

Laying on of Hands

by Anton Bosch

The laying on of hands is an extension of God's hands, used to pass on a blessing, heal the sick, baptize the Holy Spirit, and recognize a ministry.

Duration: 43:16

Scripture: Genesis 48:14, Matthew 19:13

Topics: "Ministry", "Blessing Others", "Laying on of Hands"

Description

Anton Bosch discusses the principle of the laying on of hands, tracing its origins from the Old Testament where Jacob blessed Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, by crossing his hands to impart a greater blessing on the younger. He emphasizes that the act of laying on hands is not about forcing God's will but rather enacting what God has already determined in heaven. Bosch highlights various uses of this practice, including blessing children, healing the sick, and recognizing ministry, while cautioning against hastily laying hands on others without divine confirmation. Ultimately, he encourages believers to freely give the blessings they have received from God to others, reinforcing the importance of being extensions of God's hands in the world.

Transcript

We are now busy with the eighth one of the principles, which is the laying on of hands. We did the baptisms up to the last time, and now we have three left, and this one is the laying on of hands. If we go to Genesis chapter 48, this principle finds obviously its roots in the Old Testament, as all of the principles do in one way or the other, and in Genesis 48, we find quite an interesting account of Jacob blessing Joseph's two sons, and the custom was that when someone came to the end of their life, they would bless the children, and they would lay hands on them, and in Genesis 48 and verse 12, so Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down his face, maybe we should just take it a bit earlier, verse 9, and Joseph said to his father, they are my sons whom God has given me in this place, and he said, please bring them to me, and I will bless them.

Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them. Then Israel said to Joseph, I had not thought to see your face, but in fact God has shown me your offspring.

So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth, and Joseph took them both, Ephraim on his right hand towards Israel's left hand, and Manasseh with his left

hand towards Israel's right hand, and brought them near him. Then Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn. Then he blessed Joseph and said, God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has fed me all my life to this day, the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads, let my name be named upon them in the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him, so he took the hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. And Joseph said to his father, Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn, but put your right hand on his head. And his father refused and said, I know, my son, I know.

He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. But truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations. And so he blessed them that day, saying, By you Israel will bless, saying, My God, make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh.

And thus he said, Ephraim before Manasseh. And so you see the strange thing that happened is that Jacob crosses over his hands, and obviously the greater, and we can see from that, that there was great power in their ability, in these men's ability to bless and to pass on a blessing. And you remember that even Jacob had to go to his father and get the blessing instead of his brother.

And so he goes in his brother Isaac's name, having put Isaac's clothes on and the animal skins. And so his father also blessed him in this way. But even depending which hand you use, the right hand had greater blessing than the left hand.

And so Jacob now blesses the two boys, but he crosses his hands over so that the right hand is on the youngest one and his left hand on the older one. And Joseph says, No, it's got to be the other way around. And he says, No, this is the way it's got to be.

And this is just one of the many, many examples in the Old Testament of a blessing being passed on. And this is the greatest and the most important aspect of the laying on of hands is that it passes on a blessing. But also a very important lesson that we learn from this is that we cannot do, and we will emphasize this as we go along in a different aspect, we cannot do what God has not determined in heaven.

And so we can't force God's hand by laying on hands. And so if God is not determined to bless someone, we can lay hands on that person and try and bless them as much as we like. God is not going to support that process.

And so what we can do, and this is the principle behind the laying on of hands, is that we can simply reenact on us what God is doing in heaven. And so sometimes we get confused and people get confused. They say, Well, you know, we can lay hands and so we can give a blessing or we can pray for someone to be healed.

Or we can pray for someone to be filled with the Spirit. And by laying on hands, we can do that. We can cause that to happen.

No, we can't cause anything to happen. All we can do is be extensions of God's hands and do what God determined to do. Now, it wasn't because Joseph then had laid, or that Jacob had laid his right hand on the younger on Ephraim and his left hand on the other.

That wasn't why they were, the younger one became greater than the older one. It was because that was what was in God's will. This is what God had determined before the time.

And so it, he was simply doing what God had determined. And because you'll see that he, that he then, he then prophesied, not making something happen, but simply saying, this is, this is what is going to happen. Because he says, in verse 19, But his father refused and said, I know my son, I know, he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great.

But truly, his youngest shall be greater than he and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations. And so he blessed them that day. And so it, that was what God had determined.

Ephraim would be greater than Manasseh. And so he, and so he crosses over his hands, simply following the direction of God. This wasn't something that he got into his head and said, I'm going to do it this way.

No, he was doing what God had directed him to do. This is a very important principle we need to understand when we speak about the laying on of hands, that we can't do what we want to do and expect God to support that. No, we've got to do what God wants to do.

And then God will bless and support that. Now, if we go to Matthew chapter 19, you'll find that this, this practice of blessing children is carried forward into the New Testament by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 19. And we know the story well, how that the children are brought to the Lord Jesus, and the disciples say no, but he's a busy man, you know, take the children away.

And Jesus says, suffer the little children to come to me, because of such are the kingdom. But in verse 13 of Matthew 19, it says, then little children were brought to him, that he might put his hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuke them. But Jesus said, let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for such are is the kingdom of heaven.

So again, the children are brought to Jesus, this is a custom that amongst the Jews that the children were brought to rabbis, that the rabbis might be able to pray for the children. Now, this is obviously something that we still do in the New Testament is that we pray for children, we do not baptize them, because remember, when we dealt with baptism, baptism is for those who believe, children cannot believe they could not have repented. And so it's impossible then to to baptize children.

So any baptism of children is not really a biblical or a valid experience. Now, what happens is that in in evangelical churches, where adults are baptized, that there is a tradition then for to bring the children to the elders of the church, that the children may be may be hands laid on them, and that those children may be blessed in that way. And of course, we cite the example of the Lord Jesus doing this.

Now, we need to just be very clear that we we don't have any instruction in the New Testament to do this. Nowhere does the New Testament teach and say, you must dedicate your children, you must lay hands on children and bless them in that way. This was an Old Testament custom, which Jesus perpetuates.

And so we have permission to do that. It's good that we do that. I think it's I personally like to do that.

Because it's an opportunity, particularly if the if the if the parents are unsaved, because really, we cannot by laying hands on the child, cause this child to be to be saved or to be changed in any way. But it's an opportunity to speak into the lives of the parents to speak and to give them an opportunity if even if they're unbelievers, to turn to Christ and to understand that they cannot raise this child unless they do it with the

help of the Lord. And so it's it's it's a good time.

It's a good time for the family to get together and, and for us to bless the families in that way. But it's particularly a good opportunity to be able to speak a word of truth into the lives of people. But it doesn't mean that children who are not blessed in that way will in any way be detrimentally affected in their lives.

And so it's it's a custom and we do that. And we have I believe biblical permission to do that. But we don't have an instruction to do it.

We it's not it's nothing that says we must do it. And so if parents don't want to do it, then that's that's fine. That's no there's absolutely no no problem with that.

What we've got to be careful is that it doesn't become a substitute for infant sprinkling or for christening. And so it just becomes an evangelical form of christening. It can never be that we've got to be careful about those about that connotation.

And so and so yeah, you know, the people in historic churches, they, they christen and we bless the children or we lay hands on the children. No, it's that there is no link or no parallel between those two whatsoever. They shouldn't be.

We're simply doing what Jesus did here. And what was an Old Testament custom, which we which we're perpetuating. So that's one of the uses of the laying on of hands.

In Mark chapter 16. We find that another use or another reason for the laying on of hands is for healing. In Mark chapter 16.

And verse 18. Verse 17 says, these signs will follow those who believe in my name, they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues, they will take up serpents, and they will drink it. And if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them.

They will lay hands on the sick and they will recover. Now, you'll see there that he's saying that these are things that will follow those who believe doesn't these are not for special evangelists or special ministers. Anyone who believes has the privilege of being able to lay hands on the sick and trusting God for the healing of those sick.

Now, as we've said before, we cannot make happen on earth what God is not determined to do in heaven. And so if we cannot say and that's why we've got to be careful when praying for people who are sick, we cannot demand that a person be healed, because that's not our prerogative. It's God's prerogative to heal.

And so we've got again, we've got to operate in conjunction with the Lord. And and if it is the Lord's will, the Lord will will heal that individual. But again, the laying on of hands, not just yes, evangelists, you sure they can they can do that.

But any believer can do that. And so if someone gets sick in the home, the parents can pray for the children and lay hands on them or you can ask your husband or your wife or your friend or somebody nearby to pray for you and to lay hands on you. Because this is this is a biblical pattern, a very biblical principle, and a promise that is given to us that we will lay hands on the sick and that they will recover.

And so you can see again, as we pass a blessing on to the child in this way, one is passing on a blessing to those who are that those those who are sick. In Acts chapter eight, you find that when we spoke about

the baptism in the Holy Spirit, that people received or fulfilled or were baptized, depending what terminology you want to use the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands in Acts chapter eight, and verse 18. And it speaks about Simon the sorcerer here.

And it says that when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles hands, the Holy Spirit was given he offered them money. So he thought this was a gift that you can buy. Now again, it teaches us two things here teaches us firstly that that yes, that the laying on of hands can impart the Holy Spirit.

I'm very careful of that word impartation, because it has wrong connotations. But but not in every case in the New Testament with hands laid on people in order to receive the Holy Spirit. So you don't have to have hands laid on in order to receive the Holy Spirit the same way as you don't have to have hands laid on a child in order for that child to eventually come to a knowledge of salvation.

The same way you don't have to have hands laid on a sick person in order for them to be healed. It's interesting in James when it says is any sick among you, let them call for the elders of the church. And it says that the elders must anoint them with oil.

It doesn't speak about laying hands on them. It simply says they must anoint them with oil. And the prayer of faith will save the sick and the Lord will raise them up.

You see the emphasis again, the Lord will raise them up, not the prayer of faith that will raise them up or the oil that will raise them up, but the Lord will raise them up. So it's always God who does the work. And we're simply being extensions of the hand of God.

And so and so again, the but again, you can so you can receive healing without hands being laid on. But you can also receive healing with hands laid on. It's just one of those things that God and understanding our lack of faith really gives us a visual thing, a tangible thing that we can relate to, to maybe just help our faith a little bit too, because some people just need that physical touch in order to understand that God is actually at work here.

But others don't need that. And so they can receive the Holy Spirit without the laying on of hands. And so yeah, we're speaking about blessing children, healing the sick, the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

And then while we enact in chapter 13, it speaks about the recognition of ministry. And it says that in Antioch, there were certain prophets and teachers in verse one. And verse two says, as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Now separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.

And verse three says, Then having fasted and prayed, they laid hands on them, and they sent them away. And so Barnabas and Saul are sent away, and they become apostles, because that's what that word means, they're sent out. And this is done with the laying on of hands.

And there are quite a few examples in the New Testament of people who have hands laid on in that way. In Acts chapter six, for instance, we find the seven chosen to serve the tables. Now it doesn't specifically call them deacons, but most people tend to feel that this was the first account of deacons.

And it says that they selected these men, and verse six says, Whom they sent before the apostles, and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them, and the word of God spread, and the number of disciples multiplied greatly, and so on. And so again, you can see the laying on of hands in order to recognize a

ministry, not in order to give a ministry. And only elders are ordained, other ministries are not ordained, but they are recognized, and they are blessed by the laying on of hands.

Now again, we cannot give a man a ministry by laying hands on him. If God did not give him a ministry, if God had not made Paul an apostle, the laying on of hands by the local elders there could do absolutely nothing for him. It wouldn't suddenly now make him an apostle.

He was an apostle because God had called him and gifted him to be an apostle. And so all they did was simply recognize that which God had already done. And so again, it's working together with God.

And you'll notice that in Acts 18, it speaks about the fact that the Holy Spirit said, sorry, Acts 13, that the Holy Spirit said, Separate to me Paul and Barnabas. So this wasn't, they decided this is what they were going to do, and now they're going to lay hands on these two men, and now suddenly God has to bless that. And that's again the impression sometimes we get, that a man can go to Bible school or seminary, and he can get his diploma or his degree, and now we lay hands on him or ordain him, and we send him into the ministry.

Now he's got something because he's got a degree, and secondly he's got hands laid on him. But if God didn't gift him, he's got absolutely nothing. He simply got a degree, and some men laid hands on him, but he still has nothing.

And so the laying on of hands simply recognizes that which God already does. Now we've alluded to the fact that the laying on of hands is simply an extension of his hands. Now in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, it speaks about the body, speaks about the body of Christ.

He is the head, and we are the members of Christ. And he says one is an eye, and one is a hand, one is a foot, and so on. Now Jesus has, there's a little plaque that some people have on their walls.

He has no hands, but your hands. He has no feet, but your feet. And that's maybe a little bit overused now, but it still is true.

He doesn't have feet on the earth anymore. The body which Jesus had, which he had when he was on earth, is now glorified and is now in heaven. And so the only feet he has are our feet.

The only hands he has are our hands. And so you see right through the ministry of the Lord Jesus, how that he was always blessing people, he was touching people, touching the blind man's eyes, touching the one that was dead and raising them back to to life again, touching the little children and blessing them, touching the bread and breaking the bread and multiplying it and making it into enough to feed the multitude. These were the things that Jesus did with his hands.

But now he doesn't have hands anymore, but he has our hands. And so really when we lay hands on people, and generally people are not things, some people say no, you can lay hands on the, if your washing machine breaks, you can lay hands on the washing machine, it'll be fixed. But the Bible doesn't really give us permission to lay hands on things, but we lay hands on people for different things.

And so when we do that, we're extensions of his hands. And it's his hands that are being extended to people's lives in order to impart that blessing. Now in Matthew chapter 16, we find a verse which is very often used and what we said just now relates to this now.

In Matthew chapter 16, and you also find the same in Matthew chapter 18. Matthew 16 in verse 19, Jesus speaking to Peter, Peter has just confessed that Jesus is the Christ. And then it says in verse 19, and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

And whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. And he commanded his disciples that they should tell no one that he was Jesus the Christ. Now also if you go across to Matthew chapter 18, and the context here is dealing with a brother who has sinned.

And it says in verse 18, assuredly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Now I know that neither of those scriptures deal with the laying on of hands, but they deal with a very important principle. And that is the authority which is vested within the church.

And so the church has authority to bind and to loose. Now it doesn't speak about demons. People apply these verses to demons.

Neither of these two verses apply to demons. It says nothing about demons or angels, loosing angels and binding demons. Those verses don't speak about that at all.

They are dealing with other issues. And particularly Matthew 18 in dealing with the issue of church discipline. And you will notice that the responsibility of church discipline, Matthew 18, lies with the church, not just with the elders.

It lies with the whole church. And what he is saying here is that when we bind something on earth, that is bound in heaven. But now remember the principle which we have established already, that I cannot bind on earth what God has not first bound in heaven.

And so if I say that we are going to bind this person or we are going to bind this issue on earth or we are going to loose this thing on earth, if that has not been done in heaven, we are wasting our time. Because God is not going to support that. But remember here that he is speaking particularly in Matthew 18 about the issue of dealing with someone who sins.

And you will see a very interesting thing here because verse 19 says again, I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that you ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. Now we misapply that verse because we say, yeah, you know, if we agree that God must give me a new Mercedes, then that is going to happen. But the context in which this is spoken about here is in the context of dealing with people who are sinning and who are not repenting.

Because you see he speaks about giving them warning and if they don't listen then you take witnesses and so on. And so going through a disciplinary procedure literally with that person. And the whole object is not to put the person out of the church.

The whole object of this procedure is to get them to repent and to get them to be reconciled. And then in that context he says again, I say to you, in other words, he's saying the church has great authority when it comes to these matters. And then the next verse, where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them.

Now we like to say, well, you know, if there's only a few of us in the meeting, then the Lord is there. Yes, that's true. The Lord is there where two or three are gathered.

But he's saying specifically when we're dealing with issues of church discipline, the Lord is there. And so it's not just two people. Then remember, why does it say two or three? Because it uses two or three right through the scripture in the context of witnesses that are brought against someone who has sinned.

And so under the law, you were not allowed to bring it, take an accusation against a man that he had committed adultery or that he had stolen or murdered or whatever, unless there were two or three witnesses. Now he's saying if there are two or three witnesses in this issue of discipline, then the Lord is there, the Lord is present in those two or three witnesses. And so whatever measures are, if that person then is put out of the church, because you'll see, he says in verse 17, if he refuses to hear them, let him, they'll tell it to church.

But if you refuse even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. And so he says, if that is what the church has come to a conclusion of, Christ is in the church in that process. And therefore this carries the seal of heaven.

And God will confirm that in heaven. But remember that we cannot, we cannot force God to, if we act unjustly and we, and we don't go through this procedure and the man is treated unfairly, we cannot expect God and we put him out of the church and we say now God must now support our actions. God is not going to support that action because we have, we've acted unfairly, unjustly, we've acted against the scriptures.

And so you can see what we're saying is that we don't, although what we do on earth is sealed in heaven, it is only sealed in heaven if that was first sealed in heaven to start with. We cannot force God's hand in these matters whatsoever. We cannot act unfairly or unjustly and expect God to support that.

But when we're acting in line with God, then that carries the support of heaven. And so there is tremendous authority in the laying on of hands and in every area of the operation of the church. But, and obviously in this context, in the issue of church discipline, there's tremendous authority within the church because it is being supported by heaven if it is done with heaven support.

And so you can see the great authority, the great power which actually is vested in, not just in the church as such, within the official organized church, but in where two or three have gathered in his name. And this authority carries through to the laying on of hands. And that is why the laying on of hands is quite a serious issue.

And that's why you find a warning in 1 Timothy chapter 5, 1 Timothy chapter 5 and verse 22. Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins. Keep yourself pure.

Now what he's speaking about here is about elders. You'll see that he says in verse 17, let elders who rule well be counted with a double honor. Then it speaks about if they need to be paid, they must be paid properly.

Then he says in verse 20, those who are sinning, rebuke in the presence of all, speaking of elders. And then in verse 22, he said, do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins. Now what he's speaking about is ordaining elders, laying hands on elders for ordination.

And he's saying that this is a serious thing. You can't just do this lightly. And in fact, it's not something that can easily be undone.

You can't take back the laying on of hands the same way as you can't take back your words. You say something slanderously or something in gossip about someone, there's no way you can go back and fetch all of those words. You can say, I retracted, you can say, I didn't mean it.

You can say whatever you like. But those words have gone out into the world. And it's been carried out and transferred from one person to the other.

And there's no way you can go and fetch that back. And so we've got to be careful. That's why we will give it an account for even every idle word that we speak.

Because although we can repent of those words, those words have been sent out, and they're going out and they're continuing to do that bad work even days and years and months after we have even tried to retract them. And so the laying on of hands also is a very, very serious step. It's not something you can easily revoke.

And so some people think that you can ordain elders, and you can just unordain them. Or you can just resign from that. But you can't do that.

Because in fact, it carries the seal of heaven. It's a very, very serious step. And I look back on my own ministry and think that there were times when I in fact incorrectly ordained elders.

And that has been a very, very heavy burden I've had to bear in allowing elders to be ordained when in fact they were not ready, or they were not the men that actually God wanted. But it becomes an irrevocable step. There's no provision.

This is the amazing thing. No provision in the New Testament whatsoever for an elder to be retrenched, or to be fired, or to be demoted, or anything of that kind of terminology. There is absolutely no provision for it whatsoever.

So it seems that once someone has been ordained as an elder, they are there, unless God deals with their heart. And they say, I shouldn't be in this position, and they actually step down. And so it's a serious thing.

And that's why Paul says, don't do it hastily, be careful. Don't quickly, particularly in the light of ordination. When we pray for someone who's for healing or for blessing children, yes, that's imparting a blessing.

It's not binding something serious, which gives authority to a person in the church. And so we can do that maybe less lightly. And then, what is the principle then? We've said that the principle is the giving of a blessing.

The giving of a blessing for a man to continue in an area of ministry, blessing a child, blessing someone who is sick with healing, blessing someone with a gift of the Holy Spirit. These are some of the many ways or uses. But at the end of the day, the purpose and the function of the laying on of hands is the impartation of the giving of blessing, the giving of blessing.

Now, if we go to Matthew chapter 10, you'll find a very important principle here. Because now we've spoken about some of the uses and the ways in which laying on of hands is used in the New Testament. And you'll notice that many churches don't actually practice this much anymore.

And yet it is a New Testament principle. And then, but there's a principle behind it, which we need to now also look at. Matthew chapter 10, and Jesus is sending out the twelve into Judea to go and preach the gospel.

And he tells them to do these things. Verse 17, Matthew 10, verse 7. And as you go, preach saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons freely you have received, freely give, provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs, for a worker is worthy of his food.

And whatever town or city you enter, inquire who in it is worthy and stay there until you go out, and so on. Now, you'll see that he tells them to do certain things, to go and preach the gospel of the kingdom, or the message of the kingdom, to heal the sick, to cleanse the lepers, to raise the dead. Now, how did Jesus do these things? He did most of those things by the laying on of hands.

Even the lepers, Jesus would touch. And the lepers were shocked by this, because nobody would ever touch them. And yet, Jesus would touch the lepers, and he would heal them.

But then Jesus says, now, here's the principle behind these things. He says, don't hold back in touching people. Now, we're not talking about physically embracing people or touching people in that way, but touching people's lives in order to bless them.

And he says, you receive it freely. The blessing of God, we've received that freely. And we must give it freely.

Now, that word freely means two things, really. The one is without charge. And so, when the money preachers say, sow into my ministry, and I'll pray for your healing, they're going against the scripture.

Because he says, we didn't buy that gift from God. God gave it to us for nothing. And therefore, we must give it to other people for nothing.

But also, when it speaks about freely, it means liberally. In other words, God gave to us without being stingy and saying, look, I'll just give you a little bit of blessing. God gave us much.

And so, we must give freely. We must give much to others. And that's the principle that he says to the disciples.

He says, you've received these gifts. You've received blessing from me. Now, go and give to others.

And you've received it free, give it free. You've received much, give much. And that's the principle.

And so, as they were laying hands on people, they were imparting this or enacting this principle of saying, well, I haven't got anything. You remember, the man came to Peter and to John and said, you know, give us money. And they said, we haven't got money.

We've got nothing. But what we have got. In other words, what I received, that I'll give you.

And he said, we didn't receive money from God, but God gave us blessing. God gave us healing. And so, that we can give you.

We can give you healing. And so, they were, even then, right, this is the beginning of their ministry. And now, that experience at the gate called beautiful, that was much later in the ministry of Peter and of the twelve.

And they're still applying the same principle. We got it for nothing. What we've got, we can give you.

But you know, we can't give what we haven't got. Many preachers are trying to give what they never received. And so, the preaching is dry.

The ministry is dead. And one wonders why it is. Because they actually never received anything from God.

So, they're actually trying to give nothing. Because they received nothing. But when we have received something.

And whatever that may be. If God has given you any ability to touch people's lives. Whether it be in a physical way of praying for people's healing or blessing them.

Or whether it be in a word of encouragement. Or in a financial way. Or in a way, form of comforting people or helping people in some way.

If God has given you something, then you must give that to others. That's the principle. So, we've received it.

Let's lay hands on people. Let's touch people's lives by giving to them. Out of the abundance of which God has given to you.

If he's given me joy, let me give others joy. If he's given me peace, let me give others peace. Let me give out of the abundance with which God has given.

This is really the principle behind all of these things. And so, I'm very happy to pray for little children. Because God has been so good to me.

In keeping me. And even when I was rebellious as a young man. He still called me.

And he still saved me. And he still protected me. And so, because God has been good throughout my life.

I want God to be good to others. And so, I pray for the little babies. That God would bless them.

And that he would be equally gracious to them. And that he would be equally long-suffering with them. And that he would call them until they come to a point.

Where they would find grace and salvation. I like to pray for people who want to be involved in ministry. Because others have supported me.

And have upheld my hands. All part of the same principle. In ministry.

And so, I want to support others in ministry. And bless them. And lay hands on them.

Not just in ordaining them. Or sending them out in the ministry. But simply by holding up their hands.

Remember the men who held up her and Aaron. Held up their hands of Moses. So that the battle could be fought.

All part of the same principle. As we support one another. As we help one another.

As we reach out our hands to strengthen one another. These are all the things that we have to do with our hands. As we lay hands.

Not just in a ritual of imparting blessing. But in a practical sense. Just searching out our hands.

That we may touch one another's lives. That we may support one another. Strengthen one another.

Encourage one another. In times of strength. And in times of weakness.

And in times of blessing. And so, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11. What I've received from the Lord.

That I've given to you. In fact, twice in Corinthians he says that. And so, what I've received from the Lord.

That I've imparted. That I've given to you. That's a wonderful thing.

Knowing that what Paul gave us. And gives us in his teachings. Are not things that he thought up.

Or that he learned at university. But these are things that God gave him. And God give us grace.

That we may actually have received from the Lord. In order that we might be able to give to others. Equally blessing and freely.

And you know, many Christians say. Well, I really have very little. You know, how can I give to others? How can I bless others? How can I touch others lives? I really have very little.

But you know, it's amazing. How that the Lord Jesus. Or how that the scripture.

And there are many, many examples. But I'm just going to quote two of them. In the Old Testament.

Moses comes before God. And he says. And God says.

I want you to take the people out of Egypt. And Moses says. You know, I can do nothing.

And I'm really very weak. And it had taken Moses 40 years in the wilderness. To actually understand how weak he was.

And that he really had very little. But God says. What's in your hand? And he says.

All I've got is a stick. And you remember. God says.

Throw down the stick. And he throws down his stick. And God then says.

Grab it. And turns into a snake. You remember.

And God says. Grab it by the tail. And it turns back into a stick.

But now. The stick which he had before. Is not the same stick.

Because from that moment on. That stick is called the staff of God. Or the rod of God.

So it was Moses's rod before. But he gives it to God. And it's transformed.

And it becomes the rod of God. Looked the same. But now.

It was able to turn into a snake before Pharaoh. It was able to open the Red Sea. It was able to bring water out of the rock.

It was. It was. It was.

It was a sign. And a powerful tool. In the hands of Moses.

As God. Now used that simple thing. And so.

God says to Moses. What have you gotten? Moses. I only got a stick.

You know. But. But when Moses.

Allowed God to use that. That stick. It became a very.

Very powerful tool. And symbol of God's power. And God's authority.

In the hands of Moses. And so. God may.

You know. We may say. But God.

I haven't got any. I cannot preach like so and so. Well I can't.

You know. I can't do this. Or I can't do that.

But God says. What have you got? What skills have you got? What's in your hands? What can your hands do? You know. Lord know it really.

All I can do is pray. Well. Give it to him.

And he can use that. And he can use that in a powerful way. Well Lord.

I can. I can. You know.

I can speak to people on the telephone. Well. Give that to the Lord.

And he can use that. And so. Whatever it is that I have.

Let me give it to him. And he will give it back again. Because.

What I have. I received from him in the first place. We spoke.

Not so long ago. About the fact that it says in. In Romans chapter.

Chapter 11. The last verse. Is that all things are of him.

Or from him. Everything comes from him. James chapter 1 says that.

Every good and every perfect gift descends from above. So whatever I have. My motor car.

My. My computer. My house.

My. My skills. My energy.

My abilities. My. Physical strength.

Everything I have. God gave it to me in the first place. And he gave it to me freely.

He's given me so much. Can I not now give it back to him. And say Lord here it is.

You use it the way you want. There's that. The same principle again.

Free you see freely you give. Remember the little boy with his lunch. Five loaves and two fishes.

And really everybody was saying. Well you know. We need.

We need. We really need a lot of food here. And others were saying.

We need a lot of money. So we can go and buy. But you know.

The little boy. He just had what he had. And he said.

That's all I've got in my hands. And really what Jesus is saying. Is what have you got in your hands.

What have you got available. If you just give it to him. He's able.

Now that little boy thought. He was going to lose his lunch. But he got it back again.

He had as much lunch as he could. As he could eat. But not only did he eat.

But everybody else ate also. And five thousand men were fed that day. Plus the women and the children.

And many baskets were gathered. Of the fragments afterwards. And so really.

He could say. But you know. This is just a little.

You know. A couple of sardines. And you know.

A couple of rolls. You know. This is really nothing.

You know. But as he gave it to the Lord Jesus. Jesus takes it.

And he breaks it. And he multiplies it. And it becomes a great blessing.

And so. I really believe that. When we say.

But Lord. You know. How can I go out.

Like the twelve. And touch people's lives. And heal.

And do these things. He's just saying. What have you got in your hand.

Is it a stick. Is it five loaves and two fishes. What have you got.

Give it to him. And allow him to use that. And say.

Lord. You know. I got it freely in the first place.

You know. And the little boy could have said. But this is my lunch.

No. He's. You know.

Really the right attitude was. I got it for nothing. My mom gave it to me.

And my dad gave it to me. So I got it free. So I may as well just give it free.

But as he gave. He didn't lose. He actually.

He actually gained. And he actually benefited. And so.

God give us grace. That we may be able to touch people's lives. And we can talk a lot more about that.

But in Ecclesiastes chapter nine. A verse that I love very much. It says that.

What your hand finds to do. Do it with all your. All your might.

And so. Whatever you find to do. Whatever.

Whatever comes to your hands. We're talking about the laying on of hands. Whatever your hands touch.

Do that. And do it with all of your might. If it's a. It's a job in the factory.

Or it's a job in the office. Or it's a. It's. It's helping some old person.

Or it's doing. You know. Obviously we're not talking about buying our salvation.

We dealt with that in the first principle. But now. Having now freely received from the Lord our salvation.

We freely just do whatever we can. And we do it with all of our strength. And with all of our hands.

All of our might. But you know. When we do that.

Luke chapter nine speaks about having put your hand to the plow. And you look back. You're not fit for the kingdom.

And so. If you're saying. Lord I'm going to.

I'm going to serve you with my life. With my hands. I'm going to touch people's lives.

Then don't look back and say. Oh you know. It would have been much better.

You know. If I didn't commit to this ministry. I could be sitting in front of the TV at home.

And having my supper. And having a nice rest. If you start looking back.

He says. You should never even have started. And so.

If I'm going to commit my hands to blessing people. To touching people's lives. Then I need to do that with a total.

And with a full commitment. And then finally in Romans chapter 12. It also speaks about hands that hang down.

And you know. Our hands can be hanging down. Because we're tired.

And we you know. We're really just exhausted. But he says.

Lift up those hands that hang down. Strengthen the knees. That are feeble.

And want to buckle. And so. Let's strengthen our hands.

That we may be able to touch people's lives. And bless them. And impart a blessing to them.

Because God has given so much to us. And blessed us with so much. Amen.

Let's pray. Father we thank you for the much. That you've given to us in the Lord Jesus.

We thank you for life. We thank you for eternal life. We thank you for salvation.

We thank you Lord. For many many things. And many areas.

In which you've blessed us so freely. You've given to us Lord. Without charge.

We deserve nothing at your hands. You've just given to us. And so Lord.

Help us to enact this principle. In daily living Lord. By just giving to others.

By reaching out. And touching other people's lives. By having an open hand.

In imparting. Not only blessing. But spiritually.

And physically. And materially. In any way.

In which we're able to bless others. And so Lord. We thank you for your hand upon us.

Help us Lord. To have our hands extended to one another. Not just in fellowship.

But in blessing one another. We ask this in Jesus name. Amen.

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