

Simon the Sorcerer

Acts 8:9-25

Main Street

April 1, 2012



bible verse

COMMITTING TO MEMORY

1 Peter 2:12

Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.



story lesson

BIBLE STORY

Major persecution had begun against the New Testament church. "All except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria... going from house to house... men and women [were dragged off] and put [into] prison" (Acts 8:1, 3). The church, however, "preached the word" wherever it went (Acts 8:4).

The apostle Philip...

"...went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. So there was great joy in the city" (Acts 8:5-7).

There were some amazing signs and wonders among the leaders of this new movement of God, wherever they went. They ran into people who accepted their testimony and they also confronted people (and things) that did not accept the word. One man saw these "miracles" and wondered if he could acquire them somehow:

"Previous to Philip's arrival, a certain Simon had practiced magic in the city, posing as a famous man and dazzling all the Samaritans with his wizardry. He had them all, from little children to old men, eating out of his hand. They all thought he had supernatural powers, and called him 'the Great Wizard.' He had been around a long time and everyone was more or less in awe of him.

"But when Philip came to town announcing the news of God's kingdom and proclaiming the name of Jesus Christ, they forgot Simon and were baptized, becoming believers right and left! Even Simon himself believed and was baptized. From that moment he was like Philip's shadow, so fascinated with all the God-signs and miracles that he wouldn't leave Philip's side.

"When the apostles in Jerusalem received the report that Samaria had accepted God's Message, they sent Peter and John down to pray for them to receive the Holy Spirit. Up to this point they had only been baptized in the name of the Master Jesus; the Holy Spirit hadn't yet fallen on them. Then the apostles laid their hands on them and they did receive the Holy Spirit.

"When Simon saw that the apostles by merely laying on hands conferred the Spirit, he pulled out his money, excited, and said, 'Sell me your secret! Show me how you did that! How much do you want? Name your price!'

"Peter said, 'To hell with your money! And you along with it. Why, that's unthinkable—trying to buy God's gift! You'll never be part of what God is doing by striking bargains and offering bribes. Change your ways—and now! Ask the Master to forgive you for trying to use God to make money. I can see this is an old habit with you; you reek with money-lust.'

"'Oh!' said Simon, 'pray for me! Pray to the Master that nothing like that will ever happen to me!'

"And with that, the apostles were on their way, continuing to witness and spread the Message of God's salvation, preaching in every Samaritan town they passed through on their return to Jerusalem."

Acts 8:9-25 (MSG)

Signs and wonders and miracles are not magic to be learned or a sideshow to profit from; they are manifestations of the power of the Spirit of God poured out to offer authority to the messenger and to enact the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven—connecting with the prayer Jesus taught his disciples.



life application

MAKING IT REAL

Wherever You Go Preach Jesus

No matter where you are tell people about Jesus through your life. Model the kingdom of God by the way you live your life. You don't necessarily have to actually say anything to preach Jesus. You just have to live such good lives among the world that they see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. Although don't discount using words. Sometimes people need to see (and appreciate) the boldness of your faith in Jesus by introducing him into normal conversations. How "normal" is it for you to talk about Jesus to your "normal" friends and family?

Not For Sale

Almost everything in our world is for sale. If the price is right, people are willing to sell almost anything. It may seem humorous for us when we think of Simon the Sorcerer trying to "purchase" the rights to the Holy Spirit, but Simon was thinking about his livelihood as a wizard. The reason Peter was so blunt and direct with Simon's request was because of the very FREE nature of God's precious gift in Jesus. It is not for sale. Selling Jesus goes against the very fabric of what God was doing in Jesus and through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is scandalously FREE!



questions

REMEMBERING

- 1. What areas or regions were people being scattered to because of the persecution?** Judea and Samaria
- 2. Which apostle went to Samaria and preached about Jesus and performed miraculous signs?** Philip
- 3. Who practiced magic and wizardry and amazed the people in the city in Samaria?** Simon the Sorcerer
- 4. When Simon the Sorcerer saw that the apostles "conferred" the Holy Spirit by laying hands and praying, what did he want to do with that?** He wanted to buy the magic, the secret
- 5. Which apostle put Simon the Sorcerer in his place?** Peter
- 6. Did Simon repent?** Yes. He asked them to pray for him so that nothing bad would happen to him



coloring sheet

ON THE NEXT PAGE

IF I PAY YOU, WILL YOU GIVE ME THE POWERS
OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ?



Simon the Sorcerer