

EDITOR'S ANSWERS TO INTERESTING QUESTIONS

TWO ORDINATIONS—ONE OF GOD, ONE OF MAN

QUESTION.—When, by whom and how were you ordained a minister of the Gospel?

Answer.—Before answering this question, I would call attention to the Scriptural teaching on the subject of ordination. From what we believe to be the Bible standpoint, there are two ordinations proper. One is of God; one of men. The ordination of God is the begetting of the Holy Spirit. Without this no one is authorized to preach the Gospel. If any are preaching without this ordination they are, to our understanding, preaching without Divine ordination. They are doing something that they are not authorized to do.

Our Lord told how He was ordained to be a preacher; and the Scriptures tell us that we are to walk in His steps and to have experiences similar to His own in many respects. As ministers of the Cross, we are to copy our Lord Jesus Christ as fully as we are able to do. But He was perfect, and we are imperfect. Consequently we are to have the *forgiveness* of our sins, while he had no sins. He, therefore, constitutes the basis of forgiveness of all who come unto the Father through faith in His blood. He mentions His own ordination, saying, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; because He hath anointed Me to preach good tidings to the meek." ([Isaiah 61:1](#).) As that ordination came upon Jesus, it still later came upon the disciples at Pentecost; and all down the Gospel Age it has come upon the followers of Christ, anointing them to preach the Gospel.—[Luke 4:17-21](#); [1 John 2:27](#).

All who have received the ordination of God have the authority to preach according to their opportunities and abilities. Some of them may be deaf mutes and cannot preach audibly. Others may be limited by sex; sisters cannot preach as do the brethren; but they can preach, nevertheless, in "showing forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light." ([1 Peter 2:9](#).) Moreover, they are fully ordained to make known the good tidings, but, according to the Apostle Paul's statement, not in a public way. There are some men who cannot preach publicly on account of lack of talent or opportunity, but all men, by their lives and conversation, can proclaim the glory and honor of the great and loving God who lifted them out of darkness into light, out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and placed their feet upon a Rock and established their goings.—[Psalm 40:2](#).

There comes, however, another special ordination of those who are called ministers of the Gospel, in which class I count myself. This is ordination by the Church, and is recognized by all denominations everywhere. By some it is considered a mere form, by some it is performed with great ceremony, by others with less ceremony. But to our understanding, each congregation should have those whom it has chosen ordained in a Scriptural way—by the stretching forth of hands—by a vote.

The form of the statement in [Acts 14:23](#), with other frequent references to elders in connection with all churches, justifies the inference that ordination was the *invariable* custom in the early Church. The term "elders," as seen in this text, includes evangelists, pastors, teachers, and prophets—public exponents. Hence it is important that we learn what is meant by the word "*ordained*."

At the present time the word *ordination* is generally used in reference to a *ceremony of installation*; but this is not the significance of the Greek word *cheirotoneo*, used in this text. It means "to elect by stretching out the hand," still the usual form of voting. This definition is given in Professor Young's "Analytical Concordance to the Bible." As this may be considered a Presbyterian authority, we give also the definition set forth in Strong's "Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible," which may be considered a Methodist authority. The latter defines the root of the word—"A hand-reacher, or voter (by raising the hand)."