

Restore Small Group Questions - Acts (Week 22) — “Spirit Led Mission” — 7/6/2025

Scripture (NIV) - Acts 12:25-3:3; Leviticus 16:10; 20-22; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6; Acts 6:5-6; 1 Timothy 5:22

INTRODUCTION - ‘Laying on Hands’ in prayer implies a physical act of laying hands on someone or something that can cause something to happen in the spirit. It can be a spiritual cause with powerful results. There are three primary results that can occur; transference, impartation, and setting apart and empowerment.... Each are discussed below.

KEY POINTS -

- I. **Transference** - The physical act of laying on of hands can result in the spiritual transfer of something. An act of transference took place in Old Testament accounts where a goat was chosen as the scapegoat and presented before the Lord to be used for making atonement of all the sins of the Israelites. The Chief Priest would lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites. All their sins were placed on the goat's head and the goat was taken to the wilderness to wander. Laying on of Hands along with confession = transference of sin from the Israelites to the scapegoat.
 - A. Leviticus 16:10 - *But the goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord to be used for making atonement by sending it into the wilderness as a scapegoat.*
 - B. Leviticus 16:20-22 - *“When Aaron has finished making atonement for the Most Holy Place, the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall bring forward the live goat. 21 He is to lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites—all their sins—and put them on the goat's head. He shall send the goat away into the wilderness in the care of someone appointed for the task. 22 The goat will carry on itself all their sins to a remote place; and the man shall release it in the wilderness.”*
 - C. The High Priest said the following prayer as he placed his hands on the scapegoat: *O God, thy people, the House of Israel, have committed iniquity, transgressed, and sinned before thee. O God, forgive, I pray, the iniquities and transgressions and sins which thy people, the House of Israel, have committed and transgressed and sinned before thee; as it is written in the law of thy servant Moses, For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you; from all your sins shall ye be clean before the Lord (Leviticus 16:30; Yoma 6.2)*
 - D. The scapegoat could never fully or forever take away sin, shame and blame. It required the appearance of Jesus Christ, his death for sin and resurrection to completely obliterate our sin, shame and blame.
- II. **Impartation** - The laying on of hands can result in impartation (give, convey or grant) of some spiritual gift. An example is the impartation of a spiritual gift to Timothy by Paul the Apostle through prayer and laying on of hands. Timothy was Paul's chosen successor for a ministry that had a great need for Holy Spirit power and gifting. Timothy's BIO includes (1) - The introduction of Timothy in the 2nd missionary journey with Paul [Acts 16:1-3]; (2) Timothy was the son of a Gentile father and a Jewish-Christian mother named Eunice, and the grandson of Lois [Acts 16:1,2; 2 Timothy 1:5]; Timothy was probably converted under Paul [1 Corinthians 4:17] and as his “true son in the faith” [1 Timothy 1:2]; (3) Timothy was held in high regard in Lystra and Iconium as Paul's traveling companion [Acts 16:3].
 - A. 1 Timothy 4:14 - *Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.*

B. 2 Timothy 1:6 - *For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*

C. The gifts received through impartation by Timothy needed tending to (action) by Timothy spending time with the Lord. Examples of gifts from the Holy Spirit include (but not limited to) Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Serving, Prophecy, Discernment, Teaching, Encouragement, Giving and Leading. If you have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; then you have the gifting to help build up the church. Consider asking for prayer and laying on of hands to request from God for the gift you need.

III. Set Apart and Empowered - The Book of Acts included instances where the laying on of hands was meant for setting apart for a ministry purpose and spirit empowerment. (Acts 6:5-6) - *This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. 6 They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.*

A. Another example of a specific purpose of a missionary journey is detailed in Acts 12:25 - 13:3 - *When Barnabas and Saul had finished their mission, they returned from[a] Jerusalem, taking with them John, also called Mark. 1 Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.*

B. The purpose of this missionary journey was to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ...the laying on of hands was completely Spirit-led. It all started with a word from the Holy Spirit, prayer, fasting and laying on of hands for a Spirit-Led journey of Saul and Barnabas.

C. A word of caution - 1 Timothy 5:22 - *Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.* The caution is do not set aside people into church leadership and to wait to hear from the Lord as to who to appoint. Take the practice seriously as it is powerful. It is appropriate to lay hands on and pray for one another for healing, direction, peace and purpose...parents should lay hands on their children and pray blessing over their lives. As needed, seek out someone you trust spiritually and ask for prayer and laying on of hands.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS -

1. Why do you think 'laying on of hands' is a significant spiritual tradition today? What has been your experience as either a giver or receiver?.
2. Laying on of hands is a physical connection between/among believers yet with a spiritual outcome. Is there a difference between how laying on of hands was practiced in the OT versus how it has been practiced in the NT? Discuss the transference of sin (Leviticus 16), authority, (Acts 13; Numbers 27:18-23) blessings (Acts 8:17), and healing (James 5:14)
3. Paul told Timothy "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands..." What are the possible concerns with laying on of hands? Is laying on of hands with a non-believer meaningless?
4. What role does faith play in the practice of laying on of hands? How does using God's word play a role in laying on of hands? (Mark 16:18)
5. Discuss the relationship between transference and impartation....similarities and differences. What are examples of each?
6. What are the benefits of the laying on of hands? Can anyone perform the laying on of hands?