

FIVE SMOOTH STONES

The Book of Acts: The Gospel Factor - Simon the Magician

(Acts 8:4-25)

"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. 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."

The message of the gospel centers on repentance. John the Baptist for instance preached,

"... Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things have become new." (II Corinthians 5:17)

"But when he [John] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? [8] Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." (Matthew 3:7-8)

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. 14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." (II Corinthians 11:13-14)

For all God has, the enemy has a counterfeit. There is ...

❖ **A Counterfeit Gospel**

"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—7 not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:6-9)

❖ A Counterfeit Righteousness

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." (Romans 10:3)

❖ A Counterfeit Church

"... I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the blasphemy of them who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan." (Revelation 2:9)

❖ Counterfeit Preachers

"But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction." (II Peter 2:1)

❖ A Counterfeit Christ

"Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour." (I John 2:18)

❖ Counterfeit Christians

- Simon's Pretension (vs. 9)
 - Sorcery is Rejected as Divine

“There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer 11 or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, 12 for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord. And because of these abominations, the Lord your God is driving them out before you.” (Deuteronomy 18:10-12)

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.” (I John 4:1)

▸ Supply is Regulated by Demand

- Simon’s Profession (vs. 13)

“You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!” (James 2:19)

“And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.” (Mark 3:11)

“And behold, they cried out, “What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?” (Matthew 8:29)

- Simon’s Presumption (vs. 18-19)

“But Peter said to him, ‘May your silver perish with you because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!’”