

king's chapel

Community Group Discussion Guide

Week January 12, 2014

This Week's Focus: Peter and John come to Samaria to lay hands on the new believers that they would receive the Holy Spirit. Seeing this power, Simon desires to obtain it through money and Peter rebukes him for it.

This Week's Text: Acts 8:14-25

*Signs and wonders are the finger pointing to Jesus. True faith comes when we see the glory of God in the face of Jesus. We can have all the spiritual experiences possible by looking at the finger of power. But until we turn to the Lord himself, there will be no true faith. **John Piper***

*As it appears, Simon the magician is incapable of repenting here. It's a very solemn, solemn thing that here is a man who claims to be converted, and that it is possible to make a profession of faith and for that profession not to be genuine; and that when it is tested, and when it is tried, it doesn't meet the standard of what a true profession of faith actually is. **Derek Thomas***

Related Texts: Matthew 19:24; Mark 10:17-22; Ephesians 1:13, 2:8-9; Proverbs 17:20; Roman 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; 1 Timothy 6:3-11; 2 Corinthians 7:10

Observations and Questions for Discussion:

- How has God spoken to you regarding the sermon and/or text?
- In verse 14 it says, "When the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John." What does this tell us about the apostle's sense of urgency for the mission of God? Do we have that same sense of urgency to spread the gospel?
- Sometimes God used the laying of hands as the means of giving His Spirit and at other times He did not. What are some possible reasons God used this method in this specific context? Reference Acts 2:1-4, 2:38, 8:17, 10:44 and 19:6.
- Read Ephesians 1:13, Romans 8:9 and 1 Corinthians 12:12. Discuss the norm of the work and reception of the Spirit?
- Based on the account given in chapter 8, was Simon a true believer or not? Why do you think this?
- Simon seems to have an ulterior motive when it comes to belief and his desire for the Holy Spirit. How are we sometimes guilty of chasing our own selfish desires over treasuring God himself?

- Simon's desire was to remain in control of his life. He sought to continue to be the man with the power!
 - In what ways do we seek to be our own savior?
 - In what ways do we seek power, approval and a sense of value and worth outside of Christ?
 - In what ways do we forget that our salvation is a gift?
- Read Matthew 19:24. Why does Jesus say this? What is the real issue behind Jesus' words?
 - Money is a big idol, and always has been. What other idols in your life seem to take precedence over seeking after and treasuring Jesus?
- Read Simon's response to Peter's command for him to repent (verses 22 - 24). Is Simon more concerned with his own heart or the consequences?
 - Why is it significant that Simon doesn't pray to God himself in repentance, but rather asks Peter to pray on his behalf? Is Simon taking responsibility for his own actions?
- Read verse 25. Where do we see the main focus of the apostles' hearts?

Gospel Celebration:

- The gift of salvation is just that - a gift! It's not dependent on you, your money, or your actions.
- The gospel is not good news for only one group, but the grace of God for salvation extends to all tribes, tongues, and nations!
- Praise God that He has saved you from sin and death through Jesus Christ.

Prayer Focus:

- Repent of anything that is standing between you and your relationship with Christ.
- Pray for people by name, who need Christ.
- Pray that the Spirit would empower you to open up and speak the gospel boldly to loved ones, friends, and co-workers.

Next Week's Text: Acts 8:26 – 40