

Eternity Daily Bible Study

(A ministry of Eternity Christian Fellowship)

Walking In The Spirit - 47

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Topic: Spiritual Senses - Touch

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The spiritual sense of touch is quite different from the other spiritual senses in that it is not so much used to receive heavenly information or as an aid to discernment but rather as a means of transferring spiritual power. In biblical terms to 'touch' has the sense of 'to link up with'. If the eye is like a camera, and the ear like a microphone then the spiritual sense of touch is more like a cable or a USB port that transfers spiritual energy!

Matthew 14:35-36 MKJV *And recognizing Him, the men of that place sent to all that neighborhood, and brought to Him all who were diseased. (36) And they begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His robe. And as many as touched were made perfectly whole.*

Luke 6:19 MKJV *And all the crowd sought to touch Him, for power went out of Him and healed them all.*

The sense of touch operates by faith (just as all the other spiritual senses do). One day many people were pressing around Jesus but only one was 'touched':

Mark 5:25-34 EMTV *Now a certain woman, suffering from a flow of blood twelve years, (26) and who had suffered many things under many physicians, and who had spent everything at her disposal, and was no better, but rather having become worse, (27) when she heard about Jesus, she came from behind Him in the crowd and touched His clothing. (28) For she was saying, "If only I may touch His clothes, I will be healed." (29) And immediately the flow of her blood was dried up, and she knew in her body that she had been healed from the affliction. (30) And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, He turned in the crowd and said, "Who touched My clothes?" (31) But His disciples said to Him, "You see the crowd pressing against You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?' " (32) And He was looking around to see her who had done this thing. (33) But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. (34) And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction."*

This incident shows us that there was a substantial change in the nature of the spiritual sense of touch between the Old Testament and the New Testament. To touch a woman with an issue of blood in OT times would have made Jesus unclean until evening (Leviticus 15:19) but instead Jesus was not made unclean – rather the woman was healed! Jesus was also able to touch lepers (Matthew 8:3), and even dead bodies (Matthew 9:25) without being defiled. The sense of touch in the OT was not able to transmit holiness but rather transmitted uncleanness (Haggai 2:11-13). However in the NT the spiritual sense of touch transmits God's power.

Because ritual uncleanness no longer has any power to affect us the whole category of physically unclean objects, things that we are not to eat, drink, taste or touch - is revoked:

Mark 7:18-19 ISV *He said to them, "Are you so ignorant? Don't you know that nothing that goes into a person from the outside can make him unclean? (19) For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and is expelled as waste." (Thus he declared all foods clean.)*

Colossians 2:20-23 ISV *If you have died with Christ to the basic principles of the world, why are you submitting to its decrees as though you still lived in the world? (21) "Don't handle this! Don't taste or touch that!" (22) All of these things will be destroyed through use because they are based on human commands and teachings. (23) These things have the appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion, humility, and harsh treatment of the body, but they have no value against self-indulgence.*

Jesus' power over ritual (external) impurity healed the sick, cleansed the lepers and raised the dead and was passed on to the disciples:

Matthew 10:7-8 MKJV *And as you go, proclaim, saying, The kingdom of Heaven is at hand. (8) Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. You have received freely, freely give.*

The spiritual sense of touch seems to lie behind the doctrine of the laying on of hands which Hebrews considers one of the Christian basics:

Hebrews 6:1-2 MKJV *Therefore, having left the discourse of the beginning ... of the baptisms, of doctrine, and of laying on of hands,*

The laying on of hands imparts the baptism of the Holy Spirit:

Acts 8:17 EMTV *Then they (the apostles Peter & John) laid hands upon them, and they received the Holy Spirit.*

Acts 9:17 EMTV *And Ananias departed and entered the house; and putting his hands on him, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord has sent me, the One who appeared to you in the way which you were coming, so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."*

The laying on of hands (accompanied by faith) also can impart spiritual gifts:

1 Timothy 4:14 EMTV *Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.*

2 Timothy 1:6 EMTV *For which cause I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*

Jesus give us victory over outward impurity such as blood, leprosy or death – but we need to be very careful about people who are inwardly, spiritually impure. In the same discourse that Jesus removes outer defilement He says that some people are inwardly defiled::

Mark 7:20-23 ISV *He continued, "It is what comes out of a person that makes a person unclean. (21) For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil thoughts come, as well as sexual immorality, stealing, murder, (22) adultery, greed, wickedness, cheating, shameless lust, envy, slander, arrogance, and*

foolishness. (23) All these things come from within and make a person unclean."

Indeed there are some people whom we are not to lay hands on, perhaps because they are impure or sinful:

1 Timothy 5:22 ASV *Lay hands hastily on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.*

Even Jesus did not lay hands on demon-possessed people but instead used verbal commands 'casting them out with a word' (Matthew 8:16). Thus it seems that we are not to establish a close physical connection with people who are spiritually impure. We also have to be very careful about how we use our bodies, which have become temples of the Holy Spirit:

1 Corinthians 6:15-20 EMTV *(15) Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! (16) Do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." (17) But he that is joined with the Lord is one spirit with Him. (18) Flee fornication. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits fornication sins against his own body. (19) Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? (20) For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*

So we see that joining with the harlot makes us one flesh and joining with God makes us 'one spirit with Him'. In many ways our spiritual connections define who we are and are to be monitored carefully. There are things we are permitted to reach out and touch and these will heal us, bless us and empower us in ministry.

And there are things we should not touch, things which will damage us, defile us and destroy our ministry. These are things which we should be separated from. These include idolatry, immorality, and heresy in the Church:

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 MKJV *(14) Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship does righteousness have with lawlessness? And what partnership does light have with darkness? (15) And what agreement does Christ have with Belial? Or what part does a believer have with an unbeliever? (16) And what agreement does a temple of God have with idols? For you are the temple of the living God, as God has said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people." (17) Therefore come out from among them and be separated, says the Lord, and do not touch the unclean thing. And I will receive you (18) and I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.*

2 John 1:9-11 MKJV *Everyone transgressing and not abiding in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ, he has both the Father and the Son. (10) If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house, nor speak a greeting to him. (11) For he who speaks a greeting to him is partaker of his evil deeds.*

Following Christ may even mean leaving some very close relationships behind:

Matthew 10:37-39 MKJV *He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. (38) And he who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. (39) He who finds his life shall lose it. And he who loses his life for My sake shall find it.*

And of course we are only to marry 'in the Lord':

1 Corinthians 7:39 MKJV ...she is at liberty to be remarried to whom she will, only in the Lord.

To summarize: The spiritual sense of touch transmits spiritual power and through the laying on of hands we can receive healing, the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts. In the NT we no longer have to worry about touching blood, lepers or dead bodies or about what to touch, taste, eat or drink. On the other hand we do have to beware of those who are inwardly defiled. We are not to lay hands on them, and we are certainly not to enter into close physical relationships with them. This especially applies to the immoral, idolaters, heretics, those who are spiritually destructive and to anyone who tries to turn us away from Christ.

Blessings,

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