

Morning Overview

Lesson: *The Magician Who Tried to Buy God*

Lesson Objective:

In our story today, we learn about the power of God. It can be slightly imitated, but it's never the same. The power of God is greater. Simon wants it for his own purposes, but as Peter tells him, it's impossible to buy – it's a gift. God's power, the Holy Spirit, is a gift and cannot be purchased by us. Only God can give it! It's important to stress that God gives it to us because He loves us and wants to be with us!

NB: Please look to the *Acts* trifold to help explain how the Holy Spirit grew the Church as well as what goes deepest to the heart goes widest to the world. Each week the lesson will contain a small part from previous week's lesson to help kids remember previous stories.

Teaching Summary:

- God's promises do not change despite circumstances, people and even our inability to believe them. God keeps His promises even when we do not trust Him or follow His commands.
- God has promised to always be with His people. He is with us through the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- The Church is growing, but also experiencing persecution.
- The Apostles stay in Jerusalem as persecution continues, but other believers spread out into other towns taking the Good News with them.
- Philip goes to Samaria to tell them about Jesus. There he heals the sick and crippled and casts out evil spirits.
- Simon, a magician, is also in Samaria. His magic amazes people so much that they follow him.
- Simon sees the things Philip does in Jesus' name and believes.
- Peter and John come to Samaria to see all of what the Lord is doing. Once they get there, Peter and John lay hands on people and they receive the Holy Spirit.
- Simon becomes jealous and tries to buy the Holy Spirit from Peter and John.
- Peter rebukes Simon and tells him to repent of his evil ways.

Scripture: Acts 8:4-25

Story: Vos Child's Story Bible, Pages 340-341

Scripture Memory for October:

We must obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29b) ESV

Opening Activity: *Receiving a Gift vs. Buying a Gift*

This week we want to distinguish between a gift and a purchase. When you see something you really want, your first thought is "Where did you get that? I want to buy one too!" That's how Simon felt about the Holy Spirit, but we only have to believe and receive the GIFT of the Spirit. We have a special set of the Headbanz cards in a Ziploc bag. Use these cards to play the game as normal but at the end ask the kids if you can PURCHASE this item or if you just have to ASK for it or if it's just a FREE GIFT FROM GOD!

Craft: Birdcage

Supplies: Cardstock cage, bird sticker, tag, verse sticker, magnet, crayons/markers

Instructions: 1. Attach tag to birdcage.

2. Place bird sticker on birdcage.

3. Place verse sticker and magnet on the back.

4. Color if desired.



If child has already done craft first hour, have them work on a coloring sheet.

Story

Transition

Boys and girls, how much does God cost? [allow for boys and girls to answer] Guess what? You cannot buy God! Today in our story a magician thought he could buy God, but he finds out you can't! Let's find out more in our story...

The Man Who Looked into Heaven

Stephen was a faithful servant of the church and helped many people. But because of lies, Stephen was on trial before an angry crowd. Stephen told them about Jesus, but they did not like hearing about Jesus. Stephen then said to them, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." But the angry crowd cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the crowd laid down their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. And as the angry crowd stoned Stephen, he cried out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Stephen wanted to obey God more than men. He did just that by telling others about Jesus and then being obedient to Jesus.

The Magician Who Tried to Buy God

Saul agreed that the killing of Stephen was a good thing. However, it was a very sad time for those who followed Jesus. Some friends came and buried Stephen. They cried a lot because he was gone. From that day on, people began trying to hurt other followers of Jesus in Jerusalem. Life was very hard and difficult for those who followed Jesus. The person responsible for hurting followers of Jesus was a man named Saul. Saul wanted to destroy the Church. Saul would go from house to house trying to find anyone who worshipped Jesus. He would drag people from their homes and put them in jail! While the Apostles stayed in Jerusalem, anyone else who worshipped Jesus left and went to different places, but as they scattered they took the name of Jesus with them and told others about Him. More and more people came to believe the Good News!

One of the Apostles, Philip, went to the city of Samaria. While he was there Philip preached about Jesus. The people there heard Philip and saw the miracles he was doing. They all listened carefully to the things he said. Many of the people in Samaria had evil spirits in them. But Philip made the evil spirits leave them. There were also many weak and crippled people in Samaria. Philip healed them too. So, the people in Samaria were very happy to have Philip visiting.

But there was a man named Simon in that city. Before Philip came there, Simon had practiced magic. He amazed all the people of Samaria with his magic. Simon bragged and called himself a great man. All the people—the least important and the most important—paid attention to what Simon said. They said, "This man has the Great Power!" This was another way of saying Simon was very powerful.

Simon amazed people with his magic tricks. Soon many people became followers of Simon. But Philip told the people of Samaria the Good News about the kingdom of God and the power of Jesus Christ. Men and women believed Philip and were baptized. Simon himself believed and was baptized. He stayed very close to Philip. When he saw the miracles and the very powerful things that Philip did, Simon was amazed.

As the Apostles were in Jerusalem, they heard about the great things happening in Samaria. Peter and John decided to go and visit Samaria. When they arrived, Peter and John prayed that the Samaritan believers might receive the Holy Spirit. They were baptized, but the Holy Spirit had not come to live inside of them. Peter and John began laying their hands on the Samaritan believers and they received the Holy Spirit.

When Simon saw the Apostles lay hands on the believers and receive the Holy Spirit, Simon became very jealous. Simon offered the Apostles money and said to them, “Give me this power so that when I lay my hands on a person, he will receive the Holy Spirit too!”

But Peter said to him, “You and your money should both be destroyed! You thought you could buy God’s gift with money!” Simon thought he could buy God, but that’s impossible! “You cannot share with us in this work. Your heart is not right before God. **Repent! Turn away from this evil thing you have done. Pray to the Lord and ask for forgiveness,**” Peter told Simon.

Simon cried back to Peter and John, “Please pray for me to the Lord. Pray that the things you have said will not happen to me!”

Then the two Apostles told the people the things they had seen Jesus do, and after speaking they went back to Jerusalem. On the way, they went through many Samaritan towns and preached the Good News to everyone!

Questions for Review

- Who was our story about today?
- Where did Philip go?
- What did Philip do in Samaria?
- Who was the magician in our story?
- When Simon heard Philip, what happened?
- What happened when Peter and John laid their hands on other believers?
- How did Simon react when the Holy Spirit came upon believers?
- What did Simon offer Peter and John so he could have the Holy Spirit?
- What did Peter say to Simon?