

## Why Should a Minister Become Ordained?

Charles H. Spurgeon, the noted Pastor of Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, England, is purported to have said, "If God has called you to be a minister, don't stoop to be a king." Indeed, the call of God is one that is personal and purposeful. One who yields to the call is no longer acting on one's own but as a representative of another. Scripture contains a plethora of wise counsel as to one's response to that call, but the particular interest this article concerns is ordination. Is there a Scriptural basis for one to state the station of "Ordained minister," as a goal for one's ministry?

### **It is the Scriptural pattern.**

From Aaron and the priests who followed, to Kings, to prophets, the act or rite of anointing is abundantly clear in Scripture. The "laying on of hands," as referenced in Pauline literature (I Tim 4:14, 5:22; 2 Tim 1:6) and seen in practice in Acts (Acts 6:6, 13:3) is a New Testament practice that is no doubt rooted in the Old Testament pattern. Ordination as applied in our fellowship is the embodiment of this age old practice of separating one to a calling and soliciting the blessing of God on one who is dedicating their life to serve God's purposes. Ordination to be sure is not the calling; it is the recognition that God has set one apart for the work He has called them to. As baptism is an outward witness of an inner change and a declaration that one has turned from their own pursuits to follow God, so Ordination is an outward sign that one has devoted one's self to a vocation of serving God by serving His people.

### **It is the proper ethic.**

Many might contend that their allegiance is to God who called them and need no other recognition, but the Scripture certainly teaches that no one is an island, but that we are all part of a whole and, as such, are related to one another—not only Spiritually but organizationally. Again Acts demonstrates the surrender of one's personal aspirations to the well-being and directive of the body (Acts 6, 11, 13, 15, 21). We are encouraged to submit ourselves to one another; there was a hierarchy even in the early church, and though Paul knew his call was from God, he willingly submitted himself to the leadership in Jerusalem. When Ordination is encouraged by the fellowship for ministers who serve in the local church, one should seriously challenge any personal resistance to the pattern that is practiced by the whole.

### **It is a worthy ambition.**

The Bible is full of superlatives, victories, successes. It encourages and applauds hard work and completion of goals. Honor is given to those who "endure to the end;" who "run to win." Emphasis is placed on the process—the growth and stages of development. It should inspire any minister of the gospel to achieve the highest goal, not just get in the door. The ordination certificate is not the goal, it is the reward for the effort to achieve the highest status available in ministerial credentialing. Sure, you can do everything as a certified minister that one can with ordination, yet the achievement shows that you had high aspirations and reaching ordination said something to others of how you felt about your calling, how important it was to you, and that you wanted to be the best and advance as far as was possible in ministry. Sure there are other gauges to evaluate your ministry, but ordination speaks volumes about you and your calling as a servant of God and His people.