

Foundation: Laying on of Hands part 2

2.18.24

Hebrews 6:1–3 (CSB)

6 Therefore, let us leave the elementary teaching about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works, faith in God, ²teaching about ritual washings, laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³And we will do this if God permits.

Intro: Why laying on of hands?

A. Last week I explained that laying on of hands is a core doctrine.

1. Laying on of hands is not decorative; it's foundational.
2. Laying on of hands is not elective; it's elementary.
3. In other words, it isn't a Pentecostal practice; it's a Christian practice.

B. Some of the first instances of laying on of hands involved blessing.

1. Israel blessed his family.
2. Aaron blessed the community of Israel.
3. Jesus blessed the children.
4. Jesus then blessed the crowd watching His ascension.

C. Where did this significance come from?

1. I propose that the laying on of hands is significant because of how God created humanity.
2. Genesis 2:7 (CSB)

⁷Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being.

3. I believe Genesis is a book of theology and history and is true to scientific fact.

a. Therefore, I believe that the depiction of God speaking everything into existence except for man is historical.

b. We also see that God's forming of man and Eve is very different from any other part of His creation.

c. Could it be that laying on of hands is significant because God had first laid His hands upon Man and Woman, formed them, and breathed the Spirit into them?

d. Jeremiah 18 and Isaiah 64 depict God as the Potter, and we are the clay.

4. Throughout the story of human history, we see that God is actively involved.

D. With this imagery in mind, perhaps we shouldn't be surprised that in the New Testament, the laying on of hands was often used by God to heal His people and fill them with the Spirit.

1. I want to address these key uses of the laying on hands.

2. The laying on of hands is a prominent feature in healing and Baptizing in the Spirit in the New Testament.

3. If you will permit me today, I will read more Scripture than normal and give less explanation than usual.

4.

1. Laying on of Hands and Divine Healing

A. To give a big picture of this, notice these verses:

Mark 1:41 (CSB)

⁴¹Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched him. "I am willing," he told him. "Be made clean."

Mark 5:23 (CSB)

²³ and begged him earnestly, "My little daughter is dying. Come and lay your hands on her so that she can get well and live."

Mark 6:2 (CSB)

² When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. "Where did this man get these things?" they said. "What is this wisdom that has been given to him, and how are these miracles performed by his hands?"

Mark 7:32 (CSB)

³² They brought to him a deaf man who had difficulty speaking and begged Jesus to lay his hand on him.

Mark 8:23–25 (CSB)

²³ He took the blind man by the hand and brought him out of the village. Spitting on his eyes and laying his hands on him, he asked him, "Do you see anything?" ²⁴ He looked up and said, "I see people—they look like trees walking." ²⁵ Again Jesus placed his hands on the man's eyes. The man looked intently and his sight was restored and he saw everything clearly.

Mark 16:18 (CSB)

¹⁸ they will pick up snakes; if they should drink anything deadly, it will not harm them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will get well."

Luke 4:40 (CSB)

⁴⁰ When the sun was setting, all those who had anyone sick with various diseases brought them to him. As he laid his hands on each one of them, he healed them.

Luke 5:13 (CSB)

¹³ Reaching out his hand, Jesus touched him, saying, "I am willing; be made clean," and immediately the leprosy left him.

Luke 13:13 (CSB)

¹³Then he laid his hands on her, and instantly she was restored and began to glorify God.

Acts 5:12 (CSB)

¹²Many signs and wonders were being done among the people through the hands of the apostles.

2. Baptism of the Holy Spirit and Laying on of Hands

Acts 9:17 (CSB)

¹⁷Ananias went and entered the house. He placed his hands on him and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road you were traveling, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Acts 8:14–23 (CSB)

SIMON'S SIN

¹⁴When the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. ¹⁵After they went down there, they prayed for them so that the Samaritans might receive the Holy Spirit because he had not yet come down on any of them. ¹⁶(They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) ¹⁷Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸When Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, ¹⁹saying, "Give me this power also so that anyone I lay hands on may receive the Holy Spirit."

²⁰But Peter told him, "May your silver be destroyed with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! ²¹You have no part or share in this matter, because your heart is not right before God. ²²Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, your heart's intent may be forgiven. ²³For I see you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by wickedness."

Acts 19:1–7 (CSB)

19 While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior regions and came to Ephesus. He found some disciples ²and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

“No,” they told him, “we haven’t even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”

³“Into what then were you baptized?” he asked them.

“Into John’s baptism,” they replied.

⁴Paul said, “John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people that they should believe in the one who would come after him, that is, in Jesus.”

⁵When they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began to speak in tongues and to prophesy. ⁷Now there were about twelve men in all.

A. We can’t ignore the biblical evidence that laying hands upon people was a regular and expected occurrence.

1. This is why I’ve shared so many Scriptures today, which isn’t my normal way of preaching.

a. But you can’t ignore this many Scriptures.

b. Within this practice is something foundational and elementary

2. Hands aren’t magic.

a. The hands of the apostles were no different than our hands.

b. This is important: Too often we assume that the Apostles had something that was limited to the 1st Century but died with them.

c. But that attributes the power to the Apostles instead of God, who never changes.

B. This morning, we will look at a few reasons why laying on of hands is important.

1. Again, I can't begin to explain everything and every passage.
2. What I hope you will walk away from this sermon today is this:
 - a. A belief that laying on of hands is biblical and for today.
 - b. A desire to search deeper and ask Holy Spirit to teach you and guide you in this fundamental practice.
 - c. Why Laying on of Hands?

3. The Why.

A. #1. Laying on of hands is an expression of faith.

1. The act of reaching out demonstrates faith, trust, and hope.
 - a. Imagine you fall overboard on a boat.
 - b. What do you do?
 - c. You reach your hand out, hoping to grab hold of something, or someone will grab hold of you.
 - d. But you reach out with hope, faith, and trust that someone will rescue you.
2. In several of these stories, people asked Jesus to lay hands upon them.
 - a. In one of my favorite stories, and one I didn't read, a woman reached out and touched Jesus' garment.
 - b. What we see in these moments is an expression of faith, trust, and hope.
3. **When we ask for men and women of God to lay hands upon us and pray a prayer of faith, we are expressing faith in the Lord that heals and fills.**
 - a. Yes, some people are used more often to heal than others.

b. But no one owns the gift of healing, and anyone can be used as a conduit of healing.

c. A conduit doesn't own or produce anything, it only transfers.

4. When we lay hands upon the sick, we express faith in the Lord that heals.

a. It is a very public gesture.

b. There is little doubt or question that something is needed.

c. But it also expresses that our need can only be satisfied in Jesus.

5. Each time one of the biblical characters asked for healing, they were expressing their need to be healed.

a. A few years ago, I had the opportunity to preach in Slovakia.

b. In one church service, they brought a Roma man, a gypsy, to the front and asked for the Americans and the church to come pray for him.

c. Through interpreters, we learned that he was facing a serious medical issue, and if he wasn't healed, there was no hope.

d. Because of his race, he couldn't go to the doctor or get treatment, so it was all Jesus.

e. I can assure you that we prayed differently knowing that divine healing was the only hope.

f. This is the level of faith and anticipation we see in Scripture.

B. #2. Laying on of hands is an expression of compassion.

1. Many times the people asked **if** Jesus would come and touch them.

- a. Would the Son of God, who became flesh, be willing to touch fallen, broken, bleeding, and dying human flesh?
- b. The gods of Greek and Roman lore wouldn't do this.
- c. The religious leaders wouldn't touch them, as we see in the Parable of the Good Samaritan.
- d. Jesus had every right and reason to say no, but time and again He said yes.

2. When we lay hands on people, we identify with them in their suffering.

- a. Please remember that God doesn't want to use you because you have it all figured out or put together.
- b. God doesn't want you to master a formula with the right words to heal someone.
- c. God does want to use you, in your weakness, to be a conduit of His power.

3. When we lay hands upon people, we aren't superior to them.

- a. Instead, we share with them in suffering, pain, and emptiness.
- b. We also share with them a firm belief and trust in God's goodness and His power.

C. #3. It is an expression of connection.

- 1. Whether it's shaking hands, giving a fist bump, or a hug, physical touch brings connection.
- 2. Jesus could have healed everyone and never touched them.
- 3. But He chose to touch them as an expression of connection.
- 4. We still lay hands upon the sick and the seeking as a sign of connection.

- a. In a day and time where we are increasingly disconnected from real people, we need to encourage this foundational teaching of laying on of hands.
- b. We were designed for connection, including spiritual moments like this.

D. #4. Laying on of hands is for today.

1. The great John Calvin believed that laying on of hands ended with the last Apostle.

- a. John Calvin was a brilliant man who knew the Scriptures and loved Jesus.
- b. But I disagree.

2. Laying on of hands and praying for God to heal or to fill with the Holy Spirit are foundational, elementary acts that were important during the Old Testament days, the New Testament days, and our day as well.

Close: [What do I do from here?](#)

A. As we worship for a few more minutes, I want to encourage you and me to take a HUGE step of faith.

- 1. If you are sick or hurting and in need of healing, would you be so bold as to allow other believers to pray with you for your healing?
- 2. If you want to be Baptized in the Holy Spirit, would you be so bold as to seek the gift publicly?

B. Direction for the next few minutes:

- 1. The worship team is going to start playing one more song.
- 2. The prayer team will join me across the front.
 - a. If you are comfortable, let them pray with you.
 - b. But that is optional.

3. This morning, if you would like to be prayed for for healing, I ask you to join stage LEFT, which is your right.

4. If you want prayer for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, I ask you to join stage RIGHT, which is your left.

C. What we are going to do is pray and ask the Lord to heal and fill.

1. If today's altar call isn't for you today, that's great.

2. I won't ask you to stand, but of course you are welcome.

3. You are welcome to pray, worship, or take a few minutes to spend in the Lord's presence before we dismiss and head into the world.