

Article of Faith 10
Ordination of the Ministry

- Article of Faith #10 – Ordination of the Ministry
 - We believe that no minister has a right to the administration of the ordinances except those who have been regularly baptized and called of God and have come under the imposition of hands by a presbytery and that only so long as they continue in the faith once delivered to the saints.

1. Calling of an elder

A. God is the only Authority that calls a man to preach the gospel

- Mark 3:13 – *“And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him.”*
 - Matt. 10:1, Mark 6:7, Luke 6:13
- Matt. 4:18-22 – *“18) And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 19) And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. 20) And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. 21) And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. 22) And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.”*
- John 15:16 – *“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit...”*
- Acts 13:2 – *“As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.”*
- Rom. 1:1 – *“Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,”*
- 1 Cor. 1:1 – *“Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,”*
- Jer. 1:4-5 – *“4) Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 5) Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.”*
- Heb. 5:4 – *“And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.”*
- Eph. 4:8-11 – *“8) Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9) (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10) He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;”*
 - 1 Tim. 4:14, 2 Tim. 1:16, 1 Cor. 7:17
- 1 Tim. 1:11-12 – *“11) According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. 12) And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted faithful, putting me into the ministry;”*
 - 1 Thess. 2:4, 1 Cor. 4:2, Acts 20:24, Gal. 2:7

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1. Calling of an elder (continued)

B. God is the only Authority that sends out His ministers to preach the gospel

- Rom. 10:14-15 – *“14) How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15) And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!”*
 - Isaiah 52:7, Nah. 1:14
- Mark 3:14 – *“And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach.”*
 - Matt 10:5, Luke 9:1, Luke 10:1
- 1 Cor. 1:17 – *“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.”*
- John 1:6-7 – *“6) There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7) The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.”*
- Acts 13:4-5 – *“4) So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. 5) And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God...”*
- Acts 16:6-10 – *“6) Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, 7) After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. 8) And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. 9) And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. 10) And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.”*

C. God is the only Authority to appoint a man as the overseer (the pastor) of a church

- Acts 20:28 – *“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost had made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”*
- Jer. 3:15 – *“And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.”*

D. Ministers answer to the One who has called them to the work; they answer unto God

- Gal. 1:10 – *“For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”*
 - Acts 5:29, 1 Thess. 2:4, 2 Tim. 2:15, Eph. 6:6, Col. 3:22
- 1 Cor. 4:3-4 – *“3) But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. 4) For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.”*
- Heb. 13:17 – *“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”*

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2. Training of an elder

A. The New Testament pattern for training of the ministry is for the prospective minister to learn under the tutelage and supervision of a seasoned minister. This develops a father to son instructive relationship where the “son in the ministry” learns and grows in the ministry and exercises his gift under the direction of his “father in the ministry”. This operates much like a mentor and apprentice relationship, where the apprentice learns “on the job” under the direction of the mentor, following the example of the mentor for how to administer his calling, and having a seasoned, experienced mentor to ask questions when the apprentice needs further instruction, helping the apprentice in his growth in the ministry.

B. Example of Jesus and the Apostles

- The apostles, who administered the establishment and the ordinances of the early church and also ordained the original successors to the apostolic ministry, were taught directly by Jesus, following and traveling with Him, listening to His preaching, and learning from His perfect example. These men were shown the way to defend and contend for the truth and how to administer the commandments of Jesus Christ to the church that they were now called to serve. After the ascension of Jesus Christ, it was the responsibility of the apostles that had learned under the tutelage of Jesus to now teach the church exactly what they had been commanded and instructed by their mentor, the Bishop of God’s children, the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - Matt. 28:19-20 – “19) *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*”

C. Example of the New Testament Church

- The commandment of the church that Jesus taught to the apostles was passed on through the church from the personal instruction of faithful elders, who taught the word of God to others and imparted its custody and trust to successive generations of ordained elders.
 - 2 Tim. 2:2 – “*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*”
 - This verse shows the “perpetuity of the gospel ministry”. Four “generations” of the ministry are presented in this one verse:
 - Paul – “*heard of me*”
 - Timothy – who was taught by the Apostle Paul, “*that thou hast heard of me*”
 - Minister who Timothy would teach and ordain – “*the same commit thou to faithful men*”
 - Minister who would be taught from Timothy’s son in the ministry – “*who shall be able to teach others also*”

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2. Training of an elder (continued)

C. Example of the New Testament Church (continued)

- The truth that Jesus taught to the apostles was passed on through the church from the personal instruction of faithful elders, who taught the word of God and imparted its custody and trust to successive generations of elders. (cont'd)
 - 2 Tim. 2:2 – *“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”*
 - The same truth that was entrusted to the apostles (Matt. 28:20), was perpetually “committed to faithful men” (2 Tim. 2:2) and the truth of God’s word and the practice of the New Testament church has therefore remained intact in the church since the apostolic ministry.
- Father and son mentor relationship in the training of a minister
 - An experienced, already ordained elder teaches and instructs the up and coming brother in the way he must administer his gift, as a father would instruct a son
 - 1 Cor. 4:14-16 – *“14) I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. 15) For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. 16) Wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me.”*
 - Phil. 2:19,22 – *“19) But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state...22) But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.”*
 - The father in the ministry sets the example for the son to follow and teaches him how to lead the church
 - Paul instructed others to follow his example
 - Phil. 4:9 – *“Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.”*
 - Phil. 3:17 – *“Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.”*
 - 1 Cor. 11:1 – *“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”*
 - 1 Cor. 4:16 – *“Wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me.”*
 - Paul instructed Timothy to teach others in the same manner that he taught Timothy
 - 2 Tim. 2:2 – *“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”*

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2. Training of an elder (continued)

C. Example of the New Testament Church (continued)

- Father and son mentor relationship in the training of a minister (continued)
 - The father in the ministry sets the example for the son to follow and teaches him how to lead the church (cont'd)
 - And then the apostles instructed the current ministry to set the example for the church and set the example for the successive generation of elders as well
 - 1 Tim. 4:12 – *“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”*
 - 1 Pet. 5:3 – *“Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.”*
 - New Testament examples of father and son in the ministry relationships:
 - Timothy as the son in the ministry of Paul
 - 1 Tim. 1:2 – *“Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith:”*
 - 1 Tim. 1:18; 2 Tim. 1:2, 2:1; 1 Cor. 4:17; Phil. 2:22(19)
 - Titus as the son in the ministry of Paul
 - Titus 1:4 – *“To Titus, mine own son after the common faith:”*
 - Onesimus as the son in the ministry of Paul
 - Philemon 10 – *“I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:”*
 - Leaders in the church at Corinth as the sons of Paul
 - 1 Cor. 4:14-15 – *“14) I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. 15) For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”*
 - Mark as the son in the ministry of Peter
 - 1 Pet. 5:13 – *“The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.”*

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2. Training of an elder (continued)

C. Example of the New Testament Church (continued)

- Paul and Barnabas labored among the prophets and teachers at Antioch, and it was those Antiochan prophets and teachers who confirmed the calling of Paul and Barnabas and ordained them to the work of the ministry
 - Acts 11:25-26 – *“25) Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: 26) And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people...”*
 - Acts 13:1-3 – *“1) Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2) As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the whereunto I have called them. 3) And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.”*

3. Qualifications of an Elder

A. The qualifications for one to be considered for ordination as a “bishop” (or “elder”) are given multiple times in the New Testament

- 1 Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 2 Tim. 2:24-26, Titus 2:7-8, and others

B. Moral qualifications

- *Blameless* – 1 Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:6,7
- *Have a good report of them which are without* – 1 Tim. 3:7, (Acts 16:2)
- *Husband of one wife* – 1 Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:6
 - Only men, not women, may be ordained as an elder because only males can meet the requirement to be a “husband of one wife”
 - 1 Tim. 2:11-12 – *“11) Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. 12) But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.”*
- *Ruleth well his own house* – 1 Tim. 3:4-5, Titus 1:6
- *Lover of hospitality* – 1 Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:8, Acts 20:34
- *Lover of good men* – Titus 1:8
- *Of good behavior* – 1 Tim. 3:2
- *Patient* – 1 Tim. 3:3, 2 Tim. 2:24
- *Temperate* – Titus 1:8
- *Not soon angry* – Titus 1:7
- *Not a brawler* – 1 Tim. 3:3
- *No striker* – 1 Tim. 3:4, Titus 1:7
- *Not strive* – 2 Tim. 2:24
- *Vigilant* – 1 Tim. 3:2
- *Sober* – 1 Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:8

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3. Qualifications of an Elder (continued)

B. Moral qualifications (continued)

- *Meek* – 2 Tim. 2:25
- *Just* – Titus 1:8
- *Holy* – Titus 1:8
- *Not selfwilled* – Titus 1:7
- *Not covetous* – 1 Tim. 3:3
- *Not greedy of filthy lucre* – 1 Tim. 3:3, Titus 1:7, 1 Pet. 5:2, (Titus 1:11)
- *Not given to wine* – 1 Tim. 3:3, Titus 1:7

C. Ministerial qualifications

- *Apt to teach* – 1 Tim. 3:2; 2 Tim. 2:2, 2:24-25; (Eph. 4:11)
- *Able by sound doctrine to exhort and to convince the gainsayers* – Titus 1:9
- *Holding fast the faithful word* – Titus 1:9
- *Sound speech, that cannot be condemned* - Titus 2:8
- *Not a novice* – 1 Tim. 3:6
- *Displaying wisdom* – Matt. 10:16
- *Faithful to “sound doctrine”* – Titus 1:9, (1 Tim. 4:13, 5:17)
 - Commitment to the “one faith” (Eph. 4:5) and “true gospel” (Gal. 1:6-7)

D. Willingly and eagerly accept the responsibility of an elder

- *Taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind* – 1 Pet. 5:2
- *If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.* – 1 Tim. 3:1

4. Ordination of an elder

A. When a man has demonstrated that he has been called of God by exercising his gift and preaching the gospel, the church will call for the man to be “ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry”. Ordained means “appointed” and is the appropriate biblical terminology for the designation of a man to the gospel ministry. This ordination service is performed with the candidate being questioned to ensure he meets the moral and ministerial qualifications, proving to be sound in doctrine. Then, the ministerial candidate receives the laying on of hands by the presbytery (a group of “elders”), and prayer is offered ordaining them to the work of the ministry, in accordance with the pattern of Acts 13:1-3. Then, the man will receive a charge from the presbytery to faithfully administer his office as an elder in the church.

B. Apostles were chosen and “ordained” by Jesus Christ

- Mark 3:13-14 – “13) *And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. 14) And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,*”
- John 15:16 – “*Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit...*”
 - Luke 6:12-13 – Jesus was in prayer “*all night*” before choosing his 12 disciples (compare 1 Tim. 5:22)

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4. Ordination of an elder (continued)

- C. The apostles were to commission faithful men to be entrusted with the ministry, and we believe the “genealogy” of laying on of hands of our elders goes back all the way to the first apostles
- 2 Tim. 2:2 – *“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”*
- D. Elders were “ordained” by the apostles and then by the successive apostolic ministry
- Acts 14:23 – *“And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed,”*
 - Titus 1:5 – *“For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:”*
 - 1 Cor. 7:17 – *“But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all the churches.”*
 - 1 Tim. 2:7 – *“Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.”*
 - Eph. 3:7 – *“Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.”*
- E. The method of ordination is by the laying on of hands by a presbytery
- Acts 13:1-3 – *“1) Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2) As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the whereunto I have called them. 3) And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.”*
 - 1 Tim. 4:14 – *“Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery:”*
 - 2 Tim. 1:6 – *“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.”*
 - 1 Tim. 5:22 – *“Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure:”*
 - Heb. 6:1-2 – *“1) Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrines of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of... 2)...of laying on of hands...”*
 - Deacons are ordained by the laying on of hands as well – Acts 6:6 (1-7)
- F. Example of Joshua who was chosen and charged to succeed Moses – Num. 27:15-23
- It was God alone that called and appointed Joshua as the new leader of the Israelites (v.16,18)
 - Joshua was chosen to be the shepherd of the sheep of Israel, to lead them and give them direction (v.17)
 - Joshua already had “the spirit” in him (v.18)

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4. Ordination of an elder (continued)

F. Example of Joshua who is chosen and charged to succeed Moses – Num. 27:15-23 (ct'd)

- Joshua had already been proven faithful to God in his years of service. He had led Israel into war (Exod. 17:9-14), was faithful to serve God in the tabernacle as a young man (Exod. 33:11), was chosen as a ruler of his tribe of Ephraim (Num. 13:2,8), and he gave a faithful report when he spied out the land of Canaan the first time (Num. 14:6,30).
- Moses was to lay hands on Joshua in front of all the congregation (v.18,23)
- Moses was to give Joshua a charge in front of all the congregation of Israel (v.19,23)

5. Title for the minister

A. Many different titles that are typically used for ordained ministers are either attributed to God or are specifically prohibited in scripture from being used to address men

- Reverend
 - The word “reverend” is only recorded one time in scripture and it is referring to God; therefore, this title should be reserved for God alone, not attributed to a sinful man who is certainly un-reverend
 - Ps. 111:9 – *“He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.”*
- Father and Rabbi and Master
 - God is described as our “Father” on multiple occasions in scripture, and Jesus specifically prohibits His disciples from calling another man Rabbi or Father or Master here in this world
 - Matt. 23:8-10 – *“8) But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; all ye are brethren. 9) And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. 10) Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.”*
- Priest and High Priest
 - Jesus is described as the “High Priest” of our profession. While God’s children are described as priests before God (1 Pet. 2:5,9; Rev. 1:6, 5:10), the title of “Priest” or certainly “High Priest” should be reserved for only Jesus Christ
 - Heb. 3:1 – *“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;”*
- All of these titles have reference to God and Jesus Christ in scripture. Furthermore, all of these titles are capitalized in the KJV, noting God and Jesus are given these titles and is the personification of the position. Therefore, these titles should not be given to men but only attributed unto God.

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5. Title for the minister (continued)

B. Alternate acceptable titles of the ordained minister

- There are some acceptable titles that are attributed to the ordained ministry in the New Testament
- Elder
 - Titus 1:5 – *“For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:”*
 - Acts 11:30, 14:23, 15:2,4,22,23, 16:4, 20:17, 21:18, 1 Tim. 5:17, 19, Titus 1:5, James 5:14, 1 Pet. 5:1, 2 John 1, 3 John 1
- Bishop
 - 1 Tim. 3:1 – *“This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.”*
 - Phil. 1:1, 1 Tim. 3:1,2, Titus 1:7
- Pastor
 - Eph. 4:11 – *“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.”*

C. Biblical preference for the use of “Elder” as the proper title for an ordained minister

- Apostles called themselves “elder” but never used any of the alternate names
 - 1 Pet. 5:1 – *“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ...”*
 - 2 John 1:1 – *“The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth...”*
 - 3 John 1:1 – *“The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.”*
- “Bishop” and “Pastor” are names attributed to Jesus Christ in scripture. While these are acceptable titles for ordained men, it is prudent in the church for these titles to be attributed to Jesus Christ first and foremost.
 - Bishop – Jesus is described as the “Bishop” of our souls
 - 1 Pet. 2:25 – *“For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”*
 - Pastor – Pastor literally means “shepherd”. Jesus is described as the “Shepherd” of our souls, so if the words are interchangeable, then Jesus is the “Pastor” of our souls as well.
 - 1 Pet. 2:25 – *“For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”*
- Number of times either the man or the office is referred to in the New Testament
 - Elder – 16 times, Bishop – 4 times, Pastor – 1 time
- Therefore, while other names are acceptable scriptural titles to describe the ordained man and the office in the church, “Elder” is the most scripturally appropriate and prevalent title for the ordained minister in the church