



Greater Than

Introduction: The gospel is often met with resistance. Philip shared the good news to the people of Samaria and then was met by a man who practiced magic. The power of the gospel and the truth of Christ is greater than the powers of darkness.

Text: Acts 8:9-25

Discussion:

1. Icebreaker: Have you ever witnessed an event or activity that was demonic? Have you ever participated in something that you thought was no big deal, but then realized that it had satanic undertones? Have you ever participated in games about speaking to the dead? Have you ever watched movies that were demonic in nature? Write/discuss how it made you feel or think after watching or participating?
2. There are two extremes when speaking about Satan: a consuming desire to read and study about demons or the complete denial of the spiritual evil in the world. What is the danger of these two? Where do you fit on the spectrum? Do you believe that there is truly demonic activity in the world today?
3. Who would you say are the Simon's in today's culture?
4. Philip boldly shared the good news of Jesus. What impact did it have on the people who heard the message of the gospel? What does this say about the power of Christ over the power of Satan?
5. It was argued in the message that Simon was not a true believer. He had a false conversion. How does the story demonstrate that he was more interested in the signs and miracles that he saw rather than the gospel message of Christ? Is there a danger for people to have an emotional experience in a church service and never truly have a conversion experience? discuss/write
6. Why was it important for Peter and John to be a part of the giving of the Holy Spirit to the believers in Samaria?
7. What is the theological significance of the giving of the Holy Spirit to those in Samaria?
8. Simon requested to pay Peter money so that he could have the power to give people the Holy Spirit? What was Peter's reaction to his offer?
9. How do you see modern day preachers attempt to manipulate the Holy Spirit?
10. Peter told Simon he needed to pray to the Lord and repent? How did Simon respond and why is this an incorrect way to repent?
11. What is the gospel and how do you know that you have been born again?

Think About it:

Jesus is greater than the power of darkness. The truth and light of the gospel will break the illusions of magic and sorcery. The gospel can penetrate the darkest places and bring salvation! The good news is for all people. The fact that the Holy Spirit was given to the Samaritans shows that they are saved the same way the Jews in Jerusalem were saved. The new covenant has come and there is now one new man (one church). All believers receive the Holy Spirit and we are united in Christ.

Moving Forward:

Watch the news or read article this week and see if you can see any demonic activity behind the events. If you have anything in your home that is demonic in nature—get rid of it. Do not be afraid of the darkness, instead shine the light of Jesus in the dark places. Speak the good news of Jesus and allow the Holy Spirit to do his work. Thank God for his great salvation and walk in obedience to Christ.