

The Book of Acts

GROUP CURRICULUM

SERMON	SALVATION AND SORCERY (ACTS 8:1-25)	DATE	JANUARY 12, 2020
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¹ And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. ² Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. ³ But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

⁴ Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word. ⁵ Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ. ⁶ And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by Philip, when they heard him and saw the signs that he did. ⁷ For unclean spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many who had them, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. ⁸ So there was much joy in that city. ⁹ But there was a man named Simon, who had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria, saying that he himself was somebody great. ¹⁰ They all paid attention to him, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the power of God that is called Great." ¹¹ And they paid attention to him because for a long time he had amazed them with his magic. ¹² But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. ¹³ Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles performed, he was amazed.

¹⁴ Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, ¹⁵ who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, ¹⁶ for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, ¹⁹ saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." ²⁰ But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! ²¹ You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. ²² Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³ For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." ²⁴ And Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me."

²⁵ Now when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

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1. On the opposite page, indicate every occurrence of the following words: "Samaria," "amazed," and "Spirit"
 2. Using only the space below summarize all 25 verses in this passage in one or two sentences.
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3. Read John 16:33 and compare with Acts 8:1-4. How does the early church recognize that when there is pain and persecution for the believer, there will always be the provision of Christ? Can you think of where else this is taught in the Bible?
4. Where did we first meet Philip in the book of Acts? How was he described? How is Simon described in this passage?
5. Read 2 Kings 17; Ezra 4; and Nehemiah 4. What elements of Israel's history led to a hatred of the Samaritans?

6. Consider again Jesus' words as the framing verse from Acts 1:8:
"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."
Quickly read again Acts 2:1-4, Acts 8:14-17, and ahead in Acts 10:44-48. Who is present at all three occurrences? How does his presence destroy dividing lines of race?
7. How does Simon's reason to the Apostles (Acts 8:18-19, 24) reveal his serious misunderstandings about the Gospel? Is there a lesson for us today from Simon's life?
8. When the believers were scattered to different geographic regions, they did not cease to evangelize. How can you make the most of the opportunities to evangelize where you are today?

What is one thing you can pray for this year to see the Lord advance his Kingdom in your life or family? Be specific.