

**John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament* (London: William Boyer, 1755) says:**

**Acts 2:**

**Verse 45**

[45] And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

*And sold their possessions* — Their lands and houses; and goods - Their movables.

*And parted them to all as any one had need* — To say the Christians did this only till the destruction of Jerusalem, is not true; for many did it long after. Not that there was any positive command for so doing: it needed not; for love constrained them. It was a natural fruit of that love wherewith each member of the community loved every other as his own soul. And if the whole Christian Church had continued in this spirit, this usage must have continued through all ages. To affirm therefore that Christ did not design it should continue, is neither more nor less than to affirm, that Christ did not design this measure of love should continue. I see no proof of this.

**Acts 4:**

**Verse 32**

[32] And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

*And the multitude of them that believed* — Every individual person were of one heart and one soul - Their love, their hopes, their passions joined: and not so much as one - In so great a multitude: this was a necessary consequence of that union of heart; said that aught of the things which he had was his own - It is impossible any one should, while all were of one soul. So long as that truly Christian love continued, they could not but have all things common.

**Acts 5:**

**Verse 1**

[1] But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

*But a certain man named Ananias* — It is certain, not a believer, for all that believed were of one heart and of one soul: probably not baptized; but intending now to offer himself for baptism.

**Verse 2**

[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.

*And bringing a certain part* — As if it had been the whole: perhaps saying it was so.

**Verse 3**

[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?

*To lie to the Holy Ghost* — Who is in us.

*And to keep back* — Here was the first instance of it. This was the first attempt to bring propriety of goods into the Christian Church.

#### **Verse 4**

[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.

*While it remained, did it not remain thine?* — It is true, whosoever among the Christians (not one excepted) had houses or lands, sold them, and laid the price at the feet of the apostles. But it was in his own choice to be a Christian or not: and consequently either to sell his land, or keep it.

*And when it was sold, was it not in thy power?* — For it does not appear that he professed himself a Christian when he sold it.

*Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart?* — So profanely to dissemble on so solemn an occasion? Thou hast not lied to men only, but to God also. Hence the Godhead of the Holy Ghost evidently appears: since lying to him, [Acts 5:3](#), is lying to God.

#### **Verse 5**

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

*And Ananias fell down and expired* — And this severity was not only just, considering that complication of vain glory, covetousness, fraud, and impiety, which this action contained: but it was also wise and gracious, as it would effectually deter any others from following his example. It was likewise a convincing proof of the upright conduct of the apostles, in managing the sums with which they were intrusted; and in general of their Divine mission. For none can imagine that Peter would have had the assurance to pronounce, and much less the power to execute such a sentence, if he had been guilty himself of a fraud of the same kind; or had been belying the Holy Ghost in the whole of his pretensions to be under his immediate direction.”