

Faith like a Samaritan

Acts 8:4-24

The enemy tries to stop the church.

- i. The church endures persecution (Acts 4).
- ii. Attacks from the inside (Acts 5).
- iii. Grumbling and discontentment (Acts 6).
- iv. Death and persecution (Acts 7).
- v. The first false teacher (Acts 8).

Main idea: Only faith in Jesus saves; so, check your faith and remain confident in your salvation.

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."

Main idea: Only faith in Jesus saves; so, check your faith and remain confident in your salvation.

Check your faith.

1. Believe like a Samaritan (vv. 4-8).
2. Watch out for Simons (vv. 9-19).
3. Don't be a Simon (vv. 9-23).

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All people matter to God.

- i. Witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).
- ii. People saved all throughout Jerusalem (Acts 2-7).
- iii. Samaritans rejoice at Jesus (Acts 8).
- iv. Ethiopian eunuch is read for Christ (Acts 8:26-40).
- v. Saul, the persecutor, gives it all for Jesus (Acts 9).
- vi. You, me, your neighbor ...

You can share the gospel.

- i. Not just in church, but in real life (v. 4).
- ii. Not apostles, but those evicted from Jerusalem.
- iii. Proclaim the Kingdom of God and Jesus (vv. 5, 12).
- iv. God saves people and brings joy (v. 8; 1Co 3:6).

Receive the gospel like a Samaritan.

- i. They “paid attention” to the gospel. (v. 6; cf. 16:14).
- ii. They experienced much joy (v. 8; 39).
- iii. They believed in Jesus (v. 12; John 3:16).
- iv. Baptized as believers (v. 12, 16).

2. Watch out for Simons (vv. 9-19).

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5 Attributes of Simon.

- i. Self-exaltation (v. 9).
- ii. Popularity-seeking (v. 11).
- iii. Held himself out as divine (v. 10).
- iv. It's all about the money (v. 18).
- v. Treated the Spirit as a power to be controlled (v. 19).



3. Don't be a Simon (vv. 9-23).

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Simon's "faith" can't save.

- i. It was dead faith (1Co 15:2; James 2:20, 26).
- ii. Amazement was the object of his faith (v. 13).
- iii. Simon has no part in "this matter" (v. 21; 1Jn 2:19).
- iv. His heart never changed (v. 21; 23).
- v. No brokenness because of sin (v. 22).

Are you a Simon or a Samaritan?