

# Laying Hands On The Sick



Foundations (Day 250)
by Derek Prince

Let us now turn to the New Testament to see what part this ordinance of laying on of hands plays there. We shall find five distinct purposes for which laying on of hands may be used, according to the precepts and examples of the New Testament.

The first of these purposes is directly associated with the ministry of physical healing. Jesus authorised it in His final commission to His disciples (see Mark 16:17-18). In these verses Jesus appoints five super-natural signs which are to accompany the preaching of the gospel and which may be claimed by all believers through faith in the name of Jesus. The fifth of these supernatural signs appointed by Jesus is:

> "In My name… they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." (Mark 16:17-18)

Here the laying on of hands in the name of Jesus is appointed as a means for physical healing to be ministered to those who are sick.

Later on in the New Testament another slightly different ordinance is appointed.

> "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and God will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven." (James 5:14-15)

The ordinance here appointed is that of anointing the sick with oil in the name of the Lord.

Both these ordinances alike are effective only through the exercise of faith in the name of the Lord; that is, the name of Jesus. In the case of anointing with oil, it is specifically stated that prayer must accompany this act. In the passage about laying hands on the sick in Mark's Gospel, no specific mention is made of prayer. However, in most cases it would be natural to pray for the sick person, as well as laying hands on him.

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Again, when anointing the sick with oil, it often seems natural – indeed, almost instinctive – to lay hands upon them at the same time. In this way the two ordinances become combined in one. However, this need not necessarily be so. It is perfectly scriptural to lay hands on the sick without anointing them with oil. Likewise, it is perfectly scriptural to anoint the sick with oil without laying hands on them.

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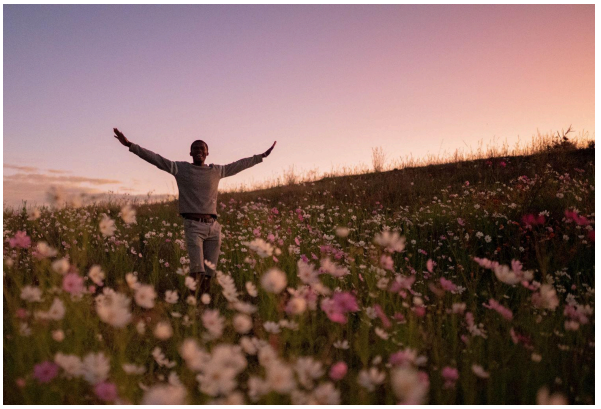
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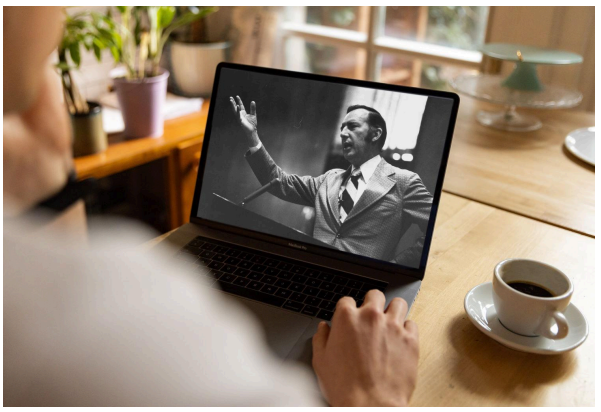
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