Acts Chapter 8 Verses 14 – 19

* Luke tells us that Philip had come to Samaria and had preached Christ to the people. He also tells us that **they received it**…**they believed** and their belief was manifested in that they *heeded* the things spoken by Philip and ***as a result*** there were many miracles, and healings and conversions as demons fled and the city was filled with joy. Verse 12 says they *believed and were baptized.* And so Peter and John come and **they see genuine faith**, folks that had heard the Gospel and had given their hearts to the Lord, but there was yet something lacking in that place and Luke describes it as *the Holy Spirit had not yet fallen* ***upon*** *them.*
* There remains a work of the Holy Spirit ***upon*** the believer after belief. After baptism. After conversion. This is evident in the scriptures and described for us as the Holy Spirit *falling* or coming *upon (epi)* a Christian. **Must have been something**…Simon reacts to what he sees…what he sees, we don’t know. Why? **Must not have been important!** Luke, *Mr. Detail*, would have given it to us if it was needful for the church. The important and explicit doctrine presented is that after conversion, after belief and salvation, there yet remains a ministry of the Holy Spirit that ***is noticeably there or noticeably not there*** and that is the *epi* of the Holy Spirit.
* Reminded me of the *Epipen*. You ever heard of those? Someone bites into something they shouldn’t like a peanut…or gets stung by a bee and they are highly allergic…what happens? ***They swell up! They break out!*** They go into fight or flight and they need help immediately! Blast that *Epipen* in their thigh though and they breathe again…What happens when someone offends you…when she disrespects you…when he ignores you…when they demean you…do you immediately get ***swole and break out?*** Or, do you breathe, control yourself and act in wisdom. You need that ***epi!*** Dumb but hey, I like it…
* So how do you move forward and get this? Can’t buy it…we’re about to see that clearly in the next verses…it’s simple and yet here is why **so few** walk in the anointing of the Holy Spirit…Remember back in Acts Chapter 5 we read, verse 32, *“We are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him!”* And what has God asked, what is His commandment…***That we love Him…make Him our reason…and then the Holy Spirit falls…***
* And so Simon **sees** something…a *trick* he can’t figure out and one he can’t replicate, and so he offers them money if they would teach him this trick…although, ***interesting.*** He ***knows*** it’s not a trick…He says, *“Give me this power.”* And I like that…Simon is a believer, I truly *believe that* and *see that* in this uncharacteristic statement of the magician…

Acts Chapter 8 Verses 20 – 23

* I’m not sure Peter was as ***harsh*** as we might perceive. I picture Peter placing his hand on Simon’s shoulder, like a friend and saying these things to him. Why? **Because Peter was once in this situation…only his Peter was Jesus.** And so Peter brings correction to Simon. Simon wanted to pay for the power of God and that is just ***silly***…use money, man valued materials created by God to purchase the eternal and infinite power of God…it’s *ridiculous* but you know what…we see it every day don’t we?
* *Send us your gift and God will bless you*…*Send us a gift of $100 and we will pray for you and God will increase you tenfold!* It’s ridiculous! Send **me** $100! Why settle for my $100 when you can send me $100 and God will give you $1,000!? ***See?*** If they really believed that then they wouldn’t ask for money, ***they’d be giving money!!*** But it’s all a scam. They just want your money…Reminds me, *why didn’t the man report his stolen credit card? The thief was spending less than his wife!* **HA!!!**
* You cannot buy the power of God…and you cannot pay God to work in your life. Are you telling me that folks without money are outside of God’s reach? How stupid a thought!!! Isaiah 55 says, *“Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price!”* ***We don’t give to God so that God will give to us. We give to God because God HAS given to us***…we give to God to build His church and to grow the reach of His love and salvation!
* Simon wanted to control the working of the Spirit, and regarded the Holy Spirit as a power he could use as he wanted, instead of a Person who **ruled** his life. And that kind of faith is a *poison* that will reap *in your life and in mine* bitterness and offness – iniquity! Look at Simon’s response…

Acts Chapter 8 Verse 24

* ***Wrong!*** Why didn’t Simon just do what Peter asked? This is ***so crazy***…Peter wasn’t unclear, he didn’t give options…he gave clear direction. Simon, you repent…you pray…but Simon says to Peter, *pray for me*…Why not just do immediately and exactly what Peter told him to do…if he had, perhaps ***Simon would have found purpose and freedom***…Because he didn’t, he **fades** into obscurity…

Acts Chapter 8 Verses 25 – 27a

* It’s interesting how ***little*** Phillip is told…did you see that? *Go toward the south…there’s a road there…its desert.* Sounds good! HA! Not sure about that!! But he isn’t told ***what*** will happen, he isn’t told ***why***, ***he’s only told to go.*** He isn’t given a second order until he does what God tells him to do first and that’s interesting. Perhaps you’re in a *silent* season with God…we all go through those…and you’re wondering why… What is it that God has told you to do that you’re not doing…
* And I’m not particularly talking about a *calling* or a commandment of God to *do* some sort of ministry…I’m just talking about Biblical order and Biblical direction…Christianity 101 stuff…like going to church, loving your neighbor, praying for your enemies, respecting your husband, obeying your parents…that kind of stuff…if God is silent with you then perhaps you’re not yet past step 1…and step 2 isn’t coming until you ***hit the road, Jack…***
* And likewise…if you have on your heart a work of ministry then let me ask you, how’s your marriage…how’s your witness at work…how’s your heart of obedience in the privacy of your own life…***the part that’s not on display?*** Folks over the years have come to me with a great heart to do something for the Lord…but if your house isn’t in order then it’s not time yet for step 2. Deal with the disobedience, deal with the sin in your life first…that’s step 1. James 4:10 says, *“Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.”* The **last thing** we, I want to do is lift up a person who is **not** humble in the sight of the Lord…that ministry will be a **disaster** for the body of Christ!!

Acts Chapter 8 Verses 27 – 31a

* Notice this…***He had not gotten what he needed from Jerusalem***…from religion…what he ultimately needs he will find **simply** in the scriptures…watch…

Acts Chapter 8 Verses 31 – 35

* That’s awesome! Phillip was ***ready*** for this ministry! He was **obedient** and he **knew** the scriptures! I like that! He was well studied and well prepared and the result is freedom for this man that was searching!!

Acts Chapter 8 Verses 36 – 37

* Again, belief before baptism…

Acts Chapter 8 Verse 38

* Notice, this is a very ***informational chapter*** as I said last week, notice, they went down INTO the water. Phillip didn’t grab a glass of water and sprinkle this man…they went into the water…

Acts Chapter 8 Verses 39 – 40

* I love that! It’s crazy and I love it! They come up out of the water and just like that…Phillip is ***whisked away*** by the Spirit of the Lord…Have you ever experienced this? Oh not the *transport* which is ultra cool and we only see it two other times in the Bible *(the boat immediately being at the beach – John 6, and the rapture of the church – 1 Thessalonians 4)* but the circumstance where you trust God and complete step 1…then step 2…***then strength and joy flood your heart and suddenly you’re just not there anymore***…you’re with Him…you know what, that’s been His desire ALL ALONG…