

# Some Prayer Ministry Protocols



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# Prayer Ministry in the New Testament

The laying on of hands is mentioned on a number of occasions in the Old Testament, so it is not surprising that it is mentioned in the Gospels and other New Testament writings. Here are a few examples.

[Mark 10:16](#) “And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them.”

[Luke 4:40](#) “While the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on each one of them, He was healing them.”

[Acts 8:17](#) “Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.”

[Acts 6:6](#) “And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them.”

[Acts 28:8](#) “And it happened that the father of Publius was lying in bed afflicted with recurrent fever and dysentery; and Paul went in to see him and after he had prayed, he laid his hands on him and healed him.”

[1 Timothy 4:14](#) “Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”

# Prayer Ministry in Today's Church

Prayer ministry with the laying on of hands is an aspect of a number of the sacraments such as baptism, confirmation, ordination and anointing of the sick. In recent years it has also become a characteristic of the Charismatic Renewal Movement when praying for baptism in the Spirit, healing, deliverance and the like.

Pope Francis spoke about it in the context of person to person evangelisation when he said in par 128 of *The Joy of the Gospel*, "If it seems prudent and if the circumstances are right, this fraternal and missionary encounter could end with a brief prayer related to the concerns which the person may have expressed. In this way they will have an experience of being listened to and understood; they will know that their particular situation has been placed before God, and that God's word really speaks to their lives."



# Some Guidelines

In these notes we will look at some guidelines which can express reverence for the person being prayed with while being mindful of such issues as transference of a sexual nature, and the need to safeguard vulnerable children and adults. In the words of John Wimber we can see all such opportunities for ministry with the laying on of hands as divine appointments which are intended by God and which can become power encounters.

**Firstly**, it is very important that we only pray with a person when he or she has consented to having such prayer.

**Secondly**, we should not presume to lay hands until the person being prayed with has said it is o.k. The fact is, some people are not comfortable with bodily contact. We should be specific by asking, “do you mind if I/we place a hand/s on your head, or shoulder?”

**Thirdly**, by and large it is better if a man prays with a man, and a woman with a woman. If there is more than one person ministering, it is better to have a man and a woman praying, for either a man or woman. This helps to avoid unconscious transference of a sexual kind.



**Fourthly**, if you are laying hands on the person's head, e.g., when praying for baptism in the Spirit, or for healing, do so lightly without pressing down on the person.

**Fifthly**, if more than one person is ministering with the laying on of hands it is helpful if there is an agreement about who is going to take the lead and do most of the talking. The other person/s quietly offer prayer support in English and/or tongues. If one of them gets a scripture, or a word from the Lord, they can share it when it seems appropriate.

**Sixthly**, sometimes it can be good to check in with the person being prayed with to find out how he is she feeling, is aware of etc. This kind of feedback can be helpful because it can suggest what kind of prayer seems to be suitable. This would be particularly true when praying for inner healing, deliverance, or an in-filling of the Holy Spirit.



# Some Spiritual Points to Keep in Mind

## **1] *Because of justification by grace God is at work within us***

When praying for a person, reject any exaggerated feelings of unworthiness by regarding them as a temptation from Satan, the accuser, the one who opposes the purposes of God. As a result of being justified by grace through firm faith in Christ's saving work on the cross, we are qualified to be channels of his blessing to others.

## **2] *We minister in the person of Christ***

When ministering to someone we believe that we are acting in the person of Jesus Christ (cf. Phil 2:13). Par. 521 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* assures us that, "Christ enables us to live in him *all* that he himself lived, and he lives it in us."

## **3] *Be aware of the benevolence of God***

Affirm the fact that God the Father is benevolent, all he has is ours (cf. Lk 15:31), if he has given us his Son would he not give us all things in him (Rm 8:32). The Father wants what is best for the person you are praying with.

## **4] *Pray in the power of the Spirit***

Affirm the fact that the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, is active in and through you. Focus on the fact that it is the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the powerlessness of death to triumphant, and glorious new life.

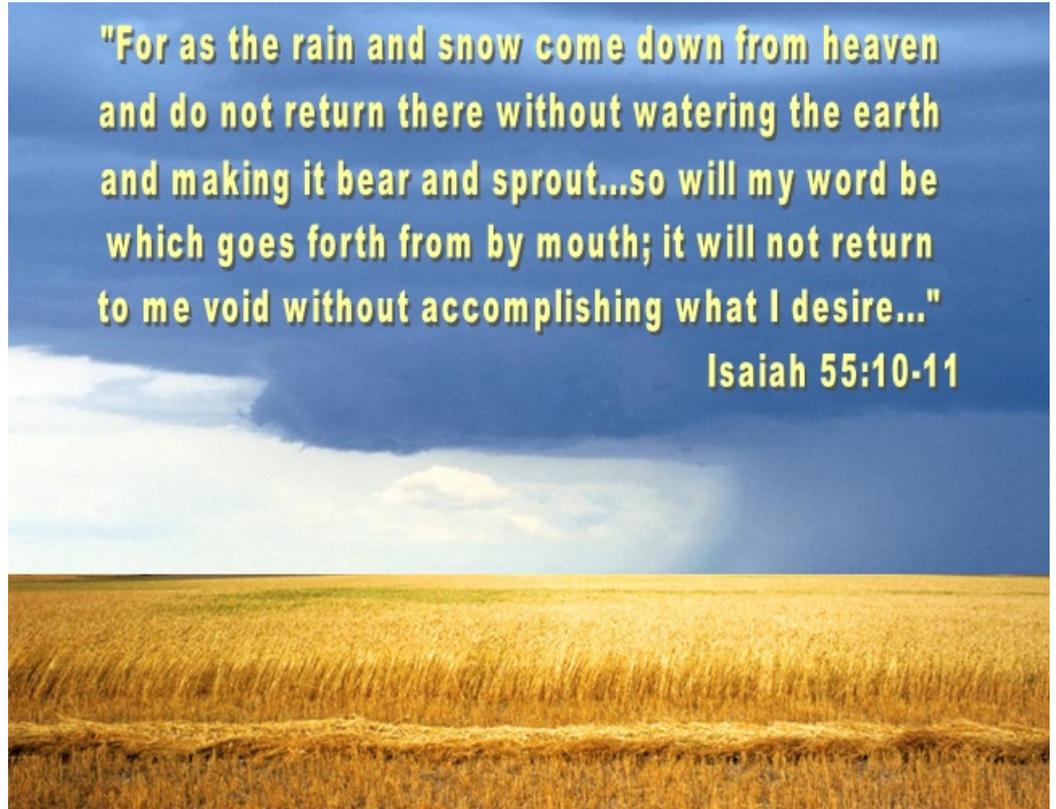
## 5] *Praying within the will of God*

Strive to pray in accordance with the will of God for the person with the measure of faith you have received, trusting or expectant (cf. Rm 12:3). Sometimes expectant faith is possible either before or during the time of ministry because the Lord can give the praying person/s a word of knowledge. It not only reveals God's specific will, but it also evokes expectant faith, because as Paul told us in Rm 10:17, "faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."



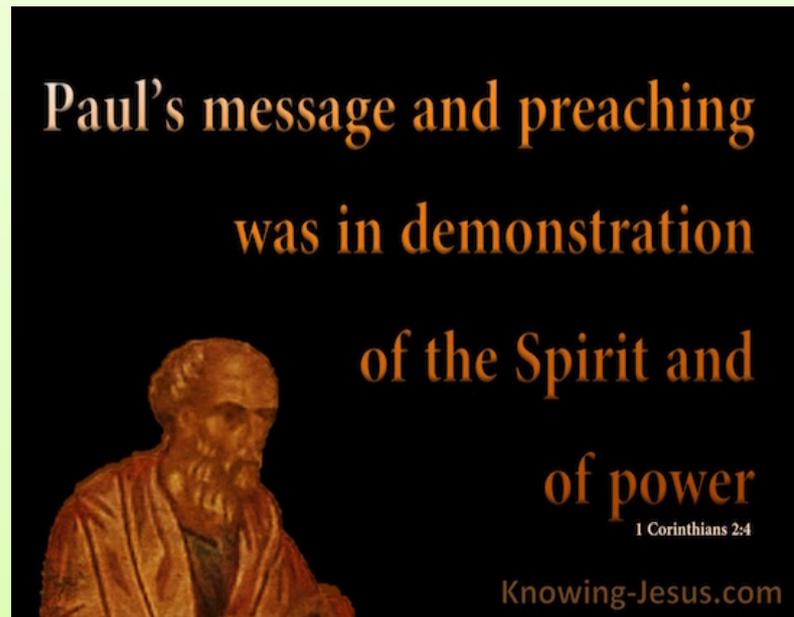
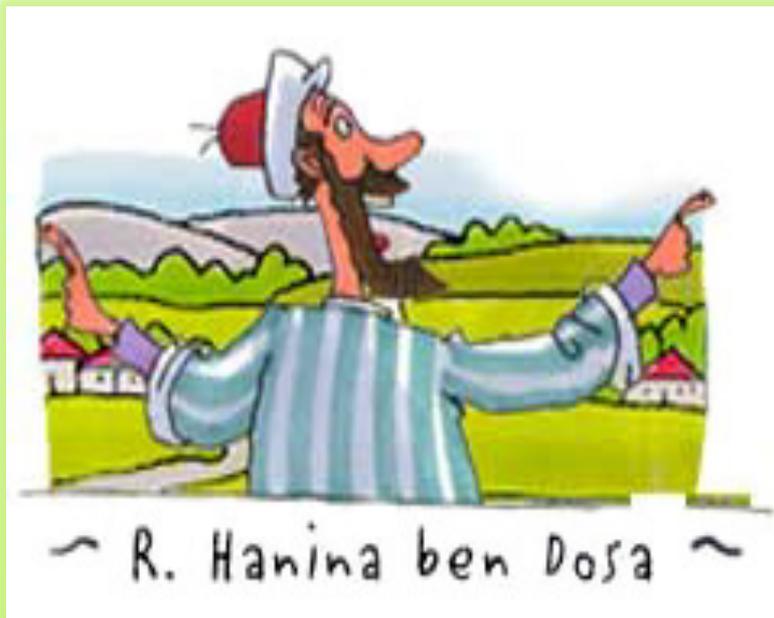
"For as the rain and snow come down from heaven and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout...so will my word be which goes forth from by mouth; it will not return to me void without accomplishing what I desire..."

Isaiah 55:10-11



# Conclusion

Ministry in the power of the Spirit is an effective way of making the kingdom of God to be present in people's lives. There was a saying which was attributed to Hanina Ben Dosa, a contemporary of Jesus, **“he whose actions exceed his wisdom, his wisdom shall endure, but he whose wisdom exceeds his actions, his wisdom shall not endure.”**



Not surprisingly, the apostles said similar things. For instance St Paul testified, **“My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power”** (1 Cor 2:4).