

Acts 8:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

Analysis

Simon saw that 'through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given' - indicating visible manifestation. His response reveals an unregenerate heart: he viewed the Spirit's gift as purchasable power for personal gain. This exposes the sin of simony (buying spiritual office/power) and demonstrates that external religious profession doesn't guarantee internal transformation. Reformed theology sees Simon's mercenary spirit as evidence he was never truly converted - faith seeks God's glory, not personal advancement or power.

Historical Context

This incident gave rise to the term 'simony' - the buying or selling of church office or spiritual benefits. Medieval church corruption through selling indulgences and offices traces conceptually to Simon's error.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Simon's offer reveal the difference between true faith and false profession?
2. In what ways do people today try to 'buy' spiritual power or position?
3. What does this teach about the Holy Spirit's sovereign, unearned gift?

Interlinear Text

θεασάμενος δὲ ὁ Σίμων ὅτι διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως
saw And G3588 when Simon that through G3588 laying on
G2300 G1161 G4613 G3754 G1223 G1936

τῶν χειρῶν τῶν ἀποστόλων δίδοται τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ
G3588 hands G3588 of the apostles was given G3588 Ghost G3588
G5495 G652 G1325 G4151

Ἄγιον, προσήνεγκεν αὐτοῖς χρήματα
the Holy he offered them money
G40 G4374 G846 G5536

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 10:8 (Parallel theme): Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

1 Timothy 6:5 (Parallel theme): Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

2 Kings 8:9 (Parallel theme): So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Ben-hadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?