



Examining Our Motives

Series: "Real Christianity: How It Flourished", Part 6 of 11

Sunday, February 8, 2026

Text: Acts 8:1-25

Big Idea: God may use all kinds of instruments in our lives to get us to fulfill His commission.

Acts 8:1b, "On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria."

Acts 8:4, "Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went."

I. The Scattering Of The Disciples.

Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 8:1b, "On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria."

Psalm 119:67, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word."

Acts 8:1b, "And all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria."

II. The Salvation Of The Samaritans.

Acts 8:4-8, "Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. So there was great joy in that city."

John 4:39-41, Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers.

Acts 8:12, "But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."

III. The Sinfulness Of Simon The Sorcerer.

Acts 8:9-11, "Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is the divine power known as the Great Power." They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic."

Acts 8:13, "Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw."

View one is that Simon's was a genuine conversion, but he was later perverted by his desire for power and all that goes with power, and he fell away from his genuine faith.

View two is that Simon's was a false conversion, as evidenced by the fact that his life apparently didn't start changing.

Acts 8:18-19, "When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

Acts 8:20b-23, "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin."

2 Corinthians 5:15, And He died for all, that they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. {NASV}

"Simony is the act of selling church offices and roles or sacred things."

Acts 8:22-23, "Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. 23 For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin."

Acts 8:24b, "Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me."