

The Elementary Principles of Christ (1)

The Laying on of hands

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Introduction: When we neglect the foundation then all that is built upon it is in peril.

- A. The Hebrew writer knew the limitations of teaching such a people! (**Heb 5:12-6:3**)
 - 1. Have we become lazy and self-centered in our spiritual life?
 - 2. We often preach on the first two elementary principles, repentance and faith.
 - a. What stagnation would occur if this were neglected! (**2 Pt 1:9**)
 - b. Faith must be maintained!
 - 3. This series will look upon the last four principles. Are they “elementary” to you?
- B. What happens when people are confused about these subjects?
 - 1. Is the religious world confused about baptism? Does it matter?
 - 2. How many of you know about the “laying on of hands?”
- C. In a study of any Bible word or phrase one will find a variety of meanings!
 - 1. The root idea of these meanings is that of a transfer from one person to another.
 - 2. What does the Bible teach about relationships and gifts?

I. Old Testament Background

- A. **The giving of a blessing upon a child.**
 - 1. The blessing of Israel upon Ephraim and Manasseh. (**Gen 48:13-14, 17-20**)
 - 2. Normally the first born would receive the greater blessing. Here was a matter of God’s choice in which the future of their descendants are foretold.
- B. **The appointment of a man to an office.**
 - 1. Moses appointment of Joshua (**Deut 34:9-10**)
 - 2. In this act there would be no question as to who is the new leader. In this act the influence of Moses is being used to increase the influence of Joshua.
 - 3. This is a great responsibility that cannot be taken lightly.
- C. **As a sign of the association of the guilt of sin in an animal sacrifice.**
 - 1. The scapegoat on the Day of Atonement. (**Lev 16:21-22**)
 - 2. This well prepares the people to understand the ultimate sacrifice which was to come.
 - 3. We see two meanings in the appointment of the Levites. (**Num 8:10-12**)
 - a. In the first instance we see the relationship and approval of the Israelites to the Levites.
 - b. In the second instance we see the association of guilt from the individual Levite to the individual bull. The bull was then sacrificed.
- D. As an act of the witnesses before the accused before execution. (**Lev 24:14**)
 - 1. Imagine looking into the face of the accused.
 - 2. This would help eliminate those bearing false witness.

II. The New Testament Usage

- A. **To impart a spiritual gift from an apostle to another Christian.**
 - 1. A brief survey of the book of Acts shows how gifts were given.
 - a. At first only the apostles were working signs and wonders. (**Acts 2:4, 43;**

4:33; 5:12)

- b. The apostles then laid their hands on selected men. (**Acts 6:3-6**)
- c. These men then could perform signs. (**Acts 6:8;8:5-7, 12-13**)
- d. These men who were not apostles could not impart spiritual gifts upon others. (**Acts 8:14-18**)

2. Timothy had Paul's hands laid upon him. (**2 Tim 1:6**)
3. Paul could not send another to Rome to impart a spiritual gift. He has to go himself. (**Rom 1:11**)
4. This is one of the unique powers of an apostle. (**2 Cor 12:12**)

B. To appoint a man to an office.

1. The appointment of the seven. (**Acts 6:6**) note the dual usage here!
2. The choice of Paul and Silas by God. The church publicly recognized this. (**Acts 13:2-3**)
3. The elders laid their hands upon Timothy with Paul when he received the gift of prophesy. (**1 Tim 4:14**)
4. In this recognition there is a fellowship and a responsibility. (**1 Tim 5:22**)

C. In the use of the spiritual gift of healing.

1. Jesus prepared his disciples for this work. (**Mark 16:18**)
2. Paul was healed by Ananias before his baptism. (**Acts 9:17**)
3. The father of Publius was healed by Paul. (**Acts 28:8**)

III. Things which do not continue today.

A. Spiritual gifts.

1. There are no more apostles. (**1 Cor 4:9; Acts 1:22**)
2. Spiritual gifts ceased with the completed word of God. (**1 Cor 13:8-10; Jas 1:25**)

B. The gift of healing.

1. Since the gift cannot be given, then it cannot be practiced.
2. Those who claim to heal today cannot duplicate Bible miracles.

C. The need to confirm God's word. (Mark 16:17-20; Heb 2:2-4)

IV. Lessons for us today.

A. We can show our support and fellowship of faithful men.

1. There are ways we indicate one as a brother. (**Gal 2:9**)
2. We may not be careful here and partake of sin. (**1 Tim 5:22**)

B. This can take the form of financial support. (Gal 6:6)

1. Elders should receive our support. (**1 Thess 5:12-13; 1 Tim 5:17-18**)
2. This principle would follow with others as well.

C. We must be careful where our support goes.

1. You can be held accountable. (**1 Tim 5:22**)
2. This can be good or bad. (**2 John 9-11; 3 John 5-8; Phil 4:17**)
3. God will put their actions on your account!
4. Please do not seek one's friendship over God's fellowship!

Conclusion: Let us support faithful men. (Phil 3:17)

- A. Let us also recognize the bounds of fellowship.