



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## Leadership Tests – Early Check List (Acts 5:1)

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*Our 2013 series on leadership has a focus on character development. We trust that these mini lessons are useful as you demonstrate leadership and service in your current setting.*

### INTRODUCTION

Personal integrity, the basic foundation of character was the subject of our study last week. Neither God nor the general public will trust a person who has not passed a series of increasingly tougher tests of integrity. **Obedience** is one of the next checks that will be faced by us. Following is both a negative and a positive illustration from Scripture. This is hard teaching, difficult for some of our friends to grasp!

### OBEDIENCE CHECKS

*Acts 5:1 Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. 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.*

God nor the apostles required Ananias to donate money for charity. Others had sacrificed and contributed to the founding of the first church in Jerusalem. An overzealous desire for social favor prompted this couple to feign sacrifice, while taking a profit. They made a show of obedience while practicing deception. Both Ananias and his wife Sapphira died suddenly when confronted by Peter. Apparently God used this one extreme example to make the point for you and me to learn! The Apostle Peter passed his obedience test! He confronted Ananias rather than being concerned with offending a donor who was in sin (Acts 5:2-10). God was then willing to trust Peter with increasingly greater responsibilities.

What could a person like Ananias, Sapphira, or you do to reverse a situation where sin was revealed?

How might have Peter failed this test of obedience?

Can you recall a contemporary example of a person failing or passing an obedience test?

### LISTENING CHECKS

*1 Samuel 3:7-9 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.*

Samuel was serving as an understudy to Eli, Israel's priest, when the Lord addressed him in a still small voice. The boy Samuel was not yet actively seeking God's direction by studying Scripture, talking with the Lord in prayer, and looking for guidance in decisions. Eli knew the Scriptures but condoned the sin of his two sons who served in the temple. God chose to speak instead through the boy Samuel, warning of pending judgment (1 Samuel 3:11, 4:17). Eli failed a critical obedience check. Samuel passed early checks by listening for God's will, and faithfully passing on God's stern message to Eli.

Can you reflect on a modern-day example of God withholding His counsel or His blessing due to sin?

How have you stepped out before hearing from God, only to find that you moved too quickly or unwisely?

Like Samuel, can you see your investment in Bible study, prayer, and meditation resulting in growth of stature as well as favor with God and with man?

### A PRAYER

Father God, Scripture and life itself, reveal numerous examples of people passing and failing tests of obedience. Help me to succeed through these increasingly difficult series of checks in my character development. Please bless me with the favor of my fellow man and with You. I ask this in the Name of Your Son, Jesus. Amen.

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### CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY/DISCUSSION

LEADERS: WEDNESDAY 5: 7 TO 7:45 AM, CAPITOL ROOM 112 NORTH

STAFF/GUESTS: WEDNESDAYS: 12:05 TO 12:50 PM, GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM – CAPITOL 264 WEST