

## Aim of lesson

To consider God's standard of honesty as it affected the early church and as it affects us.

## Bible background

Acts 4:32-37; 5:1-11.

## Outline of lesson

### Jealous of Barnabas?

Ask the class if they can remember any of the details of how the early church lived. Use their answers to lead into reading Acts 4:32-37. Ask the class to suggest what people might have said and felt about what Barnabas had done. Do they think someone might have been jealous of the nice things that were said about him? Ask the class to consider whether this was true of those you are going to read about.

### A life for a lie

Read together Acts 5:1-11. Many children will think it is rather a harsh punishment for a lie, so you will probably have to bring out that God is our Creator and has the right to judge and take life as he sees is best. He alone can take life and restore it. Have the class look closely at Peter's words in verse 4 to see that there was no compulsion to sell property and give the money to the church; it was quite voluntary.

### How to be honest

Have the class complete the first half of the worksheet. They should cross off the statements which are not true. The result should be a summary of the narrative.

Use the second part of the worksheet to promote discussion about how we can be honest or dishonest with money. The question on boasting about pocket money could be used to ask if the class might lie about what they get in order to seem important to their friends. This would be a similar situation to the one Ananias was in. The reason Peter says Ananias was lying to God was not just because the money was being given to the church but also because God knows what is going on everywhere.

You may like to use Jesus' words from Luke 16:10-15 to show Jesus' teaching on being honest with money.

## Digging deeper

### Barnabas

The students can find out more about Barnabas.

## Relevance to our lives

Ask the class to consider how honest they are this week. In what ways can they honour God in the way they speak?

## Prayer

You may like to have the class write a prayer that someone in the church might have prayed at the end of the day on which Ananias and Sapphira died.

## Other suggestions for activities

- The class could write a play based on Acts 5:1-10. This could be recorded as a 'radio' play.
- The class could make a collage based on the teaching about honesty. Cuttings from newspapers could be used to show how little the world cares about Christ's standards.