

Essential Foundations

Real Relationships

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Real Relationships

Hebrews 6:1–3 (NKJV)

Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits.

1. Laying on of Hands

Without real, connected relationships in our lives we will end up unfulfilled, unhappy and without the blessings of God we desire and that He desires to give us.

Five Things Transferred By Jesus and the Early Church Through the Laying On of Hands:

1. Healing

Luke 4:40 (NKJV)

When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.

2. Blessing

Mark 10:13–16 (NKJV)

Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by

no means enter it.” And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.

3. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Acts 8:14–17 (NKJV)

Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

4. Giftings

1 Timothy 4:14 (NKJV)

Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.

5. Authority

Acts 6:1–6 (NKJV)

Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

1 Timothy 5:21–22 (NKJV)

I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with

partiality. Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure.

2. Water Baptism

Acts 2:37–41(NKJV)

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

Why Baptism is so Important:

1. Water baptism is the covenant seal of the New Covenant.

Mark 16:15–16 (NKJV)

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

Matthew 28:18–20 (NKJV)

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

2. Baptism in water supernaturally empowers us to know and serve Jesus.

Colossians 2:11–12 (NKJV)

In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of

Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

Galatians 3:26–27 (NKJV)

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Romans 6:3–4 (NKJV)

Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Water baptism supernaturally prepares us for a close, personal relationship with Jesus Christ as His disciple.

3. Baptism in water purifies our conscience from our life of sin and gives us confidence in our relationship with the Lord.

1 Peter 3:18–22 (NKJV)

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

Small Group Guide: Real Relationships

Opening Question:

What's one relationship in your life that has helped shape or deepen your faith? Why was that connection so meaningful?

Laying on of Hands

In the Kingdom of God, relationships are the foundation of spiritual growth, blessing, and maturity. One of the most important aspects of biblical relationships is the laying on of hands. This act symbolizes relational transfer—whether of healing, blessing, or spiritual empowerment—and reminds us that the blessings and authority in God's Kingdom primarily flow through close, committed relationships.

Jesus Himself practiced laying on of hands to heal the sick, bless children, and empower His followers. The early church continued this tradition, using touch to transfer the Holy Spirit, confer gifts, and establish authority. These examples show that God designed us for personal connection — contact that involves more than words, but active love and trust.

In today's world, however, we live in an era of digital connectivity, where many interactions happen through screens and virtual exchanges. While technology can connect us initially, it can also create a false sense of closeness that doesn't truly satisfy our deepest need for love and intimacy. It's through face-to-face contact, involving touch or presence, that we experience genuine relational transfer and spiritual blessing as God intended.

Without these real, personal relationships, we risk living unfulfilled lives, disconnected from the source of true blessing. This is why the act of laying on of hands is a vital expression of our relational design—signaling trust, strengthening faith, and activating spiritual power.

Water Baptism

Water baptism is another vital step that marks a personal, covenant relationship with Jesus. It's not merely tradition, but a supernatural event where we publicly declare our commitment, and God seals that promise through His Spirit. Baptism aligns us with Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, empowering us to live new lives in close intimacy with Him. It washes away shame and guilt and prepares us to step into all God has for us.

In all these practices—the laying on of hands and water baptism—we actively participate in rooted, relational faith. These actions deepen our connection with Jesus and fellow believers, laying strong foundations for spiritual maturity and blessing.

For Discussion

1. Why do you think real, face-to-face relationships and physical contact are so important in our faith?
2. How can we intentionally build genuine relationships in a society that often prefers virtual or superficial connections?
3. If you haven't been baptized since you were saved, what's holding you back? How might baptism deepen your personal relationship with Jesus?
4. Have you ever experienced the laying on of hands in prayer or healing? If so, how did that impact your faith?
6. What is one practical step you can take this week to strengthen your relationship with Jesus or another believer?

Next Step

Evaluate your own relationships. Have you been baptized? Are you connected with others on a genuine, committed level? Pray and ask God to guide you into deeper, more meaningful relationships that will support your spiritual journey and maturity.