



BOOK OF MORMON CENTRAL

<http://bookofmormoncentral.org/>

Questions and Answers - Bestowal of the Holy Ghost Prior to the Day of Pentecost

Author(s): John Nicholson

Source: *Improvement Era*, Vol. 5, No. 6 (April 1902), pp. 474–475.

Published by: Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association

This matter, however, may be regulated by the presiding authority, according to local surroundings, circumstances, and conditions, though a uniform method conformable to the above is desirable.

Bestowal of the Holy Ghost prior to the Day of Pentecost.

Have we any scripture, ancient or modern, to prove that the Holy Ghost was bestowed permanently, by the laying on of hands and confirmation, performed before the Day of Pentecost?

Answer by Elder John Nicholson:

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I know if ye shall follow the Son, with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God, but with real intent, repenting of your sins, witnessing unto the Father, that ye are willing to take upon you the name of Christ, by baptism: yea, by following your Lord and your Savior down into the water, according to his word; behold, then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost; yea, then cometh the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost; and then can ye speak with the tongue of angels, and shout praises unto the Holy One of Israel! (Book of Mormon, II Nephi 31: 13.)

In answer to this quotation, it might be said that the passage says nothing about the "laying on of hands" to impart the Holy Ghost. Neither did Peter, on the day of Pentecost; nor Jesus, in his remarks to Nicodemus. There are but few direct statements in the New Testament in relation to conferring the conditionally permanent gift of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands; yet it was and is an indispensable ordinance in the Church of Christ, which church existed 147 B. C., according to the following, in relation to the people baptized by Alma:

Mosiah 18: 17: And they were called the church of God, or the church of Christ, from that time forward. And it came to pass that whosoever was baptized by the power and authority of God, was added to his church.

Membership in the Church of Christ requires a full baptism, not half a one. In this connection, I quote the words of the Prophet Joseph Smith, as they appear on page 279, of the Compendium: "Baptism by water is but half a baptism, and is good for nothing without the other half—and that is the baptism of the Holy Ghost."

The fact that confirmation—the conferring of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands of the servants of God, is a revealed ordinance of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is excellent evidence that this ordinance prevailed in the Church of Christ in all ages when it had an organized existence on the earth. Many of its most magnificent principles and features, which have been restored through the Prophet Joseph, are barely or not at all alluded to in the Old and New Testaments.

Can a Father who Does Not Hold the Priesthood Bless his Child in Fast Meeting?

Does a father, holding the office of teacher or deacon, have the authority to bless his child in a fast-meeting, and give it a name by which it shall be known while it lives on the earth?"

Attention is called to the Doctrine and Covenants, sec. 20, paragraph 70, page 128 which answers the question:

Every member of the church of Christ having children, is to bring them unto the elders before the church, who are to lay their hands upon them in the name of Jesus Christ, and bless them in his name.

From this, we consider that only elders, or others holding the Melchizedek priesthood, can officiate in this calling of blessing children before the Church. If a father is called upon, who does not hold the Melchizedek priesthood, he cannot officiate as mouth in the blessing of his children before the Church. It must be remembered that if a father and mother have been married in the order of the Church he will hold the Priesthood, and it is hoped that there are only few cases where a father, who is a member of the Church, is not worthy of holding the holy priesthood.

We see no objection, and do not think there can be any, to a father not holding the priesthood, as head of the family, blessing and praying for his own child at home, although one can readily see that in administering to his children, even though he is the head of the family, he can not officiate by authority of the priesthood.

Praising One Organization to the Detriment of Another.

Would you consider it wise for traveling Church authorities, presidencies of stakes, or any one else, to praise one organization in the Church to the detriment or injury of another?