

Simon: Bargaining with God

Acts 8:9-25 (NKJV)

June 1, 2022

Introduction: *God if you will only do this...I promise I will. Bargaining is to negotiate the terms of conditions of a transaction. From ancient Samaria, a man named Simon stands as an example of all that is wrong with attempts to use God for our own designs.*

Questions as you study:

1. Who are the different people in this story, and how do they relate to each other?
2. What danger was Simon to the people who followed him (vv.9-11)?
3. What indications do you see that Simon's practice of sorcery would not fit with his new faith in Jesus?
4. Why did Peter and John go from Jerusalem to Samaria(vv.14-17)?
5. Notice the events that accompanied the coming of God's Spirit to Christians in Jerusalem (Acts 2:1-6). why is this event important to the Samaritans of Acts 8, who became Christian's years later?
6. What precisely did Simon want, and how did he propose to get it (vv.18-19)?
7. in view of Simon's recent past, what use do you think he planned to make of this gift?
8. What did Simon offer suggest that he believed about God? What about the gifts God gives to His people?
9. what according to Peter was wrong with Simon's attitude and his offer (vv.20-23)?
10. What, other than money, do people use to try to get what they want from God?

Reflect and Pray:

- ✓ What are ways that you see people bargain with God?
- ✓ What are ways you have bargained with God?
- ✓ Take a moment to name a dozen or so of God attributes, for example, "God is holy, God is kind, God has all power." How might you adjust your praying so that it reflects what you know to be true of God rather than what you hope to get from God?
- ✓ God does not need anything from us...ever. So, we have nothing with which to bargain with God. Yet, God give generously to us over and over. In the days ahead, practice Christian generosity to others. Try to refrain even mentally from the give to get or what is in this for me mentality.

Prayer prompts: Pray, beginning each section of your prayer with one of the attributes of God. Try to make this prayer about praise and commitment. When you move to petition, try to shape your request from God around God's character. For example, *"because You are holy, I ask...or because Your kindness never ends, I ask ..."*

Acts 8:9-25 (NKJV) Simon the Sorcerer:

⁹ Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, ¹⁰ and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is rightly called the Great Power of God." ¹¹ They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his sorcery. ¹² But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. ¹³ Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.

¹⁴ When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. ¹⁵ When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, ¹⁶ because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸ When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money ¹⁹ and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

²⁰ Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! ²¹ You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. ²² Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord in the hope that he may forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. ²³ For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin."

²⁴ Then Simon answered, "Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me."

²⁵ After they had further proclaimed the word of the Lord and testified about Jesus, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many Samaritan villages.