



CLASS THREE: LAYING ON OF HANDS

THE DOCTRINE OF LAYING ON OF HANDS

This is a common practice we see in the church today. One of the foundational doctrines of Christ. It is a very important spiritual activity and must not be taken for granted. Let us consider some instances of laying on of hands in both the Old and New Testament

Old Testament:

- For a blessing [**Genesis 48: 8–20**]
Israel (Jacob) blessed the sons of Joseph by laying his hands on them. He placed his hands on Ephraim and Manasseh and spoke a blessing over them. These blessings affected generations even yet unborn.
- Transferring authority/ leadership [**Numbers 27:18-21, Deuteronomy 34:9**]
Getting to the end of Moses's ministry, he needed a successor. God instructed him to lay his hand on Joshua. This act transferred authority/ leadership from Moses to Joshua. In Deuteronomy 34:9 we see the product of this exercise. Joshua is said to be full of the Spirit of wisdom. The children of Israel also listened to him because he had authority.

New Testament:

- Healing [**Matthew 8:1–4, Matthew 20:30–34**]
Jesus healed Peter's mother in law by laying His hands upon her. Jesus healed the two blind men by laying hands on them. If Jesus healed people by laying hands on them, we cannot trivialize this act. It is important, as His followers, to also heal people by laying hands on them. Ananias laid hands on Paul for him to receive sight [**Acts 9:10-18**].

Paul healed the father of Publius by laying hands on him [**Acts 28:8–9**]. We are encouraged to call for the elders of the church to lay hands on us and anoint us when we are sick [**James 5:14–15**]

Other scripture references on healings that took place by laying on of hands [**Mark 1:41, Mark 6:5, Mark 7:32–33, Luke 4:40**]
- Casting demons [**Luke 4:40-41**]
Jesus laid His hands on many people and devils came out of them. Devils can be cast out of people by laying on of hands.
- Baptism of the Holy Spirit [**Acts 8:14–20**]
Peter and John laid hands on the disciples at Samaria and they received the Holy Ghost. In **Acts 9:17**, Ananias laid hands on Saul and he received the Holy Ghost. We can also lay hands on believers for them to receive the Holy Spirit.
- Impartation of the gifts of the Spirit [**1 Timothy 4:14, 2 Timothy 1:6**]
Timothy had received a gift of the Spirit by the laying on of hands. We can also receive and impart spiritual gifts by the laying on of hands.



- Separation for Service [Ministry]

The sons of Israel laid hands on the Levites to “separate” them for service [**Numbers 8:10–11**]. Hands were laid on Joshua by Moses to “separate” him for duty. He was separated unto the work of leadership [**Numbers 27:18–23**].

Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas were selected by the church. Hands were laid upon them and separated for the duty of serving tables [**Acts 6:1–6**].

During one prayer time, the Holy Spirit spoke to the disciples to select Barnabas and Saul for a particular service [**Acts 13:1–3**]. They were to be “separated” for a particular assignment (ministry). Hands were laid on them and they were sent.

- Spiritual blessing [**Mark 10:13–16**]

Children were brought to Jesus for Him to lay His hands on them. Bless: invoke a benediction. Cause to prosper.

Who Can Lay Hands on Others?

One is encouraged to call the elders (senior, presbyter) of the church when he is sick so they lay hands on him [**James 5:14–15**]. The less is always blessed of the greater. Ideally, those with a higher spiritual mandate or authority should lay hands on individuals [**Hebrews 7:7**].

This symbolizes that the transfer of gifts and wisdom is from the one with the higher authority. It should be noted however that, it is never the doing of man when it comes to the laying on of hands. It is ALWAYS the work of the Holy Spirit through a man. It is never an issue of the power of a man but the power of the Spirit in a man.