

**O**RDINATION is a spiritual act of consecrating a Christian person into the work of the Gospel ministry recognizing and acknowledging the call of God that already exists upon a Christian person's life. For centuries the Christian Church has labored under gender prejudice believing that God reserved the Rite of Ordination for men only. I believe that even as God overrode the racial and cultural prejudice of the early Christians (Acts 10:44-48), the call to Christ's ministry transcends one's race, gender and social status. God anoints whomever He wills, and He gives each one the grace and power to live up to the spiritual and moral responsibilities that go along with the ministerial calling. When we believe God's gifts, approval, and anointing are on a Christian person whether woman or man for ministry, we do not and should not hesitate to ordain him or her. In God's kingdom, we should submit to the spiritual gifts [*charismata*] in people without regard to their race, gender, and social status. If a Christian person is willing to follow the divine call upon his or her life and promises to maintain high spiritual and moral standards in his or her personal and ministerial lives, the Lord being his or her helper, I will with great joy personally ordain him or her into the Christian ministry or give my full affirmation to their ordination into the Christian ministry. I cannot and will not however knowingly ordain or affirm the ordination of any Christian woman or man who fails to promise, with the Lord's help, to personally maintain high spiritual and moral standards in both personal and ministerial lives.

I believe all ordained Christian clergy ought to be recognized as such in any Christian church or ministry anywhere! There ought to be universal recognition of a person's Christian ordination in all Christian churches and ministries everywhere! If a person is an ordained minister in one Christian denomination, he or she ought to be recognized as an ordained minister in all other Christian denominations! If a person was consecrated bishop by any Christian bishop, that person ought to be recognized as a Christian bishop in any Christian church or ministry anywhere! The problem we have today is that Christian denominations are very exclusive when it comes to ordination. There are too many walls, too much "red tape". Roman Catholic bishops do not see United Methodist bishops as bishops because there is no "apostolic succession". If a person is ordained in a simple manner by one Christian church or ministry and then wishes to bring his or her existing ordination with them to another Christian church or ministry that might have a very complex ordination process, that other Christian church or ministry (viewing only their own complex ordinations as valid) would reject that person's existing ordination. The poor person who had the existing ordination rejected as invalid by the latter Christian church or ministry feels like a victim of ecclesiastical snobbery. As similarly stated above, ordination comes straight from God! There is no need for man's permission! The Apostle Paul's apostolic authority (his ordination if you want to call it that) came straight from Jesus! He did not need the permission of Peter and the Church in Jerusalem to be an apostle! Paul made it plain in the salutations that began his epistles that he was an apostle of Jesus Christ and not by the permission of man! Jesus outranks any denominational official!

I further believe that churches, denominations, and ministries never have depended, do not now depend, and will never depend on the state for their existence or legitimacy! As such, the state has no business meddling in Christian ordination! I do believe that ordination is solely determined internally by the church, denomination, or ministry. The state must not interfere with how a church, denomination, or ministry runs ordination because of the constitutional principle of separation of church and state. The state has no right to tell any church, denomination, or ministry who is an ordained minister, who is not an ordained minister, or by what process/method a person goes through to become an ordained minister. That is unconstitutional religious discrimination on the part of the state. All churches, denominations, and ministries have the eternal right to ordain people in any manner they see fit without the interference of the state.



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