

Acts 8:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

Analysis

Simon 'believed also' and was baptized - but verses 18-23 would reveal his heart remained unchanged. This raises the distinction between genuine saving faith and intellectual assent. Simon's continued amazement at miracles suggests attraction to power rather than submission to Christ as Lord. Reformed theology distinguishes between temporary faith (James 2:19) and true saving faith that perseveres. Simon's profession was outward only, as Peter later discerns his heart remains 'in the gall of bitterness' (v.23). Not all who profess and are baptized possess genuine faith.

Historical Context

Simon's case became a cautionary example in church history about false profession. The term 'simony' (buying church office) derives from Simon's later attempt to purchase apostolic power, indicating his mercenary heart.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do we distinguish genuine saving faith from intellectual assent or false profession?
2. What does Simon's case teach about the limits of outward religious actions?
3. Why does fascination with miracles sometimes indicate an unregenerate heart?

Interlinear Text

ὁ δὲ Σίμων καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπίστευσεν καὶ
G3588 **Then** **Simon** **also** **himself** **believed** **also**
G1161 G4613 G2532 G846 G4100 G2532

βαπτισθεὶς ἦν προσκαρτερῶν τῷ Φιλίππῳ
when he was baptized **he continued** G4342 G3588 **with Philip**
G907 G2258 G5376

θεωρῶν τε σημεῖα καὶ δυνάμεις μεγάλας γινομένας
beholding **and** **signs** **also** **the miracles** G3173 **which were done**
G2334 G5037 G4592 G2532 G1411 G1096

ἐξίστατο
wondered
G1839

Additional Cross-References

Acts 19:11 (Parallel theme): And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

John 5:20 (Parallel theme): For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

