

Hebrews 6.1-3

Hands On!

The act of our laying on of our hands has become somewhat obscure in this day. However it is a practice which has deep roots and powerful significance for us who are the people of God. It is in a way, something that we DO need to return to, for in many places we have left it behind in a manner neither appropriate nor healthy. While we want to leave behind false and outdated meanings, as well as being careful to preserve purity; we need not throw away that which is still valuable. In this age of frivolous litigation, and the fear that accompanies it; as well as acknowledging the abuses that have arisen in the name of God by false religions we must proceed with care. But we must also not abandon that which was given to us by the Lord. Ministry is a hands on practice, and appropriate for the church when done in purity and faithfulness.

I. JESUS

- a. laying on hands to bless
- b. peculiar to Him.
- c. His authoritative benediction.

Mark 10.16

II. PRAYER

- a. Prayer is always an inclusive activity
- b. The reality is that physical touch binds us together in ways we cannot fully comprehend. There is something powerful and connecting in even the smallest touch, and when it is coupled with prayer it unites us in heart and spirit. It conveys honor, esteem, value and signals to the one being prayed for, that they have already been blessed. It makes what might be considered cold and of no effect into a uniting and empowering experience.

- c. The prayer of faith offered up by followers of Christ does carry His authority with it, and the symbol of that blessing is absolutely appropriate.
- d. It must be done with grace and in purity

1 Timothy 5:1–2 (NKJV)

1 Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, 2 older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.

- e. Often accompanied by the anointing with oil –

James 5.13-18

- f. the oil, remember is symbolic of the Holy Spirit.

III. SCAPEGOAT

- a. Leaving behind the old ideas of who took our sin...

b. In the OT the scapegoat was set apart, had hands laid upon his head, conveying the guilt of the people, and was led out into the wilderness bearing the sin...

Leviticus 16.20-22

c. Jesus became both our sacrifice and our scapegoat, no longer do we need any of the old forms to be our hope, our salvation, our strength.

Hebrews 13.10-16

d. Remember that this was the point of the whole letter and particularly this passage.

IV. HEALING

It was a sign of the healing given in Christ communicated by those who were His own messengers

Luke 4:40 (NKJV)

40 When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.

Mark 16:18 (NKJV)

18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

Acts 28:8 (NKJV)

8 And it happened that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and dysentery. Paul went in to him and prayed, and he laid his hands on him and healed him.

V. ORDINATION

a.It has its roots in the OT when the Levites were consecrated –

Numbers 8:10 (NKJV)

10 So you shall bring the Levites before the LORD and the children of Israel shall lay their hands on the Levites;

- b. In setting apart those who were called to the office and work of ministry. Such as under the gospel are to be set apart for ordinary ministers, are pastors and teachers.
 - i. Men's abilities to these functions are to be tried
 - ii. good testimony given of their orthodox judgment and faithful life
 - iii. in a public assembly, on a day of fasting and prayer, they are, after some exhortation and direction concerning the ministerial function, and prayer made for God's blessing on them, they are to be set apart to the ministry, by this rite of imposition of hands.
 - iv. This rite was used to show that the blessing which they desired, and the ability which was given, or was further to be expected, was from above

- v. for obtaining this power, prayer used to be joined with imposition of hands

1 Timothy 4:14 (NKJV)

14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.

Acts 6:6 (NKJV)

6 whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

VI. INITIATION

- a. In the initiation into the Holy Spirit, and subsequently the body of Christ...
- b. During the time of the apostles and the advance of the gospel unto the uttermost parts of the earth the laying on of hands conveyed the Holy Spirit.

- c. As the need the display of that reality became less, since the Spirit was given to all according to the faith that God gave them, the laying on of hands became more about a symbolic recognition of inclusion.
- d. Accompanied with prayer, it became a sign of blessing, similar to that of Christ, and using His authority, but the blessing of the church entire, rather than a man alone.