

Southside Baptist Church
Sunday Morning – 7-12-26
Christianity 103 – Message 8 Part 3
What caused the persecution?

1. Introduction:

a. Taking a look back:

- 1) We move on from Stephen's testimony to that of Philip's.
- 2) Philip is taking the gospel wherever the Lord takes him. Acts 8:5
 - a) Philip is responding in immediate obedience to the Lord.
- 3) The people of Samaria responded to the gospel. Acts 8:6
- 4) There were many miracles that took place that day. Acts 8:7
- 5) "There was great joy in that city." Acts 8:8

b. Taking a look ahead:

- 1) We encounter Simon the sorcerer today in Acts 8.
 - a) Pay close attention to what we see and learn about this man.
 - b) Was he truly born again?

2. The Gospel, "the power of God unto salvation." Romans 1:16

a. Verse 9 –

- 1) What we know about Simon is contained in this passage.
 - a) "sorcery" – the practice of magical arts.
 - b) The Bible condemns sorcery – Deut. 18:9-13
 - c) We know who is really behind this. II Thessalonians 2.
- 2) Simon used this sorcery to astonish and confound the people.
 - a) "bewitched" – to amaze, astonish, throw into wonderment the people.

b. Verse 10 –

- 1) Simon had the attention of the people. "from the least to the greatest."
 - a) "This man is the great power of God" – believed he was a manifestation of God.
- 2) An important question comes up here.
 - a) We have the testimony of many who have trusted Christ and yet specifically we are introduced to this man. Why?
 - b) Question – Was it to see the power of the gospel to change a life or to bring clarity and understanding to what it means to be born again?

c. Verse 11 –

- 1) This verse is restating what we already have learned.
 - a) But why?
 - b) We see the word "bewitched" used again.
- 2) This is where everything gets extremely interesting.

3. What really happened to Simon? Acts 8:12-25

a. Verse 12 –

- 1) "they" – speaks of the people of Samaria who believed the gospel Philip preached.
 - a) God was working and moving in that city.
 - b) What was going through Simon's mind as he witnesses all of this.

b. Verse 13 –

- 1) "believed" – a word that can be used to describe someone who became a believer or used of someone to signify an intellectual assent or a conviction that something is true as opposed to transforming or saving faith.
 - a) What is the evidence?
 - b) Why does that even matter?

- c) Matthew 7:21-23
- d) It states that Simon believed and was baptized. Is there any evidence to convict him of being born again?
- 2) Many Bible scholars do not believe Simon was actually saved.
 - a) What did Simon believe? God had the power to do miracles therefore his belief was limited to simply that.
 - b) What could he have been interested in? Look again at the end of the verse.
- 3) The key word when speaking of whether a person is saved is CHANGE!
- 4. Why hadn't the Holy Spirit come upon them? Acts 8:14-17
 - a. Verse 14 –
 - 1) The Apostles choose to send Peter and John to Samaria.
 - b. Verse 15-16 –
 - 1) These new believers had not yet received the indwelling Holy Spirit.
 - c. Verse 17 –
- 5. How do we answer this difficult question concerning the Holy Spirit?
 - a. Some things to consider here:
 - 1) Remember what we said about the Book of Acts.
 - 2) The timing of this is critical.
 - a) Matthew 16:19 – Jesus had given Peter the keys to the kingdom.
 - 3) The church was built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Eph. 2:20.
 - 4) Build a testimony that would facilitate trust.
 - a) John 4:20 – Samaritans were known as corrupters of Judaism.
 - b) Peter and John's presence would help to prove what happened was real and not false.
 - 5) How does this relate to the question surrounding Simon?
 - a) Look again at verse 18.
- 6. Today's Takeaway:
 - a. What would a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ result in?
 - 1) Let me share some examples for you to think about.