and Sapphira had not been publicly exposed and punished, the Christian ideal of an open fellowship would not have been preserved, and the modern cry of ‘there are so many hypocrites in the church’ would have been heard from the beginning.”



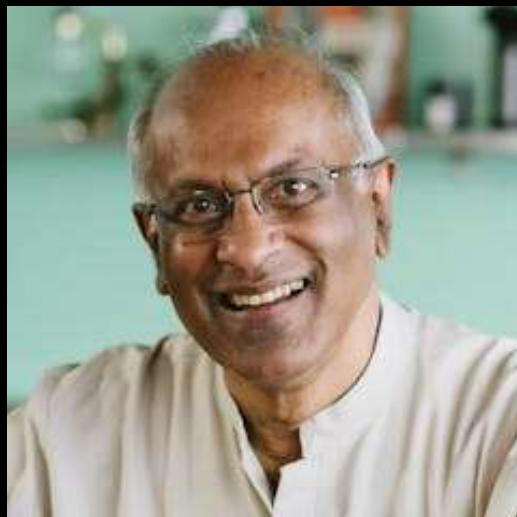
John Stott

1 John 1v5-7

⁵ God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

“Fear is a friend that alerts us to the danger of sin.”

Ajith Fernando



“Suddenly the Mole felt a great awe fall upon him, an awe that turned his muscles to water, bowed his head, and rooted his feet to the ground. It was no panic terror – indeed, he felt wonderfully at peace and happy.”

“Rat!” he found breath to whisper, “Are you afraid?” “Afraid?” murmured the Rat, his eyes shining with unutterable love, “Afraid of *Him*? O, never, never! And yet – and yet – O Mole, I am afraid!” Then the two animals, crouching to the earth, bowed their heads and did worship.