

Acts 8:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

Analysis

Simon's request 'give me also this power' exposes his desire for authority over the Spirit's distribution. He wanted apostolic power for himself, not to serve God but to enhance his own influence and prestige. The offer of money shows he viewed spiritual gifts as commodities to be traded. Reformed theology sees this as the essence of carnality - seeking to control and manipulate God's gifts for selfish ends. True spiritual power comes through humble submission to God's sovereignty, not through human acquisition or merit.

Historical Context

Simon's background in sorcery likely influenced his transactional view of spiritual power. In the ancient world, magical power was thought to be transferable through payment, ritual, or acquisition of secret knowledge. Simon applied this pagan framework to the Holy Spirit.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does desire for spiritual power for self-advancement indicate an unregenerate heart?
2. In what subtle ways do we try to control or manipulate God's gifts?
3. What is the proper attitude toward spiritual gifts and power?

Interlinear Text

λέγων,	Δότε	κάμιοὶ	τὴν	ἐξουσίαν	ταύτην	ἵνα	ὅ
Saying	Give	me also	G3588	power	G3778	that	whomsoever
G3004	G1325	G2504		G1849		G2443	G3739
ἄν	ἐπιθῶ	τὰς	χεῖρας	λαμβάνῃ	πνεῦμα	ἅγιον	
G302	I lay	G3588	hands	he may receive	Ghost	the Holy	
	G2007		G5495	G2983	G4151	G40	

Additional Cross-References

John 5:44 (Parallel theme): How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?

3 John 1:9 (Parallel theme): I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.