

# No Shortcuts to Faith

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## Acts 8:4-40

### I. Intro

We live in the day and the age of quick fixes - fast results - quick solutions - our attention span is dissipating and this has a lot of effects.

Here is the thing: Quick fixes may provide temporary relief, but spending time on long-term improvements leads to sustainable lasting change. Hard, often means doing the things that we do not want to do, being consistent especially when we are not seeing the fruit or evidence of the changes yet.

How much of the quick fix mindset do we carry into our faith?

That is what we are diving into today: Main Idea I have for us today is there is NO substitute for real faith.

Salvation happens in an instant but faith is grown and proven over a lifetime.

### II. Acts 8:4-8

Scattering because of the persecution - God is using this difficult situation to accomplish His plan. Putting people in uncomfortable situation yet they Are remaining dependent on God.

Philip proclaiming the good news of salvation through Jesus and extending an invitation for them to believe and receive salvation - its it through Philip's obedience and willingness to proclaim Jesus coupled with the powerful work of the Holy Spirit to heal and deliver - The response is belief and faith.

If we speed past that - can miss the powerful reminder that even in "enemy territory" the gospel is the power of God to break every barrier. Power of God confronting the darkness.

Philip was not seeking to bring healing - Philip was preaching Christ and the Spirit performed the miracles as a validation of the gospel message.

### III. Simon Acts 8:9-25

Simon: Practiced Magic - spiritual influence on the region, performed signs - he claims himself to be the power of God

Contrast that to Philip: Good reputation, full of the spirit of God, wise, servant heart - about the fame and glory of God.

What happens? The people of Samaria believe and are baptized - Simon included.

Now Peter and John hear that the Samaritans are embracing Jesus - come to pray with the new believers to receive the Holy Spirit and the passage implies external indication of the Holy Spirit upon the Samartans - like that of Acts 2 in Jerusalem.

However: what the Bible is communicating is Simon's response was wrong - his heart was in the wrong, he needed to change the posture of his heart before God because he was out of alignment. No short cuts to faith - you cannot buy it. We cannot be after the gifts of God - we must be after God Himself.

If his faith was genuine or if Simon was in the process of unlearning his pride and selfishness before his life with Jesus - what is being rebuked here is the desire for an easy button. Quick fix - shortcut so that he can be the one with the power of God again.

Even his raw response to Peter you pray to me that God wouldn't do this to me - is an indication of he is elevating Peter to this higher level and not realizing that Simon himself has access to God and needs to spend time before the Lord to repent and get his heart in proper alignment. No quick fix prayer - that is slow process of going before God in prayer and working out your faith before Holy God personally.

Left on a cliff hanger with Simon - like did Peter pray, did Simon pray and get his heart right leaves us with questions because the focus is not on them as individual but what we can learn from Simon's response to the gospel.

Apostles roll back to Jerusalem and they preach the gospel in the villages along the way. Then we zip back to Philip. Is Philip trying to get quick fix to the power and authority or is he walking with the Spirit of God through every day life?

#### **IV. Philip READ Acts 8:26-40**

Glimpse into Philip's life - his life with the Spirit of God. His sensitivity and immediate response.

Look at the power of God - How much God is going after each of our hearts.

Why do we have Simon and Philip here?

- Simon wanted a quick fix - wanted access to the power of God without relationship with the person of God.
- Philip living his life in communion with God - connection with God empowered Philip too be present and available in whatever situation He is in.

Simon wanted access to the miracles - Philip focused on his access to God and the miracles flowed through his obedience to God.

Philip's relationship with God empowered him to be present and available in any situation. No shortcut- about his faith relationship with God. He was seeking to be in step with the Spirit.

#### **V. Conclusion**

MAIN IDEA: THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR REAL FAITH

Galatians 5: 25a Keep in step with the Spirit

Do you have real faith?