



SERMON NOTES

Sunday, April 18, 2021 | Pastor Scott Boerckel

“The Wolves Within: A Challenge to the Early Church”

Acts 8:9-25

1. The joy of the Gospel proclaimed and embraced (Acts 8:9-13)

2. The transitional working of the Spirit in the apostolic age
(Acts 8:14-17)

3. The danger of wolves who distort the Gospel by power and money (Acts 8:18-25)

Table Talk

- 1) Have you ever known anyone who told others how great he or she is? What were they like? (v. 9) Why do people like this get attention? (v. 10) What did Simon do to keep peoples' attention? (v. 11) If you get attention or accolades by your sensational actions, what has to keep happening to maintain that attention? How does that impact church life?
- 2) What did Philip proclaim? Why is it significant that Philip proclaimed "the kingdom of God"? Why is it significant that he proclaimed "the name of Jesus Christ"? (v. 12) How do churches get off track by proclaiming a different message than this? What joyous result came from Philip's proclamation? (v. 13) What happened to Simon in verse 13?
- 3) What did the apostles do when they heard what was happening up in Samaria? (v. 14) What does "receiving the Holy Spirit" mean? (vv. 16-17) Why did the Holy Spirit not come immediately? How do we know that this type of ministry was a temporary one? (see 1 Corinthians 12:12-13)
- 4) What did Simon do when he saw that the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of hands by the apostles? (vv. 18-19) What is Simon after? How are we tempted to pursue the power of the Holy Spirit rather than the Spirit Himself? In what ways do we today see similar activities to Simon's?
- 5) How does Peter respond to Simon? (vv. 20-22) Is Simon a real believer? If not, what are we to make of his profession of faith in verse 13? What warning does Peter give to Simon? (v. 23) How is Peter's response here different than what we might see in today's church? Why should we be cautious about calls for "unity" when there is no agreement on what the Gospel is?
- 6) What happened to Simon, according to early church history? What did Peter and John do as they were returning to Jerusalem? How does their commitment to share Jesus wherever and whenever they go impact our own commitment? (vv. 24-25)