

Acts 8:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

(For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

Analysis

The Spirit had not yet 'fallen upon' any Samaritans though they had been baptized 'in the name of the Lord Jesus.' This separation of baptism from Spirit-reception was exceptional, not normative. The phrase 'fallen upon' suggests visible manifestation similar to Pentecost. Luke emphasizes this anomaly to show that even Samaritans - despised by Jews - received the identical Spirit. Reformed theology sees baptism as a sign and seal of the covenant, but the reality signified (Spirit's indwelling) is sovereignly given by God, not automatically conferred through the rite.

Historical Context

Baptism 'in the name of Jesus' distinguished Christian baptism from John's baptism (Acts 19:5) and indicated submission to Christ's lordship. The formula used (whether Trinitarian or specifically Jesus' name) is debated among scholars.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What is the relationship between water baptism and the Spirit's baptism?
2. Why does Scripture emphasize that the same Spirit came upon Samaritans as upon Jews?
3. How do we avoid either exalting sacraments above the Spirit or minimizing their importance?

Interlinear Text

οὕπω γὰρ ἦν ἐπ' οὐδενὶ αὐτῶν ἐπιπεπτωκός μόνον

as yet (For he was upon none of them fallen only

G3768

G1063

G2258

G1909

G3762

G846

G1968

G3440

δὲ βεβαπτισμένοι ὑπῆρχον εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου

baptized they were in the name of the Lord

G1161

G907

G5225

G1519

G3588

G3686

G2962

Ἰησοῦ

Jesus

G2424

Additional Cross-References

Acts 2:38 (Baptism): Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 19:2 (Parallel theme): He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

Matthew 28:19 (Parallel theme): Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: