
Principles of the Doctrine of Christ: Part 4

Laying On Of Hands

The laying on of hands is a Biblical and necessary practice for the people of God in both Old and New Testaments, and is both effectual and profitable when exercised within the guidelines of scripture for the following purposes:

1. To confer a blessing (to prophesy)
Genesis 48:14-20,
Hebrews 11:21,
Mark 10:16
2. To ordain ministry or specific assignment
Numbers 27:23,
Jeremiah 1:9,
Acts 6:6, 13:3,
Titus 1:5
3. To minister spiritual gifts
Deuteronomy 34:9,
Acts 8:17, 19:6,
1 Timothy 4:14,
2 Timothy 1:6
4. To impart virtue or strength
Daniel 9:21,
10:9-19,
5. To minister healing
Matthew 9:18,
Mark 6:5, 16:18,
Luke 4:40, 13:13,
Acts 28:8
6. [O.T.] To impute guilt to an animal for substitutionary sacrifice
From human priest (type) to animal sacrifice (type) Leviticus 3:2,
8:14, 16:21
7. [O.T.] To impute guilt to a sinner for judgment to cleanse Israel
Leviticus 24:14,
Deuteronomy 13:9, 17:7

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In the New Testament (after Acts chapter 2), the practice of anointing with oil is used only for ministering to the sick; and only for those who are in the body of Christ, in covenant with God.

The oil is a symbol of the anointing of the Holy Ghost, and, when applied in obedience to scripture,

"...the prayer of faith shall save the sick...

(Mark 6:13, James 5:14).

For those who are not in Christ and need physical healing, there is the laying on of hands.

(Acts 28:8, Mark 16:18)

* * *Always remember 1 Timothy 5:22 and 2 John 1:11***

1 Timothy 5:22

"Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure."

This admonition from the apostle Paul warns us of a very real danger. To lay hands suddenly on any man, without being specifically led by the Spirit of God can be very hazardous to us as sons of God. Many people today are walking in the error Jeremiah warned of:

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you:

they make you vain:

they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD.

They say still unto them that despise me,

The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace;

and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart,

No evil shall come upon you."

(Jeremiah 23:16,17)

And they are doing it because it is popular. Everybody is doing it. But the ministry of the laying on of hands is not for us to just go and bless whoever we please in the holy name of our God. Doing so without being led of the Lord specifically (to a particular person with an inspired word) can make us partakers of hidden sins we may not know of; and only those with clean hands and a pure heart shall ascend into the hill of the LORD!

(Psalm 24:3,4)

2 John 1:11

"For he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds."

How do we bid someone God speed? By offering a blessing or encouragement to someone. Just as when we say, "God bless you"

(a blessing intended for the people of God only- Numbers 6:22-27),

...or even call someone "brother", or "sister", or shake their right hand, or break bread with them as a privilege of covenant, we are bidding them God speed. To bid God speed is to literally say,

"May God grant you good speed in your works"

(see Genesis 24:12);

...and to say so to anyone, as a priest of the Lord, is to attach the Lord's name to that person's works, and to give your approval to the same as a Christian; a priest of God.

Certainly to lay hands on a rebellious person, false teacher, or any person who is not abiding in the doctrine of Christ, and therefore has not God (2 John 9), and to confer a blessing upon that person in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, is error - and indeed a most grievous one! If we seek the Lord earnestly, obey his commandments, and desire spiritual gifts, he will make manifest in the church the prophetic gifts (word of wisdom, word of knowledge, prophecy, tongues and interpretation). But let us take good heed to the warnings of his holy apostles and prophets, and wait on the Lord, keep his word diligently, and serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear. Let us not abuse his power and grace, but rather yield our members servants to righteousness unto holiness, that the holy name of Jesus Christ may be revered and lifted up in the churches, and that the world may see the true life of God in us,

and that they may know—

either today, or at the last day—

that God has sent us.

"...Then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them." Ezekiel 33:33