

SAVED LIKE THE SORCERER

Acts 8:4-24

The salvation of Simon, the Samaritan sorcerer, teaches us what we need to know to be saved and, if we falter, how to come back.

I. THE SORCERER SAW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FAKERY & TRUTH

A. Acts 8:9-10, 13

Simon deceived the people into believing he was God's great power by the practice of his magic arts, but when the genuine article appeared, not only did his audience recognize the difference, but so did he!

B. Exodus 8:18-19

Pharaoh's court magicians had somehow duplicated the first two plagues – as if that helped! However, they could do nothing to imitate the third and acknowledged God's power at work. No further attempt was made by them to replicate God's miracles.

C. 1st Samuel 28:7-12

When king Saul went in disguise to a medium and hired a séance, she was actually able to summon up dead Samuel, but was shocked by her success and thereby knew the identity of her client.

D. Acts 19:11-20

The seven sons of Sceva, itinerant Jewish exorcists, tried to cast out demons in the name of the Jesus they did not know and they suffered physical harm for it.

E. John 20:30-31

When the miracles of Christ are read, just read, they are sufficient to convince the honest whom Jesus really is.

II. THE SORCERER RESPONDED TO CHRIST PREACHED

A. Acts 8:5, 12-13

When Philip preached Christ, the Samaritans, including Simon, believed and were baptized.

B. Mark 16:15-16

This is exactly as Jesus prescribed: preaching should result in believing and being baptized in order to be saved!

C. Galatians 3:26-27

It takes belief in Christ and baptism into Christ to become a child of God and to put on Christ.

III. THE SORCERER OBSERVED HOW SPIRITUAL GIFTS WERE CONVEYED

A. Acts 8:14-18

It took direct physical contact with an apostle for a person to receive the Holy Spirit.

B. Acts 8:6-7, 13

Remember that Philip the evangelist was already working miracles in Samaria before the apostles arrived, but no one he converted obtained spiritual gifts until the apostle arrived, so we cannot rightly expect those gifts to be conferred otherwise.

C. Acts 1:21-22; 1st Corinthians 15:8

The apostles themselves showed the basic qualification to be an apostle was to have witnessed Christ's resurrection. Paul identified himself as the final witness. Therefore, no one since could be qualified to be an apostle, and, thus, spiritual gifts have not been conferred since their lifetime.

IV. THE SORCERER FELL AWAY AFTER SALVATION & HAD TO BE RESTORED

A. Acts 8:18-24

After he believed and was baptized, Simon tried to bribe Peter and John for the power to transfer the gifts of the Spirit, but he was immediately chastised,

told his *“heart is not right in the sight of God”* (21), *“poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity”* (23). The remedy was to repent and pray

B. 2nd Peter 2:20-22; Hebrews 10:26-31

Saved souls who subsequently sin are in *“worse”* condition than had they never been forgiven. So much for *“once saved, always saved!”*

C. Galatians 6:1-2; James 5:19-20

There is a reason Christians are taught to restore wanderers.

D. James 5:16

The process whereby the wayward Christian is turned back involves confession of sin and prayer, as well as the aforementioned repentance.