

Christ's Power and Zeal to Give New Hearts to Sinners

2022.05.29 Morning Sermon in Acts 8:9–24

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Main idea: Christ has power and zeal to overcome any obstacle to a sinner's salvation—even that daunting obstacle of pseudo religiosity in a baptized and active church member.

⁹But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, ¹⁰to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God." ¹¹And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. ¹²But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. ¹³Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.

¹⁴Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, ¹⁵who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, ¹⁹saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

²⁰But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! ²¹You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. ²²Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity."

²⁴Then Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me."

Introduction: The most difficult person to talk to about Jesus.

1. Christ's **Power** to Save Sinners
 - a. Overcomes the Samaritan spiritual climate
 - i. Already in a religious fervor: "this man is the great power of God" (v10)
 - ii. An attitude of religious superiority from centuries of sectarianism (cult-ish-ness)
 - iii. Personality-driven theology: "they heeded him" (v11)
 - b. A better message (cf. 6a)
 - i. The kingdom of God (v12)—the Jews were right (but even they didn't know how right)! David's Son is on the throne forever already.
 - ii. The NAME of Jesus Christ. Both Lord and Christ. Pourer of the Spirit, second Person of the Godhead. But also prophet like Moses and son of David.
 - c. Better miracles (cf. 6b, end of v13)
 - i. Conversion of those Simon had previously duped
 - ii. Casting out demons instead of (possibly) being used by them
2. Christ's **Zeal** to Save Sinners
 - a. Baptism a sign of Christ's power and earnestness to save (cf. Mt 28:18–20; Ac 2:36–39)
 - b. Christ more eager to save than Saul of Tarsus to persecute (v12b, cf. v3, 5:42)
 - c. Christ more eager to use apostles than they are to be used (v14)
 - d. Christ, not the laying on of hands, gives the Holy Spirit (cp. v15, 17)
3. The **Danger** of witnessing Christ's power and zeal without having Christ Himself
 - a. Simon's attributes (v13): profession of faith, baptism, active in the ministry, enthusiasm about the ministry
 - b. Simon's blindness: seeing what is done on earth (v18–19) but not seeing or engaging by faith the Lord Jesus Himself on the throne

- c. Simon's need: a new heart (v21, 22) that is directed at God Himself
- d. Simon's prescription: not just that others would pray for him as he asked (v24), but that, repenting from all his wickedness, he himself would engage God for forgiveness (v22)

Conclusion: Behold the power of Christ to save, and the zeal of Christ to save! Make good use of the means that He has given: make use of them to look by faith to Him Who gave them, Him Who uses them.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Acts chapter 8, beginning in verse 9. These are the words of God But there was a certain man called Simon who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria Claiming that he was someone great to whom.

They all gave heed from the least to the greatest saying, this man is the great power of God and they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. But, and they believed Philip as he preached, the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women.

We're baptized then, Simon himself also believed. And when he was baptized, he continued with Philip and was amazed seeing the miracles and signs which were done. Now, when the apostles who were at Jerusalem, heard that Samaria had received the Word of God. They sent Peter and John to them who when they had come down prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit for us yet.

He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands, the Holy Spirit was given he offered them money saying, give me this power.

Also that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit but Peter said to him, your money Parish with you because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money. You have neither part nor portion in this matter for your heart is not right in the sight of God.

Repent. Therefore of this your wickedness and pray God. If perhaps the thought of your heart maybe forgiven you for, I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity, Then Simon answered and said, Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me.

Amen. Listens this reading of God's inspired and inerrant work. We rejoice to know that he adds His blessing to the preaching of it. Please be seated.

One of the difficulties that ministers encounter is that there are some people who are hard to talk to about Jesus. Praise God. There are some people whom, it's very easy to talk to about, Jesus. That's all they want to hear about. I know a minister who was very concerned for a woman's salvation for years because she wanted to talk sometimes often even about spiritual things, but the spiritual things we do and our experience in the exercises of them.

But she didn't want to talk about who Jesus is and what he had done. That was kind of a one-time deal that you use when you evangelize very excited, about church things and, and so forth. But praise God, when that woman came close to dying and she realized she was about to leave this world suddenly, there's nothing she wanted to know about other than Jesus.

What does he like? There's she wanted just to read, or have read to her, rather, the gospels and just stop after everything. Jesus said or did and point out? What those things showed about him, Sometimes the most difficult people to talk to about Jesus are People in the church who feel like they have moved on from him.

When we were planting the church in Iowa, it was something that you all probably can't conceive of a little town of just over 5,000 people. 14. Large reformed churches of different flavors. Artist was the smallest by far at just under a hundred by the time we planted and yet going door to door, evangelizing was very disturbing.

You start by asking if they knew the gospel. The good news about Jesus Christ. And very quickly, if there are a member of another church, they would shut down. Even if you just wanted to talk about Christ and rather than talk about him, they would talk about themselves and their church, their baptism, their theological knowledge, their participation in the church ministries.

There were some, of course who were excited that someone just wanted to stand on their porch and talk about the Lord for a while. But sometimes, Having all of the external of religion without the new heart, as one of the greatest obstacles to genuine salvation, that's why it's such a blessing to us that Simon Magus here, who is an example to us of the danger of being witnessed to Christ's power, to save, and Christ's zeal to save without having Christ Himself.

So why the blessing? It's a blessing that in this passage he comes in the context of a passage in which the main theme is Christ's power to save and Christ's zeal to save his desire and fervor and earnestness to save sinners. So that we might be first directed to Christ.

Who is infinitely able to save and Christ? Who is unfathomably earnest wanting desiring to save and then we come and we see that what Simon was missing was that he didn't see Christ and his saving power and his saving desire. He saw only what was going on on earth, He interacted only with what was happening on earth.

And so, we'll just take it almost in the order that it comes in the passage this morning. First Christ's power to save, sinners, and then Christ's zeal to save. Sinners. And then the danger of witnessing Christ's power and zeal without having or interacting with Christ himself First. Then Christ's power to save sinners.

We already heard in the end of the portion that we took last week so that we could understand what the Lord was sowing us about the first great persecution that had arisen the purpose of that persecution in his saving providence. And then after he after the Spirit tells us that the multitudes with one accord heeded, the things spoken by Philip and that there was great joy in that city.

He backs us up he says. But there was a certain man called Simon, and the spirit now tells us the obstacle to the gospel, that was in Samaria. If we're reading this, as first century Christians, we already know. There are obstacles to the gospel in Samaria. After all their Samaritans, they only held to the first five books, They did not recognize David, and his kingship, and the promises made to him.

Their idea of the Christ, was simply only the prophet, like, Moses, who would arise from among the brethren? They were not looking for a kingdom of God. They Certainly we're not looking for the Lord himself to come as an atonement for their sins. And so the fact that there's Samaritans is already an obstacle.

These are those northerners, and that's something that you would say, from Judah, with even more irritation than a 19th, 20th, 21st century, American south of the Mason-Dixon line. The Northerners were the ones who had abandoned David at the and his line. The first chance they could who set up false worship and proceeded to enter into that false worship and never escaped from the idolatry of Jeroboam the son of Niebat and then as bad as they were already when the Assyrians exiled them, they repopulated the land with many other nationalities so that they would be mixed breed.

They would be mixed ethnically and even more mixed spiritually, then they were before and you think that that's enough of an obstacle. But there's a greater obstacle here in the text. And that is the spiritual climate into which the gospel came into Samaria. No, not like the spiritual climate of paganism or post Christianity.

Like we see in much of Europe and America today, but a spiritual climate in which you had this Colonel of truth. The one true God and His power being the only power that there is to save, man. But a sectarian cultus excitement in the recent season that they were in and God's providence.

So he backs us up and he says, but there was a certain man called Simon who previously practiced sorcery in the city. Magic. The astonished, the people of Samaria. Claiming that he was someone great. Now, that's not so astonishing. Lots of people come along and claim that they are someone great.

But to whom they all gave heed from the least to the greatest saying, this man is the great power of God and they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries with his magic. His apparently supernatural and maybe a parent or maybe supernatural works for a long time.

And so, this was a city in which there was great, religious zeal already. This is a city in which they thought they were tapping into the power of God already. Perhaps you have had charismatic friends, not that all charismatics deny Christ and who He is and what he has done.

But many of them don't they, they fall into these these superficial very exciting sorts of displays manufactured or not. Perhaps it's a con perhaps it's demonic. Perhaps a mixture of both But when you want to talk to someone who is obsessed with those things especially if they have a charismatic leader who has given them, lots of good advice.

And so you have the exciting displays on the one hand and then you have the good advice by which they are doing, as they think many good things. On the other hand. What need have? They of the gospel of Jesus Christ of the absorbing of the wrath of God, and the place of sinners that we could never add anything to.

How can we make up for the least of our sins? Especially when the Son of God himself has atoned for our sins, where you need the power of God, especially for righteousness, both to be brought to faith in the first place to be counted righteous. And then as you walk by faith to grow in living righteously, like we heard about in the midweek sermon and the power of God unto salvation and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And so they were already in a religious fervor. They all thought they already had the great power of God, And when people are like this, they have an attitude of religious superiority, don't they? There were already kind of culturally distinct and separate from the, from the southern kingdom from the people of Judea.

And from the Galileans who were also Jews as Americans were, kind of their, their own little group. And when you are cut off and excluded and you come into what you think, is a season of spiritual excitement, or activity, or power, as the language is in this passage, You do have that cultish looking down upon everyone else?

Yeah, you can even do this as Reformed people. God have mercy on us, whose doctrine above all should tell us. That there is nothing. Good enough. And that the Lord is free to do all of this work. That is better than people's stated theology. He converts people fills them with love for Christ and obedience to His commands who can't recite nearly, as well as you can from your catechisms.

What that obedience ought to look like, But they're not reciting it. They're living it because God is working in them because they know the Lord Jesus, They might not have all of the theology of what the right things are to do in worship and who it is, who leads the worship.

And yet in those times in their worship services in which they have the preaching of the Word in which they call upon the Lord, from the Word, the Holy Spirit has given them faith in Jesus. Christ to know Him as the one who is addressing them. Reformed people can get hung up on our sectarianism too, But the Samaritans now were a cultish group who thought they alone?

Had the great power of God. We knew those Jews were wrong. And now God has sent us. Simon the miracle worker. And he proves to us that we are the spiritual people. Was a great spiritual obstacle, isn't it? This religious fervor this attitude of religious superiority. This personality driven theology.

This man is the great power of God and they heeded him, But then God sends Philip in the power of the Holy Spirit and the spirit removes, the veil from their eyes. And they can hear that Philip has a better message and they can see that Philip has better miracles.

First Philip has a better message.

When they believed Philip verse 12, as he preached, the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. First of all, the kingdom of God, It was the Jews who were eager for the restoration of the Davidic throne. It was the Jews who were hoping for second Samuel 7 to come true When David wanted to build a physical house for God.

But God said that he would build a house for David and that from him, would come one whose throne would be forever and ever. And Jesus shows up in John chapter 2, identifying himself and his body as the temple, that would be torn down and then raised up again, in three days, the house that God built the kingdom that God built, that would be forever and ever.

And now Philip comes and this is this is such a display of the power of the Holy Spirit to convince this Samaritans that the Jews were right all along. Just like the woman who didn't like that temple and John chapter 4, when she even more than she didn't like the temple.

She didn't like talking about her four, marriages and fifth non-merge. And so when Jesus puts his finger on that nerve, she says, oh I perceive you're a prophet. Let's talk about theology and not my personal life and she says, the Jews say to worship at the temple, but we say to worship at the mountain, don't those silly little Jews know that.

Yeah, a house of man-made material can't contain the glory of God and that when he appears he appears on mountains, like, he did to Moses. So, we worship on the mountain and Jesus not only identifies himself as the Christ who would tell them all things. Remember, she's looking for that prophet like Moses.

But he also says, and by the way, the Jews were right? Because salvation was from the Jews and she believes in him and she witnesses to others, and they believe in him, even though one of the main things, he said, is the Jews were right? Well, Philip comes. And he says the Jews were, right?

It's not just a prophet after Moses. It is a son of David and he is already sitting on a throne in glory all authority in heaven and on earth has been given unto him The kingdom of God has come and he is reigning and shall reign until all of his enemies are put under his feet is a better message.

Not just the kingdom of God. But the name of Jesus Christ, the name of Jesus Christ. Now, we know that when he talks about the kingdom of God, and being baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus as he says, and as the Spirit says, in verse 16, that this being baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

And that's the language that's used there. There are different prepositions. And this one is the one especially for in two in verse 16 that Jesus had given a formula to use when you're baptized into his name. So your baptized into his name, meaning you are set apart from the world and brought under his authority that you are made.

Part of you are a member of his church that he in his authority in heaven and on earth has taken you and put you in, in His group His church, but you'd use the language of father, son and Holy Spirit. Why? Because the one into whose name, you are being baptized, says to use that name when you baptize.

This is why they've received they've heard the name. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, They've been baptized into the name of the Lord. Jesus recognizing that he's Yahweh and will come back to that in a

moment. That's where we are in the outline, the name of Jesus Christ. They've heard those things but the Holy Spirit hasn't yet fallen upon them.

They know that there is a Holy Spirit who not only gives them life so that they can believe. But who in the in the age of the church in which Jesus sits in the throne of heaven and pours out the spirit. Now not only is God the Holy Spirit, but as Galatians, 2 says, the spirit of His Son who is sent into our hearts by whom we cry.

Abba. Father, that they want to receive the Holy Spirit that way. And yet, He has not fallen upon them or indwelt them entered, their hearts made them call God their Abba from their heart. Yet This is what are the great differences. Isn't it between the church under under the Freedom and Seth and then later Noah and Abraham and even under Moses.

And now the church under Christ that not only is a spirit, make people spiritually alive so that they can believe that. That Christ, pours out his spirit upon us and the Father by the Son. Sends his spirit into our hearts. This indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the name of Jesus Christ.

Is a name that reminds them that the Lord Himself has come as their Savior. In other words, he proclaimed the Trinity. He didn't just proclaim the kingdom of God, But that God has triune and God. The Son has come to save and got the Spirit. Now, is poured out by God the Son.

So that he indwells our hearts and makes us to call God our Father and to trust in Jesus. As our Lord This language of the name of Jesus Christ, calls us back to chapter two and Peter finished concluded that sermon this Jesus. God has made both Lord and Christ.

Both Lord. Who that was the subject of the Sermon? It was on Joel chapter 2. They wanted the crowd had gathered together to see what in the world. This was all these men speaking. All these languages and the main point of the sermon was Jesus has poured out this, but he's preaching a passage in Joel, chapter two, in which Yahweh had said, I will pour out my spirit So it comes to the end of the sermon and he says, God has made this Jesus, both Lord and Christ.

He is your way from Joel chapter 2? He pours out his spirit. If you call upon his name you will be saved. None can ever be lost who hope in the Lord, Jesus Christ, because Jesus Christ is Lord of heaven and earth. The great. I am the uncreated Creator.

The one who alone is God, His Lord, but he's also Christ. The Son of David, the promised prophets, The one who has made like us in every way except without sin, who is not ashamed to call us His brethren and who laid down his life for us that he might be true and proper atonement in our place and Peter had concluded, the sermon.

That's the fullness of the apostolic message. Jesus is both Lord and Christ. And you can see that in the name, Jesus Christ because his name is Yahweh saves, But it's not just what his name means. It's where he got it because Joseph didn't pick that name. Did he And so Philip preaching, the name of Jesus.

And his name is the Lord saves, and he got that name because he has no human father. His human father. Got the name from an angel because God was the one by the Spirit who conceived in Mary. The man. Jesus Christ. It's an amazing message is a glorious. Message in the, Holy Spirit has given the Samaritans to stop listening to Simon the trickster or Simon.

The maybe demonic miracle worker, Phillip has come with a better message and part of the exercise of the power of Jesus to save sinners is to bring those Samaritans to say that is a better message. There's not something good in me that can be amplified. If I follow this spiritual guru Simon, There's nothing good in me at all, But there's everything good in Jesus because He's God and he both has received what I deserve and given himself to be my life as I trust in him.

So that all of the power of God, the Son is applied by the power of God. The Spirit to make me on earth a child of God. The Father, It's robustly Trinitarian, isn't it? The name. Jesus, And so Philip comes. And

he preaches a better message. Jesus is both Lord and Christ or of the Spirit second person of the Godhead.

Lord and also Christ the Prophet like Moses. Since Martin's weren't wrong about everything. Were they? Jesus is the Christ, both Lord and Christ, And also better miracles. Now, the conversion of those Simon had previously duped, Does itself a miracle? I mean, think about this from Simon's eyes. So, all the effort he had to put into conning this whole town and and perhaps the spiritual darkness that went into conning.

The town. If in fact, those things that he did were not mere deceptions but actually demonically powered. There is real supernatural power and yet even it comes in the providence of God and one of the reasons in this particular place and it gives us great encouragement for those whom we know and love and want to reach with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And they are spiritually bound. One of the reasons that God had given them the town as a whole, not just all of them heated him but even from the least to the greatest so he's emphasizing how many in the town had bought into. This was so that when God comes at, He rips them out of Simon's hands and puts them into Jesus's hands as the Lord.

Jesus says, no one can take them from my father's hand. No one can take them from my hand. John chapter 10. It's the same hand, right? Jesus is hand in the Father's hand. One of the first better miracle is not even the casting out of demons and the raising up of paralytics.

But the plucking people out of the cult. Praise God. He saves people from cults. Some of us need to hear that for people who we love, and they are very religiously excited, about false religion. But then there is, isn't there? The casting out of the demons. And if Simon's magic working was, in fact, demonic, you can imagine the impression it would make up on him.

These wicked spiritual creatures that he thought he was using to dupe the people, but we know they were, of course, using him. And they were at Well, they're not at Christ's mercy. They're at Christ's judgment. The authoritatively cast them out of these other people. So, Christ's power to save.

Sinners is on display here. Oh, dear congregation. I think we often forget the power of the Savior with whom we are dealing. We remembered, we knew at the time that he brought us to faith and we knew our powerlessness. We knew not just our guiltiness, but the inability to lift our hearts towards him.

We had tried so many times to to believe and and we just could not get relief from the guilt of our sin. It felt like so much intellectual maneuvering and then the Spirit came and he gave us to see and know Christ as our Savior and that he who is our God had not only done that for us but that He gave our hearts life and we could believe is blessed doctrine of the power of Jesus to save You.

Call it Calvinism in call it reformed, whatever you want. As long as it's the blessed doctrine of the power of Jesus to save Sure. I've used the illustration with you before that good, southern Presbyterian minister. Benjamin Morgan Palmer and he's preaching a series of camp meetings, and of course he's just preaching the gospel, but it's the power of Jesus to save.

It's, you can't do anything, but God can do everything look to him. Depend upon him and he will give you the ability to believe as you look to him and trying and one of his hearers is very irritated. His a I guess I don't know if there's such a thing as cage stage or minionism, but he comes and sees Palmer, one afternoon during this week and Palmer, studying the guy is very rude, just odd in the 19th century south but he just starts launching into him.

And Dr. Palmer, doesn't even look up You guys just telling him how wrong his Calvinism is and when the guy stops Dr. Palmer says, well very good. If you were able to believe in the Lord on your own strength, then I very much recommend that you do it. If you don't, you will perish in your sin and then the man says, that's the problem.

I've been trying but I can't and at that point. Dr. Palmer puts down his pen. He looks up and he says that's a very different thing. Altogether. Welcomes. The man into the study. Praise with him that he would be able to believe. And that night has that man hears, the same gospel that irritated him all week.

Preached. God gave him to know Christ as His Lord and to save you, he rejoice that the prayers of the pastor had been answered earlier that day. Your God is able to give you faith in the first place. If you are worried that you don't have it and all of us who have it, we know that ours is weak, but it's not the strength of our faith.

That saves us. It's the strength of the Christ in whom we believe and he gives more grace. He has power to save from start to finish. He will give you more faith. You will cause you to rest more fully upon him to look away from yourself and what you do to be full of knowledge of his love and to be full of that.

Love for him that you wish you could produce but you cannot and you use his means and you trust him to do. He is powerful to do it. Jesus Christ is powerful to say but he's also zealous to save First. He's given us a sign. He knows that we are the that we are weak of faith.

And so, in Matthew 28, he said all authority in heaven and earth is given unto me. Now, as you go into all the nations make disciples baptizing them and teaching them to obey all that, I have commanded you. How can we do all that? He has committed because he has the authority in heaven and on earth to enable us who trust in him and belong to him and have been set apart to him, to obey him.

This is the answer at the end of the sermon in Acts chapter 2, and they hear that, this Jesus is both Lord and Christ. That wasn't great news, in the conclusion to the sermon. Why? Because they had just finished murdering him. Is there? Hope for us? Who some seven weeks ago, cried out.

His blood be upon us and upon our children, They're cut to the hardness of brethren. What shall we do? I said be repent and be baptized, not the baptism of some sort of work, but it's a sign from the one who died for sinners that he gives repentance that, he gives faith that, he gives his spirit.

They're just heard a sermon about Jesus is the one who pours his spirit from heaven. And then they say, bend, he's given a sign on her. We are authorized to pour water in his name, As we say, in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Ghost, the one whom you murdered is more eager to save you than you were to kill him and he's given a sign to show it to show that he does it to show that it is he who does it by his power and to show how he does it by the pouring out of his spirit.

So that you may be washed by his blood baptism is a sign of Christ's power to save and of his earnestness to save. Because we We need help for our faith. It doesn't help you without faith. Does it, How can something be affirmed and assured? And strengthened. If it is not there but it can be can't.

A means by which you are pointed to him, and when you are brought to that faith, he gives now not converting grace. Not now, regenerating grace. But persevering grace, Do you need to remember the power of Jesus to save you or the desire, the fervent urgent earnestness of Jesus to save you.

Do you need to remember it any less now that you've walked with him for many years? You're not see how the efficacy of baptism as we confess from the Scripture. And this is one of those passages that teaches that will have a bunch of them in Acts is not tied to the moment of its administration.

You know we're not those who say you get the baby wet and it comes spiritually to life And we're also not those who say that baptism, is this one time declaration of ourself and you and you have to figure out the moment in which you got converted so that you can tie it to the water and you just get baptized over and over and over again because you keep looking back on yourself and you don't find life in yourself.

Well, excuse the da. The life is in Christ. That's what the baptism said. Are you going to keep doing the thing over and over again until you find life in yourself? You're never gonna find life in yourself. That's a misuse of something that was designed to point away from you.

So one of the reasons why application of the covenant sign to our babies who can't do anything, didn't choose, their family didn't choose to be put in the church didn't choose to be put under the authoritative. Use of Christ's means, didn't do anything for themselves. It was all done to them.

Well, well, that's what baptism says to begin with. You don't do anything to yourself. It's done to you and now it's done to you even if you're a girl wonderful to as we did and we use the Hopewell at home too. And our household to look at my five daughters this week and enjoy that they have received the covenant sign that they didn't just know that Daddy had received the covenant sign and that they're under daddy.

And so they're in the household and the households part of the church, There's a point of household baptisms. It's not to count noses and try to argue over whether there were babies or, or who in the household. It's household baptism. That's just what it says. But Now, our daughters are set apart unto God not just from being in the house of a circumcised man, But God has expanded in this wonderful season of his church administration of his church, which is not now under Moses.

As as the yeah, intermediary of this administration of the Covenant but Jesus in heaven. Of course. He expands the sign to include our daughters, to doesn't remove it from our children. In fact, one of the things that he's pointing out here when he says, both men and women who were baptized, is that God is more eager to say, of than Saul of Tarsus was to persecute.

There's a linguistic context here. He's he's picking up on something. In verse 3. In verse 3. When we read as for Saul, he made havoc of the church entering every house and dragging off men and women. We see the zeal of this man that he's not satisfied to drag off men to prison.

He wants to drag off women to prison too. He say, oh, he is the chief of sinners. When we understand when the Apostle says that about himself, that he has memories of shrieking women who in his whom in his zeal to persecute, he had dragged them off, and hatred of the name of Jesus.

And then that context here, when you have Saul was dragging off men and women verse 3, the Spirit comes and he ties linguistically verse 12, both men and women were baptized. You see what he's saying? He's saying Jesus is more eager to save than Saul of Tarsus was to persecute.

And by the way, soul of Tarsus was as eager to persecute as the apostles were to disciple because that entering every house phrase in verse 3, recalls chapter 5, and verse 42 and how in the temple. And in every house they had preached Christ, but the eagerness of Jesus to save is greater than any wicked, eagerness of unconverted, man, or any righteous.

Eagerness of converted, man. Jesus went to the cross more willingly than we came to church this morning. Jesus gives his spirit to to give us faith and life and love for him and to know his love more than we desire. To know His love more than we desire to love him.

The earnestness of Jesus Christ to say not just His power and his ability that His desire and his zeal for saving us What a savior is held forth to you in baptism. When you see that, it's something that comes from him by his authority. Something not that you do but that is done to you.

I'm sure it's been done in the wickedness of man that someone, you know, grabbed some water and put it on himself or you know, error multiplying error jumped in. But never in the Bible and never properly in the history of the church. Does anyone baptized themselves? Why? Because one of the points of the sign is that he who saves by his power because He desires to save in his love.

Christ is more eager to save than solve. Tarsus was to persecute. He has more eager to use apostles than they are to be used by him. And we see that not only in tracing the linguistic trail, back to five and chapter 5 and verse 42. But also by looking at verse 14, Now, when the Apostles were at Jerusalem,

heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, They weren't supposed to receive the Word of God yet and the thinking of it.

Why? Well, because back in chapter 1 and verse 8. Jesus said, we would be his witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria. And so the apostles here that the the Word of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ has been heard in some areas that Jesus got ahead of us.

We were supposed to be his witnesses and and they, they send, you know, Peter, the most boisterous of the apostles and John probably the most mature or at least seems that way in the gospels, He's the one that lays his head on Jesus breast, and when you want to ask, who the betrayer is, you have John be the one who asks.

And so they take those two and they send them to Samaria. Jesus is more eager to use us even than we are to be used. You who parent your children and leave them in family worship, and you give them discipline, but it's the Lord's discipline, which means it comes with the Lord's instruction explaining to them.

What's sin is, and why it's wrong, not because it's against mommy, and daddy, and makes everything miserable in the house. But because it's against the living God and it deserves how, but he gave his son, you you do all these things and you want God to use them so bad and they're baptisms.

Say, Jesus is more earnest. More eager to save our children than we are for them to be saved. It is a horrible wrong way of thinking to think that we are using the mean, and hopes that we can overcome this threat. That is against us. No, you use. The means to embrace the one who has more eager to bless.

Those means than you are, whether with your children or your parents, or your neighbor, or your co-worker. Now we have to leave to him because he's the one who loved from before the foundations of the world. He's the one who came to die for them, but it's safe with him.

And especially, if he has put his sign upon them, it is Christ, not the laying on on of hands that gives the Holy Spirit. The apostles understand what Simon doesn't We're going to get in a moment to looking at the danger that of witnessing, Christ's power and zeal without having Christ himself.

But before we notice, what, Simon Mist. Let's notice that the the apostles didn't miss, it verse 17, then they laid hands on them. But what did they do? First verse 15, When they had come down, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. Well, these are the same apostles who say that Jesus is the one who pours, out this to whom do you think they were praying children?

If Jesus is the one who pours the Spirit to whom were they praying that the Samaritans would receive the Spirit. They're praying to Jesus, They didn't think there was something marvelous in their hands. In fact, they could have prayed in their hearts as they laid on their hands and that would have drawn more attention to them, in their hands.

But what were they showing? They were showing that the power isn't in us. The power is in Jesus, to whom we pray. The power is in Jesus who created heaven and earth. The power is in Jesus, who became a man and died on the cross for our sins, and rose again from the dead.

The power is all in him. And when we lay hands on you, it's it's not because there is a connection to us. It's because it's a connection to Jesus. It's saying the the same Savior of the church in Jerusalem is the same Savior of the church in Samaria, that there is one God and one, mediator the man, Jesus Christ, who is God, and man in one, So it's Christ who does everything.

And this This is what Simon was missing. This is what Simon is missing and he presents a great danger to us first of all because look what he had, Then Simon himself. Also believed in some form of intellectual theological agreement. He made a profession of faith, The professions deemed credible.

You can't imagine that there was not a change in mind and change in life and that they baptized him anyway. Now, he's got a credible profession of faith and he's baptized and he participates in ministry. He's active, he's not one of those guys who makes his profession of faith and he gets baptized, and then he receives to the periphery.

He continues with Philip verse 13 and is not unaffected. He's amazed seeing the miracles in signs which were done. This is very much like Hebrews chapter 6, isn't it? Tasting of the heavenly gift and of the powers of the world to come being in a spiritually alive church, where Jesus Christ is genuinely working by His Spirit and being active in it and participating in the ministry and yet not knowing Christ himself because he sees what has done on earth.

When Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands. The Holy Spirit was given He offers them money saying, give me this power. Also, He's accustomed to having power. He wants in his new religious zeal to have something similar to his previous religious deal. That's what they had said about him, right?

This man is the power of God. The great power of God. He says, I would like to have some of this power, but he doesn't know where it comes from. That it comes only from Jesus. The apostles praying went in one ear and out the other. He had no hearts to look to Jesus Christ in the praying and therefore he had no eyes to see the authority and work of Jesus Christ in the laying on of hands.

And so he thought that this could be a transaction that took place on earth. If you are in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, and you think that spiritual life and power as a transaction that can take place on earth then you are in danger of being like, Simon of having a profession of faith, that is deemed incredible by the church enough of a changed life and the baptism applied to you and participating in the ministry and being excited about what's going on and in the ministry.

And yet not seeing that that you are actually trusting in someone who has come to earth and become a man and died and risen again and is sitting on the throne. Not actually trusting in him in whom you profess faith, not receiving from him. The sign that was applied to you on earth and looking to him for the spiritual reality behind that sign.

Not participating in ministry as something that we do independence upon him for his glory because he is working, not because we can work,

He had all of these externals, but he was blind to Jesus himself and what he needed was a new heart. Peter says to him your money parish with you because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money. It's not purchased with money. It's purchased by the Incarnate, the blood of the incarnate Son.

The second person of the Trinity, your money is already to inflate it, because it's creaturely

He's the gift of God could be for you. Have not neither part. Nor portion of this matter for your heart is not right in the sight of God. Sometimes you wish for a more literal translation, although it'll be difficult to do with this one. Perhaps one of the older translations might say, straight way.

Then you get to it. The word that's being translated right here. Is that word that appears a bunch of times in the gospel of Mark means immediately, Perhaps we would use. The word directly means your heart is not engaging with God himself. Your heart does not instant directly. No, looking to him.

It's not the use of a word that means, right? Like righteous, you know, counted just and in the sight of God, He needed a heart that would interact with Jesus himself. So each of us needs. If we don't have a heart that is interacting with Jesus himself, we are not saved.

No matter. What else we have? We may have the profession, we may have the baptism. We may have the the ministry participation we may have excitement about what's going on in the church. But the thoughts of a heart that is not looking to Jesus and many of us cry out.

And as soon as we hear that, my heart doesn't look to Jesus like it Well independence upon Jesus looked to Jesus for the looking to Jesus. The very fact that your heart cries to him. Is it not an evidence that his spirit whom he gives by His power in his zeal to save?

Is the one who has given you to look to him for it, rather than try to figure out how you can work up in yourself, trusting in Jesus. He needed a new heart and he missed his prescription. We sometimes do that in doctor's offices or whoever the medical profit professional.

Is They, we hear about a condition in our minds are racing and and they tell us what to do, and we hear something differently. Peter says, repent. Therefore of this. Your wickedness, In other words, turn from interacting, only with things on earth and interact with God himself and pray God.

If perhaps the thought of your heart, maybe forgiven, you Simon answers, and says, pray to the Lord. For me, I'm sure the apostles were already praying for him. Are they not learned from the Lord Jesus? Do they not love those to whom, they announce the gospel with, with that, derivative love that the Spirit had given them of, from Christ for sinners, the that they would be saved.

Do you not as you are telling someone about Jesus? Do you not also pray for them? That's not what Peter had said is it. He said you pray God, why? Because it was his calling upon Christ himself that his new heart would do by which he would rest in Jesus and be saved.

So what we desire for all of you children, that it would not just be your church that prays for you and your elders, you pray for you and your parents who pray for you, that your sins would be forgiven, that the thoughts of your heart would be forgiven, You know, Job gathered his family once a week because one of his children might have sinned against God in their hearts and not known it.

It needs to be you who pray to the Lord for yourself who trust in Christ yourself that he who claimed you, as part of His church because he is your father's God. And your father Savior, you would know as your God and your Savior. Even as He has promised by your baptism He will do.

He alone has power. He has more love and desire to save you than you have to be saved. Just look to him. Now with Simon saved, You'll find out in glory.

It's a mercy of the Holy Spirit, isn't it? That he doesn't tell us whether he ever finally took the apostolic prescription repentant. Pray to God.

So that we might not be presumptuous. And think that If we are discovered to ourselves as not, actually engaging with the Lord in his church, that just sitting under the preaching of sermons like this and receiving correction, like Peter gave him. That we will automatically be saved. No, If you call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, you'll be saved.

If you look to him and engage with him, directly by faith immediately by faith, use the vocabulary of the passage. You will be saved and you're baptism shows you that he's infinitely, able and more eager to do so than you yourself are And that's not just for children. Dear converted adults, whose faith is so weak, who have such difficulty drawing comfort, such difficulty, drawing, strength, to love, and obey.

Your baptism tells you, He has Almighty power to give it to you and he's more eager for you to have it. Then you are to receive it from him. Don't merely look to your baptism look to him to whom you're baptism points. You, Let's pray.

Lord Jesus, we fall before you now like Thomas crying out my Lord. And my God and how we thank you. That it is, you our God, our Creator who added humanity to yourself. That you might be our sacrifice that you might be the Lamb who has taken away the sins of the world.

We pray that your spirit would work in each one's. Heart. That each one of us would act upon you individually saying me to me too. My God and Savior that we all might rejoice together over that wonderful display of your power and of your eagerness to save for. We ask it in your name.

Amen.