

Summary:

The central question the sermon addresses is "How can I be sure I have received the Holy Spirit?" Drawing from Luke 11:9-13 and Acts 2:37-39, the pastor provides a simple three-part answer: have you repented and called on Jesus as Lord, been baptized, and specifically asked God for the Holy Spirit? If yes to all three, you can be assured you have the Spirit. He addresses concerns about infant baptism, tracing the practice to a covenantal understanding of theology. He also addresses the view that one must receive a special, secondary baptism of the Holy Spirit in order to receive the Holy Spirit addressing the passages that are often cited in that regard. The sermon concludes by shifting focus from "Do I have the Holy Spirit?" to the more important question: "Am I living in the power of the Holy Spirit?"

Discussion Questions:

1. The pastor confesses that prayer is more of an aspirational value than an actual value in the church. What would you expect to observe in a church that was fully living out the value of prayer?
2. How do you respond to the pastor's simple three-part test for assurance of having the Holy Spirit (Baptism, Faith, Invitation)? Does this seem too simple, or appropriately straightforward given God's generous nature?
3. The sermon warns against Simon the Sorcerer's wrong motives for wanting the Holy Spirit's power. What are some wrong motives people today might have for seeking spiritual experiences or gifts? How can we examine our own hearts?
4. How do you understand the relationship between having the Holy Spirit and being filled with or living in the power of the Holy Spirit? What's the difference between these concepts?
5. The sermon addresses infant baptism from a covenant theology perspective. Do you find it compelling or not? Is it necessary for infants who were baptized to be baptized again as adults after professing faith in Jesus Christ?
6. Have you ever been exposed to the idea that there is a special second baptism for the receiving of the Holy Spirit? If you have been baptized, professed faith in Jesus, and invited the Holy Spirit into your life, do you think you need a second baptism of the Spirit?