

**Welcome to the
Common Ground Café!**



Sunday, August 19, 2018

**Simonitis
A Study of Acts 8:9-25**

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Make a list of all the superhero characters you can think of (Example: Batman. Now name a few more.) If you want to *really* prove your geek cred, identify them according to whether they're a Marvel or DC character.

What superhero ability do you wish you had?

In Acts 8, we read about a man named Simon Magnus who saw the miraculous deeds of Philip and Peter and John, and he wanted that “superpower.”

We get the English word “simony” from this story. What does “simony” mean? (Look it up on your mobile device if you need to.)

Name as many physical problems as you can that end with “—itis.” (Example: Bursitis. Now name a few more.)

Pastor Tom said there was a sickness we have to watch for called “simonitis.” The Westminster Confession says “the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.” When we suffer from simonitis, we fail in this. Use your sermon notes to fill in the three symptoms as we come to them.

First Symptom:

Read Acts 8:5-13.

What was Simon Magnus always talking about according to verse 9 and what was Philip always talking about according to verse 12?

What can cause a follower of Christ to begin to self-promote?

Why do people sometimes seek a “church position”? Or name a misplaced drive for wanting to use a personal talent in the church community.

How can self-promotion sidetrack God’s blessings? (Think about how it impacts the self-promoter and also the church’s fellowship and witness.)

Second Symptom:

Read Acts 8:13-17

How do verses 10-11 describe Simon Magnus’s success? According to verses 12-13, what changed?

In verse 14, what group came to the Lord? Which two apostles did the Jerusalem church send to investigate this new mission work? When John encountered Samaritans during the earthly ministry of Jesus, what was his attitude? (Read Luke 9:51-56 for the answer.) In Acts 8:15-17, what was John’s new attitude? What do you think brought about that new attitude?

What prejudices were you brought up with? How is the gospel breaking through those prejudices in your life? What is it about the gospel that brings this change?

Why would the Father delay pouring out the Spirit until Peter and John were on the scene? Do you think this was a lesson for the Samaritans or for the apostles?

Simon Peter accused Simon Magnus of two things in verse 23. Identify them. How can one lead to the other?

According to verse 21, what was Simon’s root problem?

Describe the characteristics of a “right heart.”

What causes jealousy/bitterness in modern Christians?

Third Symptom:

Read Acts 8:18-24

How did Simon Magnus foolishly attempt to manipulate God?

What do you think his motive was?

Why did Peter react so strongly?

Describe how modern Christians can foolishly attempt to manipulate God.

Do you think Simon was repentant in verse 24 or just afraid? Explain.

Conclusion

John Piper famously said, “God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him.” What does that mean? How does that help you avoid simonitis?



Close with praise reports and prayer requests