

# "Heavenly Hands"

By Allan Pole



Theme: Let the Lord touch others through you.

Text: Hebrews 6:2

Here's a thought: We are told to "drink responsibly". We should be told to "speak responsibly" and to "touch responsibly".

I can remember my parents' hands. Dad had the strong, calloused, clean hands of a dairy farmer. As a young boy, I would wrap my tiny hand around his reassuring index finger as we crossed the street in downtown Calgary. Mom had smooth, shiny hands that had been washed many times after serving her family. It's funny how such memories stick with me – even though my childhood is far behind me and my parents have gone to be with the Lord. Hands can make a tremendous impact!

The Holy Spirit knew this when He inspired the writer in Hebrews 5:11-6:3:

11 We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. 12 In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! 13 Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. 14 But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. 6:1 Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, 2 instruction about baptisms, **the laying on of hands**, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3 And God permitting, we will do so. NIV

The Jewish readers of this letter would have been very familiar with the laying on of hands.

Hands are to impart:

**Blessing**



The book of Genesis emphasizes the blessing of a father to his sons. The patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all gave formal blessings to their children - and, in Jacob's case, to some grandchildren. Receiving a blessing from one's father was a high honour, and losing a blessing was tantamount to a curse (from [www.gotquestions.org/fathers-blessing.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/fathers-blessing.html)).

Jacob was nearing the end of his days when he laid hands upon his grandsons in Genesis 48 and upon his sons in Genesis 49. While doing this, he blessed the next generation and spoke prophetically over them. We have failed to understand the significance of this blessing. Without this blessing, boys and girls have become men and women who are confused about their identity and value. With this blessing, boys and girls grow up to be secure men and women who can give and receive love in the context of healthy relationships.

Who knows where those hands have been that you shake? A Chinese proverb explains, "Man who sneezes without hanky takes matters into his own hands."

Modern minds have a hard time understanding and appreciating what happened in Mark 10:13-16:

13 People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. 14 When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 15 I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." 16 And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them. NIV

Alarm bells would sound in the heads of "sophisticated" people today as they read this passage while they shout, "Surely this is some twisted pedophile who loves to touch children!" Actually, this is the Son of God through whom the universe - including these beautiful, precious children - were made. To the pure, all things are pure (Titus 1:15). Like our Creator and Saviour, Satan knows the tremendous potential and power in hands. Hands can bring either devastating hurt through abuse and violence or tremendous blessing and joy. There is good touching and there is bad touching.

We are told to "drink responsibly". We should be told to "speak responsibly" and to "touch responsibly".

Even the disciples missed the significance of what Jesus was doing with these young lives. While they saw these children as disturbances and interruptions, Jesus seized the opportunity to demonstrate God's love and purposes as He laid hands on them and spoke words of blessing over them.

What is your first language? French? Chinese? Russian? Or English? How about none of these? The first language of all humans is touch.

In the womb we begin touching our face in an effort to learn about ourselves. As infants we are calmed and soothed by our mother's touch. Through all stages of our lives, we are comforted, we are helped, by touch. Students who receive a supportive touch participate more in class. Athletes have better games if they receive a high-five or a slap on the back from a teammate.

Clinical studies done over the years have found that a loving touch can lower our blood pressure, reduce anxiety and stress, and raise the levels of our good hormones (from <https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/power-of-touch/3179086.html>).

Rhoda P. Curtis points out ([www.huffingtonpost.com/rhoda-p-curtis/the-power-of-touch\\_b\\_956203.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rhoda-p-curtis/the-power-of-touch_b_956203.html)):

Touch is the only one of our five senses that doesn't lose its potency with age. As we grow old, our sense of smell becomes less acute; our sense of taste becomes less discriminating; our acuity of hearing diminishes; our eyesight needs enhancement, but touch does not change. In fact, our need to touch and be touched becomes greater.

How can you use your hands to connect with and bless people of all ages?

Hands are to impart:

Blessing

**Healing**



People usually listen very closely to someone's last words. Some of the last words of Jesus to His disciples are recorded in Mark 16:15-20:

15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but

whoever does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; **they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.**" 19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. 20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it. NIV

Whether you are a surgeon, nurse, dentist, chiropractor or massage therapist, you know your hands can bring healing and restoration. Jesus, however, was not speaking to medical health professionals here. He was speaking to His disciples, a collection of ordinary guys who had seen God's awesome healing power demonstrated and who had already experienced such healing power through their own hands. Jesus had already sent them to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness (Matthew 10:1). I am sure they looked at their hands in amazement as they saw sick people made well and evil spirits cast out. The extraordinary God wants to use the hands of ordinary people to bring His healing to those who need His touch.

The stranger approached the pastor after service and said, "I'd like you to pray for my hearing."

The pastor placed his hands on the man's ears and said a passionate, earnest prayer. "How's your hearing now?" the pastor asked.

Looking surprised, the man said, "Well, it's not until tomorrow."

It is no coincidence that a physician named Luke wrote the Gospel according to Luke and The Book of Acts, highlighting many healings through Jesus in the Gospel and many healings by the Holy Spirit through the followers of Jesus in the Book of Acts. Lest we think that the power to heal was reserved for the twelve apostles, note that Stephen did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people (see Acts 6:8), Philip saw many paralytics and cripples healed (see Acts 8:5-7) and Paul (who was not one of the original twelve apostles) raised a young man from the dead who drifted off to sleep and fell out of a window while Paul was preaching (Acts 20:7-12).

Contrary to what some believe, the Bible gives no indication that divine healing would pass away with the apostles. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). Jesus has been raised from the dead and He promised that His followers would do even greater works than what He did (John 14:12). They will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well (Mark 16:18).

God has raised up men and women to preach His Good News and to heal the sick. There are some well-known individuals who are doing this today, but for every famous person bringing healing to those who are sick, there are thousands of nameless, faceless believers who are stepping out and being used by the Lord in this way. This is happening most frequently with sick, injured or even demonized people outside church meetings, with people who don't know Jesus Christ.

Smith Wigglesworth (1859-1947) was used by the Lord to bring healing to many people. He did not learn to read until his wife taught him. He often stated that it was the only book he ever read, and did not permit newspapers in his home, preferring the Bible to be their only reading material. Wigglesworth worked as a plumber, but he abandoned this trade because he was too busy for it after he started preaching.

Smith Wigglesworth concluded:

In me is working a power stronger than every other power. The life that is in me is a thousand times bigger than I am outside.

Would you (really really) like to place your hands on sick people and see them get well? Are you willing to risk looking foolish or being rejected?

Hands are to impart:

Blessing

Healing

**Recognition**



Moses knew that his days on earth were coming to a close when he laid his hands on Joshua in Numbers 27:18-23:

18 So the Lord said to Moses, "Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay your hand on him. 19 Have him stand before Eleazar the priest and the entire assembly and commission him in their presence. 20 Give him some of your authority so the whole Israelite community will obey him. 21 He is to stand before Eleazar the priest, who will obtain decisions for him by inquiring of the Urim before the Lord. At his command he and the entire community of the Israelites will go out, and at his command they will come in." 22 Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazar the

priest and the whole assembly. 23 Then he laid his hands on him and commissioned him, as the Lord instructed through Moses. NIV

Moses did not wake up one morning with a brilliant idea or leave a board meeting with a resolution to appoint Joshua the next President or Prime Minister of Israel. Joshua had hung around the Tent of Meeting soaking in all He could of God's manifest presence and he had served faithfully behind the scenes for years leading up to this moment. The Lord watched and listened then called Joshua to succeed Moses as leader of the Israelites. How were Moses, Joshua and the nation to know about this? The Lord did not tell Moses to post it on Facebook or simply to make a public announcement. He used hands.

We have seen in the Bible that hands are powerful communicators. The commissioning of Joshua is one of many examples where leaders amongst God's people were set into place by the laying on of hands. After the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost, the Apostle Peter preached the Good News and 3,000 people decided to follow Jesus. Thus, the Jerusalem church was launched publicly with the disciples serving as the first elders.

The church continued to grow and people were sent out to preach in other cities and towns throughout the Roman Empire. Another base church formed in Antioch, and we see in Acts 13:1-3:

1 In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. NIV

Saul (later known as Paul), Barnabas and other messengers would visit a city, preach the gospel, gather the converts, recognize elders by praying over them and laying hands on them then move on to another city to repeat the process (Acts 14:20-24).

One of the apprentices in Paul's apostolic team, Timothy, was recognized (1 Timothy 4:14) then sent to the city of Ephesus to lead a large church with some issues and to recognize or ordain a team of elders and deacons who would lead, preach, teach, equip, care for the people and carry the Gospel message to other communities. It was important that elders and deacons were recognized by the laying on of hands after their characters, reputations and ministries were known by those within the church and by outsiders (1 Timothy 3:1-13 and 1 Timothy 5:22).

Do you feel called to serve as an elder or deacon? If yes, start "elding" by caring for people and helping them to grow. Start "deaking" by serving

alongside the elders and lifting their load.

Dr. Joseph Brennermann recalls (from

<https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/power-of-touch/3179086.html>):

Many times we would come across a child for whom everything had failed. For some reason the child was hopelessly wasting away. When this would happen, Dr. Talbot would take the child's chart and scrawl some indecipherable prescription. In most of the cases, the magic formula took effect and the child began to prosper. My curiosity was aroused and I wondered if the famous doctor had developed some new type of wonder drug.

One day, after rounds, I returned to the ward and tried to decipher Dr. Talbot's scrawl. I had no luck, and so I turned to the head nurse and asked her what the prescription was.

"Old Anna," she said. Then she pointed to a grandmotherly woman seated in a large rocker with a baby on her lap. The nurse continued: "Whenever we have a baby for whom everything we could do had failed, we turn the child over to Old Anna. She has more success than all the doctors and nurses in this institution combined."

Hands are to impart:

**Blessing**  
**Healing**  
**Recognition**

Let the Lord touch others through you.

