

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Have You Been Ordained?

Jerry Fite

One could Scripturally answer this question with a “yes” if they are believing children of God in Christ. For, God chose such “*in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love: having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ...*” (*Ephesians 1:4-5*). By submitting to the Gospel and living holy lives we become a part of what God determined, ordained, or appointed in Christ (*Ephesians 2:10*). Every person, in that they have come to Christ and are in Him, has therefore been foreordained and is walking in an ordained or appointed manner that God envisioned would happen in His Son before the world was.

But that is not what is usually on the minds of people when they ask the question regarding ordination. They are wanting to know, for example, if you have been ordained by the hierarchy or leaders of the church to preach the gospel or minister to others.

The concept in Roman Catholicism is that “*an increase of sanctifying grace*” is bestowed

upon one in order for that one to fill a special office. “*Grace and spiritual power for the discharge of the ecclesiastical offices are conferred.*” The ordination is looked upon as an “*external rite conferring inward grace*” (The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 11; p. 281).

In Protestant Churches, while the imparting sanctifying grace concept is absent, the idea of being called of God first to the ministry is essential before ordination can occur. In the Lutheran Church, for example, article xiv of the Augsburg Confession states, “*No one may teach publicly in the Church, or administer the sacraments, except he be rightly called*”.

Because either by a special gift of grace or a special call by God, we have in the religious world a clergy and laity distinction. The clergy, which emphasizes one chosen “by lot” either through Catholicism’s special gift of sanctifying grace or Protestantism’s special call, is therefore distinguished from “the people” or the laity.

The clergy –laity distinction is not seen in the New Testa-

ment. For example, all Christians are priests and are to offer up spiritual sacrifices through Christ (*I Peter 2:5, 9*). The house of Stephanas did not need a special call from God or some church ordination to serve because we see that they “*set themselves to minister unto the saints*” (*I Corinthians 16:15*).

There is no indication that Timothy received a personal call from God to be an evangelist before the presbytery, through the laying on of their hands, appointed him to that work (*I Timothy 4:14*).

Paul and Barnabas ordained or appointed elders or bishops in every church (*Acts 14:23*). They instructed the evangelist Titus to ordain or appoint men to the work of bishops who already possessed essential qualities of character (*Titus 1:5-9*, cf. *I Timothy 3:1-6*). This was not some formal ecclesiastical ordination where men came before church leaders having received a personal call by God, but it was simply setting men forward for the work of being bishops or overseers whom the members of the local church could clearly recognize as qualified.