

ACTS – Simon

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Acts 8:9-25

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Reflection & Discussion Questions

Philip shows up in Samaria and begins preaching about Jesus and the kingdom of God

Read and discuss Acts 8:9-13(NIV)

⁹ Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, ¹⁰ and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, “This man is rightly called the Great Power of God.” ¹¹ They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his sorcery. ¹² But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. ¹³ Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.

*What does this passage tell us about God? About people?

*What do you see in the way Simon is described in contrast to Philip?

The Holy Spirit is received by the new believers

Read and discuss Acts 8:14-17

¹⁴ When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. ¹⁵ When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, ¹⁶ because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

*What is different about the way these new believers received the Holy Spirit than at other places in the Bible? Why might this be?

*What are some different ways the Holy Spirit works in people’s lives?

Simon sees the Holy Spirit as a power to harness and wield rather than a person to be in relationship with

Read and discuss Acts 8:18-24

¹⁸ When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money ¹⁹ and said, “Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.”

²⁰ Peter answered: “May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! ²¹ You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. ²² Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord in the hope that he may forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. ²³ For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin.”

²⁴ Then Simon answered, “Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me.”

*How do Simon’s responses here teach us and warn us?

*Do you see any of Simon in yourself? Have you tried to add God to the things that you are doing or as just a means to an end?

The Holy Spirit is a person to know, someone we listen to

It is a relationship of obedience, following and surrender.

*How has a relationship with the Holy Spirit help you become more attentive to what God is already doing?

*Are there practices that help you to be more attentive and courageous in following?

*Where might the Spirit be leading you these days?