

The Conversion of Simon

(Acts 8:13)

Introduction:

1. The book of Acts shows how the apostles and other Christians in the early church carried out the Great Commission (Mark 16:15-16).
 - a. We learn from Acts 1:8 that the Lord gave the apostles a specific plan for accomplishing His mission.
 - b. The remainder of Acts shows how this plan was implemented.
2. (Acts 1-7) Many people were converted in Jerusalem.
3. According to Acts 8:1, persecution eventually caused many Christians to scatter forth from Jerusalem.
4. Those who left Jerusalem carried the Gospel with them, and they preached it wherever they went (Acts 8:4).
5. Preaching the Gospel resulted in people being converted in various areas.
6. In our lesson we are examining a conversion that occurred in Samaria -- "the conversion of Simon."
7. Let us begin by showing that . . .

Discussion:

- I. A MAN NAMED PHILIP REACHED MANY PEOPLE IN SAMARIA (vs.5-8)
 - A. This is not the first time that Philip is mentioned in Acts.
 1. (6:5) He was one of the 7 men chosen to serve the Jerusalem congregation.
 2. (6:6) The apostles laid their hands on Philip and the other men.
 - B. (8:5) Philip left Jerusalem and went to Samaria where he preached Christ to the people there.
 - C. (8:6a) The people in Samaria listened to Philip's teaching.
 - D. (8:6b-7) They listened to Philip because of the great works he performed.
 - E. (8:12) Both men and women believed and were baptized (Mark 16:16).
 - F. (8:8) We can certainly understand why there was so much joy in Samaria.
- II. ONE PARTICULAR CONVERSION INVOLVED A MAN NAMED SIMON
 - A. According to 8:9-11, Simon practiced sorcery.
 1. He had convinced the people in Samaria that he had some great power.
 2. Apparently, he had quite a following.
 - B. (8:13) Simon was converted -- he believed and was baptized (Mark 16:16).
 - C. (8:13b) It seems that he was quite impressed by Philip's miracles.
- III. (vs.14-17) THE APOSTLES IN JERUSALEM SENT PETER AND JOHN TO SAMARIA
 - A. Philip had taught the people in Samaria, and he had baptized them.

- B. He performed miracles because the apostles had laid their hands on him.
 - C. However, he could not lay his hands on people so they could receive the Holy Spirit.
 - D. Only the apostles were able to do this [another example is in Acts 19:6].
 - E. Peter and John prayed for the Christians in Samaria and laid their hands on them so they could receive the Holy Spirit.
- IV. (vs.18-24) EVEN THOUGH SIMON HAD BECOME A CHRISTIAN, HE NEEDED TO BE CONVERTED AGAIN
- A. (vs.18-19) Simon made a mistake.
 - 1. He wanted to be able to lay hands on people so they could receive the Holy Spirit.
 - 2. He offered to buy this ability from Peter and John.
 - B. (vs.20-23) Peter rebuked Simon.
 - 1. (vs.20-21) Peter pointed out Simon's problem.
 - 2. (vs.22) Peter told Simon what to do.
 - 3. (vs.23) Peter revealed Simon's condition.
 - C. Thankfully, Simon responded as he did in vs.24.

Conclusion:

- 1. From Simon's conversion we learn how to be saved (vs.13).
- 2. We also learn from Simon how Christians receive forgiveness.
 - a. Repentance and prayer are involved (vs.22).
 - b. Confession of sin is also involved (James 5:16; 1 John 1:9).