

**Valley Bible Church**  
**Sermon Notes for September 30, 2012**

**The Ministry of Philip to Simon**  
**Acts 8:9-24**

**1. The ministry of Philip to Simon (8:9-13)**

a. Simon boasts (8:9-12)

The magic that Simon practiced was undefined, but it was clearly performance based.

Simon is often referred to as Simon Magus, derived from the Latin word for “Great” (*magus*). This significance of his title is the misrepresentation of himself as divinely powerful.

Simon captured the Samaritan’s attention much like Philip did with miracles (Acts 8:6).

b. The Samaritans believe (8:12)

Baptism follows belief in the New Testament. The practice of the early church did not delay baptism after a profession of faith.

c. Simon believes (8:13)

The question of whether Simon was a genuine believer in Christ is a matter of controversy.

The great miracles are set in contrast to the “Great Power of God” as Simon is amazed.

**2. The ministry of Peter to Simon (8:14-24)**

a. The Samaritans receive the Holy Spirit (8:14-17)

The reason for this exceptional delay in the reception of the Spirit was to unite the church in Jerusalem to the Samaritan believers.

b. Peter rebukes Simon (8:18-23)

Peter’s rebuke is in the strongest terms due to the seriousness of the sin, which is reminiscent of Christ’s forceful rebuke of the Jewish enterprise at the temple (John 2:13-22).

This account is the basis for the word “simony” which is the exchange of money for religious things.

Those who seek financial gain from the things of God are unable to serve both God and money (Matthew 6:24).

c. Simon requests supplication (8:24)

There are several reasons why it is unlikely that Simon was a Christian:

- The verb “believe” does not always refer to saving faith (cf. James 2:19).
- The command to “repent” in Acts 8:22 is normally addressed to the lost, not the saved.
- The description of Simon by Peter in Acts 8:23 fits that of an unbeliever.
- The warning of “perish” in Acts 8:20 strongly communicates lack of salvation (cf. John 3:16).

Most significantly, the text does not provide a clear answer to Simon’s spiritual state, but the Lord knows those who are His (cf. 2 Timothy 2:19).

Our ministry to all people is rooted in the truth of Christ based on faith, which rests on the power of God alone.

May we resist the temptation to serve ourselves, and may we freely give our service to the Lord just as freely as we have received from the Lord.