



[Acts 5:1-5](#)

(1) But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, (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. (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? (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. (5) And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

King James Version

These two church members apparently did not take [Satan](#) into consideration. They listened to a lie and were divided, first, from God's church and then from life itself. What did Satan do? He moved them toward self-satisfaction to the point (the actual [sin](#)) that they lied to take credit for a greater sacrifice than they actually made.

The sad part of this is that no one asked them to donate the entire sale price of the piece of land. What happened was they committed themselves to it and then undoubtedly began to feel put on. "Hey, Sapphira, that's too much money." Maybe they began to think, "We didn't expect we'd get so much money from the sale of this, and it is too much to donate." They began to think, undoubtedly, of other uses that they could put the money to. "We could buy new clothes. We could improve the house. We could buy another piece of land as an investment and make even more from it."

They had apparently already told those who were in charge of the collection that they would contribute the entire amount of the sale, and when the time came to give the contribution, they gave only a part of it but let on as if it was the entire sale price. They kept the difference for themselves.

Who led them to dare to lie? Satan has a *modus operandi*. He will always move us in the direction of self-satisfaction at the expense of obedience to [God](#), service to God, or

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service to others, so that we elevate ourselves over the others.

Is that not what Satan did originally? In his own mind, his vanity elevated him higher than the position God had given to him, and it then began to work on his mind so that he had to do something about it. This process repeats itself over and over again.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Satan \(Part 4\)](#)



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[Satan](#)

[Satan's Modus Operandi](#)

[Satan's Spirit](#)

[Self Centeredness](#)

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