

*Shield of Faith Christian Center of Pomona
Tuesday Night Bible Study
Bishop Henry B. Alexander, Instructor*

***The Doctrine of Laying on of Hands
(How To Receive Altar Prayer)***

Introduction

This week Shield of Faith will experience a Miracle Outreach Crusade called Miracles in Action.” Services will be held on Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7PM. God will be in our midst willing to work many miracles of healing deliverance and salvation, but His grace towards us will be in proportion to our readiness and ability to receive from Him, for the *limitless* God is always limited only by the responses that we make to Him. Truly He is able to do “exceeding, abundantly above all that we are able to ask of think.” The service tonight is shared in order to prepare us to receive from God on this week. For those who are attentive, many miracles will happen this week.

A. Hebrews 6:1-2 points to six primary principles of the doctrine of Christ –

Repentance from dead works,
Faith towards God
Doctrine of *Baptisms*
The laying on of hands
The *Resurrection* of the Dead
Eternal Judgment

Here is our initial class statement that summarizes the doctrine of laying on of hands –

• ***Doctrine of the Laying on of Hands***

Statement of doctrinal truth – “The Lord has selected physical contact expressed by the laying on of hands in faith, accompanied by prayer as a method of bringing physical and spiritual benefit to those who are willing to believe him. Benefits may include physical and emotional healing, receiving of the Holy Ghost, the stirring up of spiritual gifts and the conferring of spiritual authority.” (*Mark 16:18, Acts 19:6, Luke 22:51, James 5:14*)

B. Because the Lord strongly desires to bless His people, He uses many different means of conveying a blessing. One of the simplest and most powerful ones is simply *the laying on of hands*. (*Read Mark 16:16*)

The “laying on of hands” is perhaps the most *supernatural* and *miraculous* aspect of basic Christian doctrine. The notion of physical contact that conveys spiritual benefit is a greatly overlooked and undervalued aspect of Christian doctrine by many believers and ministries. It asserts that there is a spiritual dimensional release that results from physical contact initiated by faith in God.

Scripture indicates that when an intercessor believes in the power of the laying on of hands, and when the recipient also believes, then there is a God-authorized release and response from the *spirit* realm into the *physical* realm. (Matthew 18:18-19)

Example - The woman touched the hem of Jesus' garment in faith and a spiritual event/dynamic occurred, with any conscious agreement or effort on Jesus' part. (Matthew 14:36)

This doctrine lifts Christianity out of the philosophical, ideological realm and into the realm of power and performance! Without this doctrine and these assertions Christianity would be only an intellectual belief system like any other. The ideas of Christianity are powerful and true, but God recognizes that mankind is blessed and helped if he uses supernatural things to CONFIRM HIS WORD with signs and wonders (**READ MARK 16:20**). We sometimes need “signs following.”

Scripture prophesied the coming of professors of religious faith who would have only a “...form of godliness, but denying the *power* thereof...” (II Timothy 3:5). And there are many Christian denominations today who believe in the **Cessation Theory**, which postulates that all the miracles, signs, wonders and supernatural things died out with the death of the last of the twelve apostles, and that God no longer works miracles or does the *supernatural* today. Yet, the doctrine of the laying on of hands, right here listed as among the six most critical doctrines of Christianity, is an intensely supernatural doctrine. Some are tempted to reduce Christianity to a theological belief system and a code of *ethics* or lifestyle – but true Christianity also included *experiencing the supernatural power of God!*)

In point of fact, it is impossible to preach the authentic Gospel of Jesus Christ without including heavy elements of the supernatural, especially since the very initial rebirth processes involve a *necessary* supernatural event for every believer – the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit baptism is God's supernatural part in the salvation of an individual and in his inclusion in the Christian church. The individual may in fact embrace a presumed REPENTANCE, and the minister or evangelist may minister the WATER BAPTISM (with the assumption of the remission of sins), but only God can administer the BAPTISM IN THE HOLY GHOST: The truly, undeniably supernatural part must come from God Himself, and without that ingredient a man or woman is still no yet born again. Hence salvation is *birthed* in the supernatural. It cannot be removed from our doctrine.

Biblically, the laying on of hands was advocated and used for the following kinds of benefits –

- To *bless* the life of the individual receiving prayer
- To *consecrate* and individual to a sacred office or calling
- To promote physical *healing*
- To minister (not give) *the Holy Ghost* to those who are seeking it

Let's look at biblical examples of each use of the laying on of hands

A. Blessing (*to bless* means “to make happy or fortunate.”)
Genesis 48:17 – Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph
Matthew 19:13-15

B. Consecration
Moses laid hands on Joshua to consecrate him as his successor in Numbers

27:23. It effectually ministered *ruling authority* into his life.
Paul and Barnabas were sent out with the laying on of hands (Acts 13:3)
Paul ministered God's impartation of gifts to Timothy with the laying on of hands (II Timothy 1:6)

C. Physical Healing

Jesus healed by laying on of hands (Mark 6:5, Luke 13:13, Matthew 9:29)
Jesus prophesied that believers would minister healing this way (Mark 16:16)

D. Ministry of Holy Ghost Baptism

Peter and John at Samaria (Acts 8:17)
Paul at Ephesus (Acts 19:5-6)

What is to be the use of laying on of hands in the church today? How ought it to be done? What benefit will be derived, and what would be lost by neglecting this spiritual practice?

It is one of the "weapons of our warfare" spoken of in II Corinthians 4:10. Failure to take advantage of it would make us greatly accountable before God as negligent gospel workers. If the laying on of hands is not used then the supernatural aspects of the Kingdom will become increasingly unrecognized and underutilized: The church will become increasingly cerebral and less empowered in signs and wonders.

Many people have a hard time believing the ideas of the gospel for their own sake and are greatly benefited if they can see God perform some miraculous thing that builds their faith: This is true of both the saved and unsaved.

We need to train our ministers and workers to have great faith in the laying on of hands, to act expecting God to confirm his word in these things.

A. People still need it for physical healing, working in conjunction with medical science for physical well-being

B. People still need assistance in opening their spirits to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost

C. Ministers and church workers still need the greatest possible authority and empowerment as they set out to do the work of the Lord.

So HOW DO YOU RECEIVE PRAYER?

1. AGREE WITH THE INTERCESSOR MINISTERING TO YOU
2. BELIEVE GOD AND EXPECT SOMETHING TO HAPPEN IN THE MOMENT
3. YIELD AND SURRENDER TO GOD'S ACTIVITY

MINISTRY EXERCISE

ALTAR PRAYER for the faith of the altar workers

ALTAR PRAYER for the openness and receptiveness of the saints