

# Acts 8:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

## Analysis

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The apostles laid hands on the Samaritans, and 'they received the Holy Ghost.' This apostolic act confirmed the Samaritan believers as full members of Christ's church. The laying on of hands symbolized apostolic authorization and blessing. Reformed theology recognizes this as a transitional event establishing that salvation comes to all peoples equally - neither Jews nor Samaritans have preference. The visible reception of the Spirit (evidently manifested outwardly, given Simon's observation in v.18) authenticated the Samaritan mission.

## Historical Context

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Laying on of hands was used in the Old Testament for blessing (Genesis 48:14) and for conferring office (Numbers 27:18). In the apostolic church, it accompanied gifts of the Spirit, healing, and ordination, signifying identification and authorization.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. What is the purpose of laying on of hands in Scripture?
2. How did the visible reception of the Spirit confirm the Samaritan believers' inclusion?
3. What does this teach about the unity of all believers regardless of ethnic background?

## Interlinear Text

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τότε	ἐπετίθουν	τὰς	χεῖρας	ἐπ'	αὐτούς	καὶ	ἐλάβανον
<b>Then</b>	<b>laid they</b>	G3588	<b>their hands</b>	<b>on</b>	<b>them</b>	<b>and</b>	<b>they received</b>
G5119	G2007		G5495	G1909	G846	G2532	G2983
πνεῦμα	ἅγιον						
<b>Ghost</b>	<b>the Holy</b>						
G4151	G40						

## Additional Cross-References

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**Acts 19:6** (Holy): And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

**Acts 6:6** (Parallel theme): Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

**2 Timothy 1:6** (Parallel theme): Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

**Acts 8:18** (Holy): And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

**Acts 2:4** (Holy): And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

**Hebrews 6:2** (Parallel theme): Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

**Acts 9:17** (Holy): And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

**Romans 1:11** (Spirit): For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

**Numbers 27:18** (Spirit): And the LORD said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him;

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