

ARE YOU WHAT YOU WANT PEOPLE TO BELIEVE YOU ARE?

Ananias was known as a Christian. He was rich. People believed he was generous, but he was not really as generous as was thought.

Named



Acts 5:1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

Hananiah, God has been gracious, and Sapphire. They were neither. What did this couple hope to gain by their insincere gift?

Kept back

2 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

His wife knew and collaborated. The sin was to “appear” as not keeping back.

Lie

3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

Satan was their inspiration. The Holy Ghost is to be respected as a person.

Thine own

4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

Integrity is always within our own authority. Our public name should not be different than our name before God. Hypocrisy is a sin of the heart.

Great fear

5 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

A sin against the Holy Ghost will be punished. (Mt. 12:32) What were the people afraid of, hypocrisy? (1 Cor. 11:30)

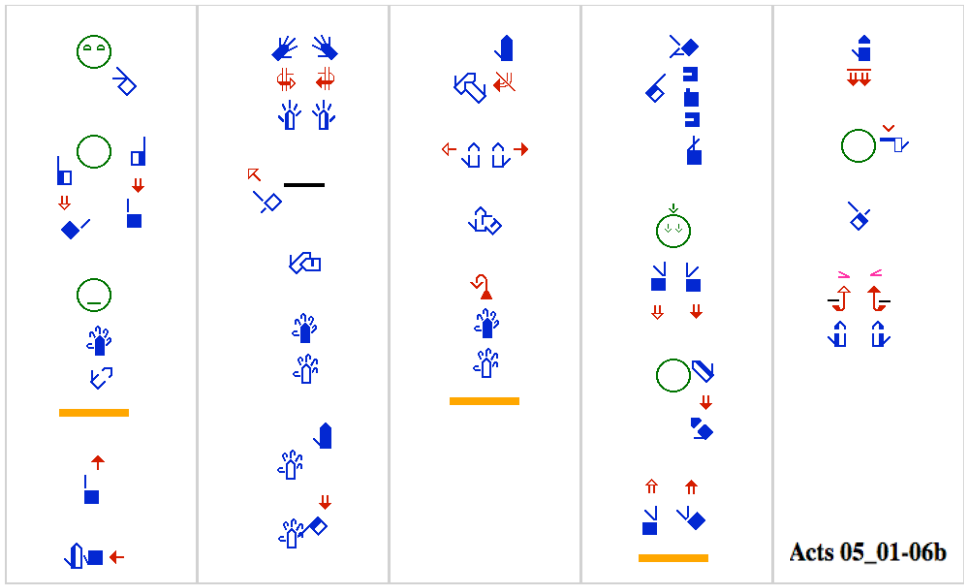
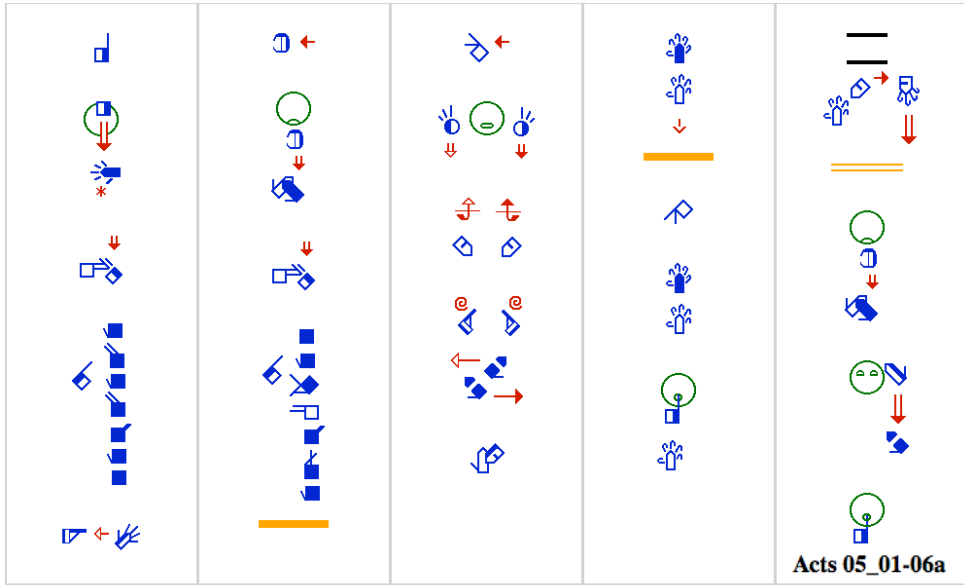
Out

6 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

A good conscience is God's requirement for Christian living (2 Tim. 3:9), and He has made provision. (Hebrews 9:14) A person is “out” if he cares not to have a good conscience. Insincerity is spiritual cancer. “Great fear” must be followed by repentance and honesty.

Ananias was judged by God. If we would judge ourselves (1 Cor. 11:31) then God will not judge us. However, if we refuse to repent, God will clean His house. (1 Cor. 11:32, 1 Peter 4:17)

If you don't tithe, don't let people think you do; if you don't pray for missionaries don't let people think you do. It is better to have people think too little of you than too much.



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