



The Acts of the Spirit

GATHERING THE CHURCH

ACTS 8:9-25

"THE POWER"

OCTOBER 8, 2023

AT A GLANCE

How much of you does God have?

CONTEXT

The Book of Acts is the theological history of the Church. In the previous weeks, we explored how God's people (the Church) have become where heaven and earth meet. The Church is multiplying rapidly, and with it, opposition from the outside and obstacles from within. Despite the opposition, these followers of Christ are sown, not scattered, into areas and people groups in need of hearing the Gospel.

SERMON SUMMARY

Pastor Jeff reminds us that when it comes to the Holy Spirit, He is a person to know, not a force to wield. Therefore, when it comes to God's power the question is not how much of it you have, but how much of you He has.

But we all, like Simon the magician from Acts 8, seek to commandeer God's power to advance our agendas, status, and sense of security. We believe that we know best, so we end up placing ourselves above God and his judgments.

Pastor Jeff exhorted us to allow our longing for our kingdoms and our esteem to be undone by the transformational good news of the Gospel offered to us freely. And in relationship with Christ, we seek to build his kingdom, and will find ourselves more immersed in Him and his power than we could have ever thought possible.

Because it's not about how much of His power you can get; it's about how much of you He has.



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This document can be used for either personal or group reflection.

Group facilitator: you do not need to ask every question but can select the best ones for your group dynamic.

DISCUSSION

Expand Your Awareness

- What is power, and why do people want it?
- What are the different ways people go about getting power?

It's said that all people are looking to feel safe, loved, and purposeful. When people do not experience those things the way God intended, they will stop at nothing to try to experience counterfeits.

- How have you seen people use all their resources (money, time, personality, etc.) to procure power as a means to feel:
 - Safe?
 - Loved?
 - Purposeful?

Extract the Truth

Read Acts 8:9-25

- What do you believe led Simon to pursue a life of Magic?
- What did that provide for him?
- What do you believe he (and his community) saw that was different in Philip's and Peter's message/power?
- What jumps out to you about Peter's response to Simon's request?
- Why do you think Peter warned him about this spirit of bitterness, greed, and envy?
- What was Peter passionately defending about the nature of the Gospel by refusing Simon's request?



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Explore Your Experience

- What are some things you want out of life?
- How does the world tell us we should use power to try to obtain them?

Pastor Jeff said that how we use our power and wealth is a window into how we would act if we had more.

- How have you been tempted to use your power (time, talent, personality, resources, etc.) to get what you want in life?
- Have you been tempted to attempt to manipulate/use God to get those things? If so, how?
- Has that provided the lasting effect you desired?
- What are you genuinely looking for in life that only surrendering to God's power and ways can provide?
- How have you seen God provide the power, resources, connections that you needed to carry out what He's called you to do?

Experience Transformation & Engage the World

- What do you think pastor Jeff meant by his statement, "When it comes to God's power, the issue is not how of it we have, but how much of us He has?"
- To grow, we don't just try to hold down or remove our thirst for power; we must ask God to help us transform it in line with God's character and purposes. How do we do that, practically?
- What do you feel convicted to repent of, from this text?
- What do you need to receive from God to avoid the temptation of power-seeking?
- How can we intentionally ask God to transform our desire for power, wealth, recognition?
- What is one thing you can do this week to grow in this area?

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Pray For:

A longing for more intimate relationships with God.

Awareness of how we seek to use Him and his power for our agendas.

A genuine repentance from those behaviors.

A redeemed view of power that is reliant on God and honors Him.



**PREPARE FOR
NEXT WEEK:**

Read Acts 8:26-40