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A Survey of Selected Aspects of the Practice of Ecclesiastical Appointment in the New Testament, Early Christian, and Seventh-day Adventist Church

Gerald T. du Preez
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A SURVEY OF SELECTED ASPECTS OF THE PRACTICE
OF ECCLESIASTICAL APPOINTMENT IN THE
NEW TESTAMENT, EARLY CHRISTIAN, AND
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Divinity

by

Gerald T. du Preez

November 1994

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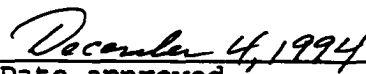
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ABSTRACT

A SURVEY OF SELECTED ASPECTS OF THE PRACTICE
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by

Gerald T. du Preez

Adviser: Norman K. Miles

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Thesis

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: A SURVEY OF SELECTED ASPECTS OF THE PRACTICE OF
ECCLESIASTICAL APPOINTMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT,
EARLY CHRISTIAN, AND SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Name of researcher: Gerald T. du Preez

Name and degree of faculty chair: Norman K. Miles, Ph.D.

Date completed: November 1994

Problem

Seventh-day Adventists claim that their doctrines
are Bible-based. The question is asked whether the same
holds true for their practice of appointing ministers. This
study examines and compares aspects of ecclesiastical
appointment in the New Testament, Early Christian, and the
Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Method

The New Testament passages pertaining to
ecclesiastical appointment were surveyed, incorporating
brief exegeses and word studies. Selected writings of the
Early Church and the early history of the Seventh-day

Adventist Church were also examined.

Conclusions

The Bible does not appear to present a definitive pattern on the practice of ecclesiastical appointment. The concept of "ordination" appears to have evolved to reflect the practices of the latter part of Early Church history. It seems as though the early Seventh-day Adventist Church adopted a system of "credentialing" and "ordination" for pragmatic reasons. This system more closely approximates the pattern found in the Early Church than that found in the New Testament.

To the memory of my father-in-law

Bertie Jacobs

22 May 1927 - 30 January 1994

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Appreciation is expressed to the members of my committee, Dr. Doug Kilcher, Dr. Norman Miles, and, especially, Dr. Nancy Vyhmeister for guiding me through this process.

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Finally, thanks be to God. All glory, honor, and praise be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

INTRODUCTION

The Seventh-day Adventist Church employs the practice of appointing persons to various levels of ministry.[1] This act of appointment involves a process referred to as "ordination."[2] This takes place on three different levels of church office. These are (1) deacons, (2) local church elders, and (3) those set apart to the full-time Gospel Ministry.[3]

During the mid-1970's the Seventh-day Adventist Church began anew to give urgent study to the question of ecclesiastical appointment.[4] This study, however, was precipitated by the question of the ecclesiastical appointment of women to the gospel ministry.

While it is necessary to examine the complexities of the various types of appointment, the issue of

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[1]See General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Ministerial Association, Seventh-day Adventist Minister's Manual (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1992), 83-92.

[2]Ibid., 83.

[3]Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia (SDAE), ed. Don E. Neufeld (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1976), s.v. "Ordination."

[4]Raoul Dederen, "A Theology of Ordination," Ministry, February 1978, 24K.

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ecclesiastical appointment per se, however, needs closer
study. This is due to the fact that it is foundational to
any discussion of the peripherals. Within the Seventh-day
Adventist Church this fact has been acknowledged. Articles
by Blincoe[1] and Dederen,[2] along with a chapter in a book by
Fowler,[3] have highlighted the need to develop a
comprehensive theology on ministerial appointment. However,
this has not been done as yet.

The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church arose from
within the milieu of the Millerite Movement of the mid-
nineteenth century.[4] As a "protest" movement, it resisted
adopting the formal organizational structures similar to
that of the churches from which its founding members had
originated.[5] However, within twenty years, it had grown to
where it was constituted as a church with an organizational

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[1]Thomas Blincoe, "Needed--A Theology of Ordination,"
Ministry, February 1978, 22-24.

[2]Dederen, 24K-24P.

[3]John W Fowler, Adventist Pastoral Ministry (Boise,
ID: Pacific Press, 1990).

[4]Gary Land, ed., Adventism in America (Grand Rapids,
MI: Eerdmans, 1986), vii.

[5]Andrew G. Mustard, James White and SDA
Organization: Historical Development, 1844-1881, Andrews
University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, vol. 12
(Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 1987), 118. See
also SDAE, s.v. "'Organization, Development of, in SDA
Church."

pattern similar to some of the other Protestant churches of the day.[1]

In its development, the Church sought to ensure that its distinctive doctrines were thoroughly Bible-based.[2] The question needs to be asked as to whether the same was done in its adoption of an organizational system--particularly the practice of the appointment of ministers.[3] Or did the Church transfer the pattern and practice of the setting apart of ministers from the churches to which its members had originally belonged?

A great deal of attention is currently being devoted to the issue of women's ordination. This renders it all the more necessary for a study to be made as to the origin of the theology and practice of ministerial appointment in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The Church is correct in continually striving to ensure that its theology and practice are based on biblical,and not ecclesiastical, tradition. This endeavor

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[1]Land, 46, 63.

[2]James White, Ellen Gould White, and Joseph Bates, A Word to the "Little Flock" (Brunswick, ME: James White, 1847, facsimile reproduction, Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1944), 13.

[3]Land, 50. The same issue was raised by Eugene Miller: "Is its [SDA Church] ministry founded on firm religious authority or on mere human authority?" H. Eugene Miller, "The Development of the Ordination of Ministers in the Seventh-day Adventist Church," Term Paper, Andrews University, 1964, 2.

must be applied to the issue of ecclesiastical appointment as well.

Problem

This thesis attempts to answer the question: What does the teaching and practice of the New Testament Church, the Early Church, and the early Seventh-day Adventist Church reveal with regards to ecclesiastical appointment?

Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to outline the practice of ministerial appointment in the New Testament, Early Church, and the early Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Significance

I hope that this study:

1. Brings clarity to my mind as a minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as to the origin, purpose, and practice of appointment in the Church

2. Assists in providing a more objective platform from which to assess the validity of the appointment of categories of persons not included in the biblical record

3. Contributes towards the development of a theology of ecclesiastical appointment within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Definitions

The common term used to denote ecclesiastical appointment is "ordination." This thesis does not use this term, except where it is used in a direct quotation. This is done because it is the contention of this thesis that the term "ordain" and its derivatives, as they are commonly used, are not neutral.

Its use connotes that a particular status, "higher" than that of the rank-and-file membership of the church, has been conferred upon an individual within a religious setting. Dederen states:

> One should be aware of the inappropriateness of the word *ordination* for the act that sets apart an individual to a special ministry in the church. There can be no real *ordo* that places the minister on a higher level of being than the rest of the faithful.[1]

Furthermore, it seems to imply a biblically instituted liturgical process encompassing particularly prescribed ecclesiastical practices. "Ordination terminology" appears to have assumed a cultic nature which has become entrenched within the Christian psyche. Thus its usage militates against an objective study of the development of the practice of ecclesiastical appointment. A discussion of the origin and use of the term follows.

"Ordain" in Ecclesiastical Usage

Modern ecclesiastical usage of the term "ordain"

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[1]Dederen, 24P.

seems to have assumed the universal meaning of

> publically designating and setting apart certain
> persons for special religious service and
> leadership, granting them religious authority and
> power to be exercised for the welfare of the
> community.[1]

Another definition of ordination expresses it thus: "The
liturgical action which establishes a man in the hierarchy
of orders."[2] The definition given by the SDAE is as
follows: "The act by which the church sets apart an
individual for a special function in the church by prayer
and the laying on of hands."[3]

Thus, as discussed in the previous section, it
appears as though the concept derived from the word "ordain"
and its derivatives unquestionably point to a church-related
activity. This activity, as the preceding definitions
indicate, sets apart an individual for specific functions
within the religious community.

In modern practice, this "setting apart" or
"ordaining" usually involves a solemn, yet elaborate
service. This service often takes the form of a ceremony in
which the hierarchy of a church publically sets an

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[1]Theodore Ludwig, "Ordination," The Encyclopedia of
Religion (EoR), (1987), 11:97.

[2]J. J. Flood, "Ordinations in the Roman Rite,"
Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion (EDR), ed. Paul K.
Meagher, Thomas C. O'Brien, and Sister Consuelo Maria Aherne
(Washington, DC: Corpus, 1979), 3:2612.

[3]SDAE, s.v. "Ordination."

individual apart through the ritual of the laying on of hands, the issuing of a charge, the offering of a prayer,and the acceptance into the ranks of the "ordained ministry."[1]

However, there appears to be an absence of ecclesiastical language and practice employed in the New Testament which in any way approximates modern ecclesiastical terminology and practice.[2] On the contrary, "some scholars doubt whether the solemn service we know today as ordination was practiced in the time of Christ."[3] Referring to the appointment of the twelve, it is suggested that they were chosen and sent without a liturgical service, such as is currently practiced.[4]

While the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary describes the process of appointment as "ordaining," it recognizes that the biblical terminology employed does not support this concept. "Although it is true that Jesus actually 'ordained' [sic] the Twelve upon this occasion

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[1] See Minister's Manual, 82-90.

[2] N. Halligan, "Holy Orders," EDR, 2:1694. He states that "precision of terminology began to appear only in the 2nd century."

[3] Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary (Nelson's), 1986 ed., s.v. "Ordain, Ordination."

[4] Ibid.

[Mark 3:14], . . . this meaning is not implicit in the
Greek word *poieō*."[1]

New Testament Terminology

There are thirteen different Greek words in the New
Testament which are translated as "ordain" or "ordained" in
the KJV. These are: *poieō, tithēmi, ginomai, horizō, tassō,
cheirotoneō, krinō, promeletaō, diatassō, proeroimadzo,
kathistēmi, kataskeuazō, prographō.*

Their meanings are: to make or to do; to place; to
cause to be/to become; to mark out or bound; to arrange in
an orderly manner; lit., a hand-raiser or voter, i.e., to
select or appoint; to distinguish, i.e., to decide; to
premeditate; to arrange thoroughly; to fit up in advance; to
place down, designate; to prepare thoroughly; to write
previously, to announce. Thus, as the above meanings
indicate, the original words translated as "ordain" or
"ordained" in the KJV do not necessarily refer to an
ecclesiastical appointment involving a liturgical service,
that is, an investment "with the functions of a minister,
priest or rabbi."[2]

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[1]*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary (SDABC)*, ed.
F. D. Nichol (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1953-1957,
5:592. It is interesting to note that Mark 1:17 employs the
verb *poieō* when Jesus says to Simon and Andrew that He would
make them fishers of men. Thus the "ordaining" of the
disciples in Mark 3:14 and the "making" of the disciples
into fishers of men employ the identical term.

[2]*Webster's New World Dictionary*, 3d College ed.,
1988, s.v. "Ordain."

An examination of various English translations[1] reveals that the KJV is one of the very few that translates the original words as "ordained."[2] The most common translation is "appointed" (ASV, Geneva, Jerusalem, Knox, Moffat, Moulten, NAB, NASB, NEB, NIV, NKJV, NRSV, REB, and RSV). The TEV uses "chose," while the New World translation uses the expression "formed a group of." Afrikaans uses the word aangestel. This means "to appoint."[3]

Etymological Considerations

An examination of the etymological development of the word "ordain" is undertaken in this section. This is done in order to find a possible explanation of why the term "ordain" is employed in some of the biblical translations with regard to the setting apart of individuals.

The Oxford English Dictionary (OED)[4] gives sixteen different meanings for the word "ordain." Definition number eleven gives the ecclesiastical meaning: "To appoint or admit to the ministry of the Christian Church; to invest with a ministerial or sacerdotal character by the laying on of hands or other symbolic action." The other fifteen, in

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[1]Particularly Mark 3:14.

[2]Another translation that uses "ordained" is Berkeley.

[3]The Afrikaans equivalent of "ordained" is gesalf, literally, "to anoint with oil."

[4]Oxford English Dictionary, ed. J. A. H. Murray (Oxford: Clarendon, 1905).

their abbreviated forms, are:

    1. To put in order, arrange, make ready, prepare

    2. To set in proper order or position

    3. To settle the order or course of

    4. To set up (something) to continue in a certain order

    5. To plan, devise, continue

    6. To put in order (for a purpose)

    7. To put into a particular mental condition or disposition, especially into a right or fitting frame of mind

    8. To prepare oneself, make ready

    9. To make preparation, prepare, arrange

    10. To appoint (a person) to a charge, duty, office (with the official name or position as simple object or complement)

    11. (See above)

    12. To appoint or assign

    13. Of Deity--to appoint as part of the order of the universe or of nature, to decree, predestine

    14. To appoint authoritatively

    15. To order, command

    16. To order (a thing) to be made or furnished.

Initially, there might appear to be little connection between "to put in order" and "to invest with a ministerial or sacerdotal character." An etymological study

of the word, however, shows that the meaning of the root of

"ordain" evolved to assume ecclesiological significance.

A schematic representation of the evolution of the

term is shown in figure 1.
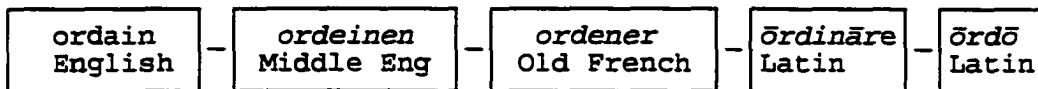
Figure 1. Evolution of "ordain."

The Latin root *ōrdō* is "a tech [sic] term for the

order of threads in the woof, hence, in non-tech [sic]

language, a row, a rank, hence order in general (things in

due succession or place)."[1] The dictionary definitions

relating to setting in order given earlier are thus

consistent with the root of the word. If applied as such,

it could not have liturgical overtones or ecclesiological

significance. However, in connection with the word

"ordain," we discover that

> the meaning of to appoint or admit to a
> ministerial or priestly function in the church is
> first recorded in Middle English around 1300, and
> was borrowed from . . . Latin, to appoint, arrange
> (emphasis supplied).[2]

Within the hierarchical system employed by the church at

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[1]Eric Partridge, Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English (New York: Macmillan, 1958), 1456.

[2]The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology, 1988 ed., s.v. "Ordain."

that time (13th century), it would not have been out of place to consider the appointment of priests or ministers as arranging into rank, or orders, the different categories of clergy in relation to the ordinary member. This is the import of the definition given by the EDR.[1]

Thus when Mark 3:14 refers to Christ "ordaining" the disciples (KJV),[2] it could be suggested that the translators of the KJV Bible were simply reflecting the sixteenth and seventeenth century concept of ecclesiastical appointment.[3] In this way the act of appointment or setting apart appears to have come to be called "ordination."[4]

As stated earlier, this thesis does not use the term "ordain" or "ordination," except where it employs a direct quotation or illustrates the usage of the terms. The terminology that is employed is "setting apart,"

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[1]See page 6.

[2]This is the only instance in which the Greek term, *epoiēsen*, used in this passage, is translated as such. This passage is discussed later on.

[3]Tindale's translation of the Bible (1526) renders Mark 3: 14 reads: "And he ordeined the twelve that they shulde be with him." The OED notes a sixteenth century usage of the word: "1588 J. UDALL *Demonstr. Discipl.* (Arb) 20 The Apostles ordayned bishops euery where." A seventeenth century usage states: "He cannot be a true Pope, unless he were rightly ordained Priest." Cited in the OED as Chilligw. *Relig. Prot.* ii. 109.

[4]See also Ernest Klein, A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1967), 2:1093.

"ecclesiastical, ministerial or church appointment," or simply "appointment."

Historical Periods

The historical period of the Christian church as recorded in the New Testament, outside of the Gospels, is referred to as the Apostolic Church. The term "Early Church" is used to refer to the Christian era, following the Apostolic period, up to around A.D. 600. The period 1844 to 1904 forms the parameters for early Seventh-day Adventist Church history.

Limitations

This study, as an M.Div. thesis, does not provide a definitive theology on church appointment, but is a survey of aspects of the issue. It is hoped that this thesis will serve as a springboard to further study on the subject.

Delimitations

The study of ministry and setting apart within Christendom is an extremely broad field. However, much of what has been written on Christian ministry uses, as a point of departure, a pattern for church order which had become entrenched by the beginning of the seventh century. Hence, this study focuses on the biblical origin of ministerial appointment, and its development in the Early Church. Following this, the rise and practice of appointment in the Seventh-day Adventist Church is examined.

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Method

A survey of the New Testament passages which refer to the act of setting people apart is made, incorporating brief exegeses and word studies. This is followed by a historical survey of the practice of ecclesiastical appointment as found in the literature of the Early Christian Church. An examination is then made of various denominational histories of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A survey is also made of selected writings of the early pioneers of the SDA Church. A comparison between the practice of the early history of the Christian Church, and that of the SDA Church is made in the concluding chapter.

Presuppositions

This paper is written on the assumption that the authenticity of the New Testament with its twenty-seven books has been established. Furthermore, the Epistles traditionally attributed to Paul are accepted as having been originated by him during the first century, A.D.

CHAPTER I

THE PRACTICE OF ECCLESIASTICAL APPOINTMENT

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

This chapter examines the practice of ecclesiastical appointment in the New Testament Christian Church. It first looks at the record according to the Gospel writers. Attention is then focused on the writings of the Apostolic era.

Christ's Teaching and Practice

The Bible relates that Christ, commencing His public ministry at the age of thirty (Luke 3:23), traveled around Palestine as an itinerant preacher (Luke 4:14; Matt 11:1; Mark 7:31). Early in His ministry, He called various individuals to follow Him. They were to accompany Him as disciples (Matt 4:18-20; Mark 1:16-20; John 1:43).

Three passages in the Gospels refer to His specific appointment of twelve disciples to be His close associates and assistants (Matt 10:1-5; Mark 3:13-19; and Luke 6:12-16). Another passage refers to persons appointed by Christ, Luke 10:1,17, where the sending out of seventy persons is described. John 15:16 records Christ's having appointed the disciples to go and bear fruit.

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In the following sections, the five biblical passages referred to above are examined. These cover Christ's practice with regard to the appointment and sending out of His disciples.

Matt 10:1-5

Matthew records the calling of the first disciples in chap. 4:18-20. What could be described as the formal appointment of the disciples is found in 10:1-5.

This passage contains various elements:

1. The calling of the twelve disciples to Him (vs. 1)

2. Christ's giving them power over unclean spirits as well as the ability to heal (vs. 1)

3. A listing of the twelve by name (vss. 2-4)

4. A statement that these twelve were sent by Jesus (vs. 5).

The rest of the chapter contains Jesus' specific instructions to them.

In vs. 1 the account tells us that He called to Him (*proskalesamenos*) twelve disciples who are subsequently described in vs. 2 as apostles (*apostolon*). The concept of being sent or being a messenger,[1] is echoed in vs. 5 where it is stated that the disciples were sent out (*apostellō*).

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[1]See "*apostolos*," Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon (New York: Harper Brothers, 1846), 192.

The essential elements in this pericope can be thus
summarized. Jesus calls His disciples, gives them
authority, and sends them out as messengers on His behalf.

Mark 3:13-19

Mark records the calling of the first disciples
early in chap. 1:14-19. The setting apart is found in chap.
3:13-19. The account of the appointment of the disciples
contains the following elements:

1. Jesus calls those whom He chose (vs. 13).

2. Those whom He called respond by going to Him
(vs. 13).

3. He appoints them to preach, to heal the sick,
and to cast out devils (vss. 14-15).

4. The names of the twelve are listed (vss. 16-19).

The primary word in this pericope with regard to the
appointment is *epoiēsen*. This word comes from the root
poieō meaning "literally, 'to make', that is, 'to
appoint'."[1]

Mark uses it in the third person, singular, aorist
first indicative active tense.[2] The literal meaning thus
conveys the concept that Jesus "made" them disciples. This
is the only occurrence where the word *epoiēsen* is translated

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[1]"Mark," SDABC, 5:592.

[2]J. Stegenga, Greek-English Concordance of the
Greek-English New Testament (Jackson, MS: Hellenes--English
Biblical Foundation, 1963), s.v. "*poieō*."

"ordained" (KJV) or "appointed" (NIV).

The root *poieō* and its derivatives occur seventy-eight times in the New Testament. There are two main branches of meaning to the root. These are "to make" or "to do" as opposed to "to act" or "to behave."[1]

These meanings are reflected in the usage of *poieō* in the Gospels, where it is used primarily to describe the completion or execution of an action. Examples of this are:

1. Matt 1:24--Joseph, responding to the message of the angel, <u>did</u> (*epoiēsen*) what the angel had commanded him to do.

2. Matt 19:4--Christ describes God as having <u>made</u> (*epoiēsen*) human beings male and female.

3. Matt 27:23--Pilate, when questioning the Jews as to what crimes Christ had committed, asks, "What <u>did he do</u> (*epoiēsen*)?"

4. Mark 8:25--At the healing of the blind man of Bethsaida, Jesus <u>made</u> (*epoiēsen*) him look up.

5. Mark 14:8-9--The account of Mary anointing Jesus' feet bears Christ's commendation that she <u>had done</u> (*epoiēsen*) what she could.[2]

Some commentators adopt the position that the act of

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[1]F. Braun, "*Poieō*," <u>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT)</u>, (1964-1976), 6:458-484.

[2]See also Matt 12:3; 13:26,25,28; Mark 2:25; 5:19-20; 10:6; 15:14; Luke 23:22. As in the Synoptic Gospels, John also uses it in the sense of "did, done, had done, etc."

Christ in appointing His disciples went beyond merely an
appointment. One commentary states that "the sacral
character of their [the disciples] ordination is implied by
the word used for 'appoint' (literally 'made' or
'constituted') used in the LXX of the ordination of priests:
(1 Sam 12:6; 1 Kgs 12:31; 2 Chr 2:17)."[1]

Another commentator, Ellen G. White, states that the
events of Mark 3 were the first steps in the organization of
the church.[2] In this passage, she says, Christ called the
disciples and sent them forth to declare the Word to the
world. They were to be workers together with Him.[3]

She also states that the twelve were to stand as
representatives of the gospel church in the same way as the

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[1]"Mark," A New Catholic Commentary on Holy
Scripture, (Camden, NJ: Nelson, 1969), 961.

[2]Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages (Boise, ID:
Pacific, 1940), 291. This sentiment is echoed in Eerdmans
Bible Commentary. "Mark," Eerdmans Bible Commentary, ed.
D. Guthrie and J. A. Motyer, 3d ed. (London: Intervarsity,
1969), 859.

[3]Ibid., 291. See also the Wesleyan Bible
Commentary, vol. 4, ed. Ralph Earle, Harvey J. S. Blaney and
Charles W. Carter (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 141,
where it states that the reason for the appointment was so
that the disciples might be with Christ. A second function
was so that He might send them forth to preach.

twelve patriarchs represented Israel.[1] She concludes by saying that

> [w]hen Jesus had ended His instruction to the disciples, He gathered the little band close to Him, and kneeling in the midst of them, and laying His hands on their heads, He offered a prayer, dedicating them to His sacred work. Thus the Lord's disciples were ordained to the gospel ministry" (emphasis supplied).[2]

The SDABC refers to the incident as the "appointment and ordination of the Twelve."[3] Noting that the twelve were chosen from a larger group, the SDABC goes on to say that "the appointment of the Twelve may well be regarded as the formal inauguration of the kingdom of grace that Christ had come to establish."[4]

The New Century Bible (NCB) states that the literal meaning of *epoiēsen* is "made" and it is most often translated "appointed." The NCB considers the "making" a sovereign decision of Jesus in selecting and appointing.[5]

This section has focused on *epoiēsen* to demonstrate that the biblical language of Mark 3:14 does not intrinsically appear to convey the concept of a formal, ecclesiastical service. As stated earlier, the Greek seems

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[1]Ibid., 291.

[2]Ibid., 296.

[3]SDABC, 5:592.

[4]Ibid.

[5]New Century Bible: The Gospel of Mark, ed. Hugh Anderson (London: Oliphants, 1976), 116.

to indicate that Christ "made" them disciples.

Luke 6:12-16

The same pattern as found in the previous two Gospels is repeated in Luke. Christ calls His disciples to follow Him and spends time with them during which He teaches and heals. After that He appoints them as His apostles.

The essential elements in this passage are:

1. He calls (*prosephōnēsen*) His disciples to Him (vs. 13).

2. He chooses (*eklexamenos*) twelve from the larger group of disciples (vs. 13).

3. They are named (*onomazen*) apostles (*apostolous*) (vs. 13).

4. The names of the twelve are listed (vss. 14-16).

In contrast to Mark, Luke describes Christ's action, not as "appointing," but as "choosing" twelve disciples. In contrast to both Matthew and Mark, Luke omits any reference to authority or power being given to the twelve with regard to preaching, teaching, or healing. In common with Matthew, Luke attributes the title "apostle" to the disciples. As with the previous two accounts, no indication is given in this passage as to a liturgical or ecclesiastical service as understood in today's context.

Luke 10:1-24

This passage differs in essence from the previous three in that it refers to the appointment of seventy additional persons.

The essential elements of this passage are:

1. Jesus appointed (*anedeizen*) seventy (vs. 1).

2. They were sent out (*apesteilen*) two by two (vs. 1).

3. They were to go into every city (vs. 1).

4. They were commissioned to proclaim the coming of God's kingdom (vs. 9).

5. They were given authority to heal the sick (vs. 9). In their report back to Jesus, they rejoiced at the fact that even the devils were subject to them in Christ's name (vs. 17).

The word *anedeizen* (he appointed) is derived from *anadeiknumi*, "appoint, commission"[1] or "to lift up and show, display."[2] Other meanings are "to show clearly, reveal something hidden."[3]

The seventy are not listed by name. While they are not called *apostolous* (apostles) as in Matthew and Luke's

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[1]Walter Bauer, _A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature_, trans. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 1957), 53.

[2]Liddell and Scott, 101.

[3]Bauer, 53. It is used by Luke in the latter sense in Acts 1:24 (*anadeixon*).

account of the appointment of the Twelve, the same concept is inherent in the fact that Jesus sent them out (*apesteilen*). The method of their appointment and mandate varies little from those of the twelve disciples.

John 15:16

John does not record the appointment of the Twelve as apostles or disciples. Towards the end of his ministry, however, Christ, on the night prior to his crucifixion, refers to the disciples as having been appointed or placed. The word used is *tithēmi*, meaning, literally, "to set, put, place."[1]

Christ's Practice in Relation to Setting Apart

The five passages examined in the previous sections give the sum total of Christ's teaching and practice with regard to the setting apart of His representatives in terms of His active, public, recorded ministry. Various factors emerge from these passages.

1. Jesus' appointment of His disciples was: (a) based on prayer (Luke 6:12), His choice and call (Matt 10:1; Mark 3:13; John 15:16), and their response (Mark 3:13); (b) His sending them out with power and authority (Matt 10:1; Luke 9:1).

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[1]Liddell and Scott, 1495.

2. The process of sending out the seventy was essentially the same as that of the twelve.

3. There appears to be an absence of a formal commissioning service.[1]

Laying on of Hands

According to some commentators, the "New Testament practice of ordination is generally associated with the laying on of hands" (emphasis supplied).[2] V. Norskov Olsen states that

> in the church rite of ordination the laying on of hands has become so significant that it seems unthinkable to have ordination without the laying on of hands, leaving the impression that ordination is the laying on of hands (emphasis supplied).[3]

However, the Gospel record does not appear to provide any evidence that the laying on of hands accompanied Christ's setting apart of the disciples or the seventy.[4]

The chapter thus far has focused on the practice of Christ with regard to ecclesiastical appointment. We now turn our attention to the Apostolic era.

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[1]Michael Fink, "Ordination, Ordain," Holman Bible Dictionary (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible, 1991), 1057.

[2]Ibid.

[3]V. Norskov Olsen, Myth and Truth about Church, Priesthood and Ordination (Riverside, CA: Loma Linda University, 1990), 125.

[4]See The New International Dictionary of the Bible (NIBD), 1987 ed., s.v. "Ordination."

<u>Apostolic Teaching and Practice</u>

This section examines the practice of church appointment during the Apostolic Church era. It first looks at the book of Acts, then the Pauline Epistles.

The Book of Acts

Attention is paid to four passages. These are chaps. 1:15-26; 6:1-6; 13:1-3; and 14:23.

<u>Acts 1:15-26</u>

This passage recounts the appointment of Matthias to replace Judas Iscariot, who had taken his own life in response to his betrayal of Christ. The essential elements of his appointment are:

1. Judas's position (as an *episkopos*) must be given to another (vs. 20).

2. This person must become a witness (*martura*), along with the other Apostles, to the resurrection (vs. 22).

3. The disciples set forth (*estēsan*) two persons from which they were to choose (vs. 23).

4. This person must take part in ministry (*diakonos*) and apostleship (*apostolos*) (vs. 25).

5. He is numbered (*sugkatepsēphisthē*) with the eleven apostles (vs. 26).

The noun *marturia* (witness, vs. 22) follows the verb *ginomai* (to cause to be/to become). My translation would be that "he was made to become a witness."

The appointment of Matthias, who joined the Eleven as an overseer, witness, minister, and apostle, does not appear to include a formal, liturgical, appointment service. The laying on of hands does not appear in the record.[1]

Acts 6:1-6

This passage is generally understood to describe the appointment of the seven deacons.[2] However, in the passage the seven are not called deacons. The tasks assigned to them are those which had been, up to that point, carried out by the Apostles.

Robinson concurs with the view that the seven were appointed to fulfill functions carried out by the Apostles up to that time. It was only the press of numbers that made them appoint assistants.[3] They could, therefore, be viewed as "ministry assistant[s]." Robinson points, however, to "the unanimous tradition, which reaches back to Irenaeus, that the office to which the seven were appointed corresponds with the later diaconate."[4] While tradition may

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[1]See page 24 above, "Laying on of Hands."

[2]The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (COD), ed. E. A. Livingstone (Oxford: Oxford University, 1977), s.v. "Deacons" and "Seven Deacons."

[3]According to the COD "where it occurs in the NT in a technical sense (e.g. Phil. 1:1) it is used of ministers who serve under presbyter-bishops." S.v. "Deacons."

[4]See Joseph Armitage Robinson, "The Christian Ministry in the Apostolic and Sub-Apostolic Periods," in Essays on the Early History of the Church and Ministry, ed. H. B. Sewte (London: Macmillan, 1918), 81-82.

support that view, the text and function of the Seven do not appear to do so.

Essential elements of this passage are:

1. The seven were chosen by the entire church membership (vss. 1-2).

2. The seven were presented to the apostles by the church (vs. 6).

3. After prayer, hands were laid upon the seven (vs. 6).

The laying on of hands as part of the process is generally considered to have been performed by the Apostles.[1] The antecedent to the "who prayed and laid their hands on them," however, could be either the congregation or the Apostles.

According to V. Norskov Olsen, "the only Greek manuscript that has a reading which makes it definite that it was the apostles is *Codex Bezae*."[2] He goes on to point out that this same manuscript is rejected in other instances for its unreliability. Thus, V. Norskov Olsen concludes that the change in Acts 6:6 of *Codex Bezae* reflects a historical development beginning in the third century. This development resulted in only the bishop in apostolic succession being able to ordain, followed by the assertion

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[1]V. N. Olsen, 141.

[2]Ibid.

that bishops are the vicars of Christ--a claim later applied
to the pope.[1]

The passage indicates that a formal appointing took
place. However, there does appear to be a possible
inconclusiveness as to whether it was a service
incorporating the laying on of hands by the apostles. This
act might have been performed by the congregation.

Acts 13:1-3

This passage contains various elements which are
considered by some commentators as support for the current
liturgical character and process of appointment.[2] The
following elements, which closely approximate the modern
practice of appointment, are present:

1. A group of prophets and teachers of Antioch were
praying and fasting together (vs. 1).[3]

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[1]Ibid., 142.

[2]The SDAE cites this passage as the chief New
Testament reference when giving biblical reasons for
Seventh-day Adventist practice of "ordination." SDAE, s.v.
"Ordination." Dederen refers to Acts 13:1-3 as "the
ordination of Paul and Barnabas." Dederen, 24P. Ellen G.
White states very clearly that the exercise engaged in by
the believers in Antioch constituted the "ordination" of
Paul and Barnabas to the gospel ministry through prayer and
the laying on of hands. Ellen G. White, Acts of the
Apostles (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1911), 161.

[3]This could approximate the meeting of the governing
board or executive committee of a church organization. See
J. W. Packer, Acts of the Apostles (Cambridge: Cambridge
University, 1966), 100. Trenchard makes a particular note
that this is a gathering of prophets and teachers, not of
the congregation. E. H. Trenchard, "Acts," in International
Bible Commentary, gen. ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids, MI:

2. The Holy Spirit gave the directive that Paul and Barnabas be set aside for a specific task (vs. 2).[1]

3. After prayer and the laying on of hands, the group at Antioch sent the two on their way (vs. 3).[2]

In examining the passage, several factors require consideration: Paul and Barnabas are included in the list of prophets and teachers at Antioch prior to the setting apart (vs. 1). Ananias had already laid his hands on Saul after Saul's conversion (Acts 9:17), after God had informed Ananias that Saul was to be a missionary to the Gentiles. Saul had been presented to the Apostles in Jerusalem and had been accepted by them (Acts 9:28). Saul and Barnabas had been involved in ministry in Jerusalem for a period of time (Acts 10:25).[3]

Zondervan, 1986), 1289.

[1]This could reflect the leading of God's Spirit in the decision-making process of the governing board or church committee. Packer, 101.

[2]This can be seen as the formal appointment service after the recommendation and approval by the governing body of the church. It is "an act of commissioning, closely associating them with the church . . . that is sending them." Packer, 101.

[3]The chronology of Acts suggests that Paul had been involved in active ministry for at least ten years by the time of the Acts 13 event. "By that time [Acts 13:1-3] Paul had already been engaged in an extensive ministry in the area of Syria and Cilicia (Gal 1:21; cf. Acts 11:24 ff.)." Dederen, 24P. If 13:1-3 was his initial setting apart to the ministry, this would be inconsistent with the pattern followed by Christ in the appointment of the disciples or of the seventy. This is in that they were appointed to ministry upon their call by Christ. The delay in the appointment of Paul would also depart significantly from the

The passage seems to suggest that Paul and Barnabas were being set aside for a specific missionary endeavor.[1] This work, "to which [the Holy Spirit] ha[d] called them" (vs. 2), was apparently to commence a ministry among the Gentiles. This is demonstrated by the verses immediately following the setting aside. "The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus" (vs. 4). This was the start of what is commonly called Paul's first missionary journey.

After returning from this missionary tour, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch. They reported on the work that had been done among the Gentiles (14:27). Of interest is the preceding verse. It states that they returned to Antioch "where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed" (vs. 26). The "committing to the grace of God" could be alluding to the setting apart of 13:3. This seems to indicate that the setting apart in 13:1-3 was for the specific task of

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practice employed in the appointment of Matthias and the Seven.

[1]SDABC, 6:281, states: "Barnabas and Saul were to be set apart for a new work" (emphasis supplied). Bruce states that they were set aside for a special work. He goes on to say that they "were released for what we would nowadays call missionary service overseas." F. F. Bruce, Commentary on the Book of Acts (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), 261.

preaching to the Gentiles. This work was now completed
(14:26).[1]

After some time had elapsed (14:28; 15:35), Paul
decided that they should return to "visit the brothers"
(15:36). Because of a disagreement with Barnabas, Paul
chose Silas to go with him (vs. 40). A similar phrase that
described Paul's first commission by the brothers is
repeated in vs. 40 in describing his second missionary
journey. "Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the
brothers to the grace of the Lord." While the passage does
not state specifically that the process of 13:3 was
repeated, the similarity between 14:26 and 15:40 raises the
possibility that a second setting apart was done for Paul as
he commenced this new venture.[2]

Thus, while the passage does contain elements which
closely approximate modern ecclesiastical practice, the
possibility exists that this was not an initial appointment
to ministry.[3] The appointment could have been for a

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[1]"Paul and Barnabas had been sent forth by the
Church . . . for a specific task--the evangelization of the
Gentiles. . . . Their commission was fulfilled." SDABC,
6:301-302.

[2]Bruce states: "They were commended afresh to the
divine grace . . . as on the former occasion (Ch. 13:3)
[sic]." Bruce, 319. The SDABC links 15:40 with 14:26.
SDABC, 6:317.

[3]Trenchard states: "This is no ordination, for Saul
was an Apostle with long years of service behind him, and
Barnabas was a spiritual father of the Antiochene Church,
devoted to the Lord's work for many years." Trenchard,
1289.

specific assignment, under the direct guidance of God.[1]
This assignment appears to have been given by the prophets
and teachers ministering in Antioch to two of their number.
It thus appears that this might not have been an appointment
in the same sense as that of the apostles, Matthias, or the
seven.[2]

Acts 14:23

In this verse reference is made to Paul and Barnabas
appointing (cheirotoneō) "elders in every church." The
literal meaning of the verb is "to reach with the hand or to
vote." According to V. Norskov Olsen, this is "a technical
word expressing an appointment or agreement by lifting the
hand in voting."[3]

No indication is given as to whether a liturgical
service, including prayer and the laying on of hands, was
involved. The passages seems to indicate that a process of
appointment took place, possibly as a result of the vote of

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[1] Ellen G. White, Acts of the Apostles, 162.

[2] Within the context of today's practice, one would
have expected the Apostles from Jerusalem to have been
summoned for this auspicious occasion. That is, if this was
indeed the initial ecclesiastical appointment of Paul.
While Ellen White does state that Paul would forthwith
consider this to have been the starting point of his
apostleship, the possibility exists that this was such a
major shift in the focus, not only of his ministry but in
the mission of the church, that he understandably recognized
this as a major milestone in his ministry. See Ellen G.
White, Acts of the Apostles, 164,165.

[3] V. N. Olsen, 124.

the church under the direction of Paul and Barnabas.

The Pauline Epistles

In his Epistles, Paul refers to the setting apart of persons for service. The following examples are given:

1. He refers to himself as having been appointed (*etethēn*) as a preacher, apostle, and teacher (1 Tim 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11).

2. He reminds Timothy of the gifts he had received through the laying on of hands (*meta epitheseōs tōn chērōn*) by the elders and Paul (1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6).

3. He counsels Titus to appoint (*katastēsēs*) elders in every city (Titus 1:5).

As with the Gospels and Acts, the terminology employed by Paul appears to refer to the action of appointing. Sometimes it included the laying on of hands, while on other occasions this feature is not mentioned.[1]

Generally , within the mind of the modern reader, these occurrences referred to by Paul would be considered as references to "ordination."[2] The ecclesiastical package

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[1] The Bible gives instances of different categories of persons being sent out or appointed, accompanied either by prayer, the laying on of hands, or both. Examples of these are: (1) evangelists (1 Tim 4:14), (2) missionaries (Acts 13:1-3), (3) presbyters (Acts 14:23), and (4) the seven (Acts 6:6).

[2] NIBD, s.v. "Ordination," where it states: "Ordination in the sense of setting aside officers of the church for a certain work by the laying on of hands was practiced in apostolic times (1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6), but it is nowhere described or enjoined. No great emphasis was

referred to in the introduction could easily become appended to it, thus appropriating a meaning to it that might not originally have been present.

This chapter has examined the practice of ecclesiastical appointment during the time of Christ's ministry and in the Apostolic Church. The next chapter looks at the transition brought about by the Early Church.

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placed on this rite."

CHAPTER II

ECCLESIASTICAL APPOINTMENT
IN THE EARLY CHURCH

The previous chapter examined the biblical
parameters of church appointment by examining the process of
appointment in the Gospels, the book of Acts, and the
Pauline epistles. This chapter surveys the practice of
ecclesiastical appointment during the Early Church period.

The Primitive Church

First, the transition from the Apostolic Era to the
Early Church is examined. Some attention is devoted to a
survey of the development of the organizational structure in
the early church. The development of the organizational
structure is then surveyed, as the later practice of church
appointment was influenced by it.

Transition from the
Apostolic Era

As the Church moved into the Apostolic Era, there
appears to have been at Jerusalem a council of elders, with
James, the brother of Jesus, at the head (Acts 15). After
Paul had worked in Asia Minor and further afield, it appears
as though elders were appointed in the various cities where

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the work grew (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5).

According to some scholars, there was a smooth transition from this organizational pattern seen in the Apostolic era to that later found in the Early Church. Halligan suggests that there was an uninterrupted Apostolic succession, originating with God who, through Christ, appointed Apostles. These Apostles appointed Bishops, who, in turn, developed the system of holy orders. This succession continued, unbroken, down to the present.[1]

Others, such as Raymond Brown, argue against strict succession. He says that some persons in the Apostolic and Early Church were serving without apostolic appointment.[2] Brown states "that the New Testament does not show the twelve laying hands on bishops either as successor or as auxiliaries."[3] The Bible cites instances where persons were set aside for specific functions within the church without the presence of the Apostles. For example, persons were appointed by persons other than the Apostles in: (1) Titus 1:5--by an evangelist; (2) 1 Tim 4:14--by presbyters;

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[1]Halligan, "Holy Orders" 3:1693. See also Hans Urs Von Balthasar, "Uninterrupted Tradition of the Church," in The Order of Priesthood: Nine Comments on the Vatican Decree Inter Insigniores (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1978), 74-84.

[2]Raymond E. Brown, Priest and Bishop: Biblical Reflections (New York: Paulist, 1970), 54-55.

[3]Ibid., 55.

(3) Acts 6:6--by members;[1] (4) Acts 13:3--by prophets and teachers.

Most scholars seem to agree that during the Apostolic Era the ecclesiastical institutions were fluid, with no fixed pattern evident.[2] Griffiss states the following:

> The ordained ministry, as we now know it, has its origin and justification in Holy Scriptures, but the structure and exact nature of that ministry is not specifically laid out for us. The ordained ministry developed as the church interpreted the apostolic commission (emphasis supplied).[3]

Joseph Robinson states that the Christian ministry "gradually evolved" as the needs of the church changed in harmony with changing circumstances. Some of these factors were the growing numbers, and extended geographical boundaries.[4]

Nathan Mitchell raises the question as to whether a professional ministry or leadership even existed during the post-Apostolic era.[5]

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[1]See page 26 above.

[2]James E. Griffiss, "Ordination of Women: Test Case for Anglican Authority," in Towards a New Theology of Ordination: Essays on the Ordination of Women, ed. Marianne H. Micks and Charles P. Price (Somerville, MA: Greeno, Hadden & Co., 1976), 66-67.

[3]Ibid., 65.

[4]Robinson, 91.

[5]Nathan Mitchell, Mission and Ministry: History and Theology in the Sacrament of Order (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1982), 107.

Arguing that Christ's intention with regard to ministry and church order was not given in specific words, but was manifested in "pastoral interpretation" by the church, Griffiss says:

> If we examine the tradition carefully we shall discover that much of our thinking and our feeling about the ordained priesthood derives not from Holy Scripture.[1]

If "ordained priesthood" does not come from Scripture, where does it then originate? Robinson agrees that there does not appear to be any biblical ordinance given as to the specific form of ministry that was to direct the primitive church. He sees no problem in this, arguing that

> the silence of history is not unfavorable to [the] supposition . . . [that] during the historical blank which extends over half a century after the fall of Jerusalem, episcopacy was matured and the Catholic Church consolidated.[2]

This "maturing" was the process whereby the Early Church developed a pattern of ministry which supposedly evolved from the structure present during the Apostolic Era.

However, caution must be exercised so that the assumption is not made that "organized ministry existed where there were none."[3] The observation has been made that "there is no single 'theology' or structure of

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[1]Griffiss, 66.

[2]Robinson, 86.

[3]Mitchell, 108.

leadership in the early communities."[1]

Transition to the Early Church

The Apostolic Era reveals the presence of Apostles, Overseers, and Deacons within the Christian milieu (Acts 15:22; Phil 1:1). However, as can be seen from the previous section, it is difficult to be able to ascertain the precise form or structure of leadership during the emergence of the Early Church.

One reason is the scarcity of documents relating to the issue.[2] Niebuhr states that "none of [the early] documents [New Testament and Apostolic Fathers] is concerned to set forth in any full or systematic way the constitution of the church or the methods of its work."[3]

A reason for this could be the fact that the Early Church did not focus on recording the precise development of appointment practices, as there were weightier matters to consider. The church was growing at a tremendous rate. With this growth came heresies, schisms, and a diluting of the teachings of the church.[4]

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[1]Ibid., 109.

[2]Richard H. Niebuhr and Daniel D. Williams, eds., The Ministry in Historical Perspectives (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), 2.

[3]Ibid., 3.

[4]See Jaroslav Pelikan, The Christian Tradition: a History of the Development of Doctrine, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1971), chapter 2, 68-120, for a discussion of the main heresies.

The Early Church

In this section the study of the practice of setting apart in the Early Church is examined further.

Ministry in Early Church Literature

A survey of Early Christian literature reveals references to various ministerial offices and functions. Examples of these are:

1. Clement of Rome, in <u>First Epistle of Clement to Corinth</u>, written ca. 96, uses the words "bishop" and "presbyter" interchangeably. Reference is also made to "deacons" (42.3-4).

2. Ignatius of Antioch (died ca. A.D. 110-115) refers to the bishop, the presbyters, and the deacons in his <u>Epistle to the Trallians</u> (7.2). In <u>The Epistle to the Philadelphians</u>, Ignatius refers to the three-fold ministry as well.

3. Polycarp (died ca. A.D. 156), in the opening paragraph of his letter to the church at Philippi, makes reference to the elders serving with him. He refers to the qualifications of presbyters and deacons, but makes no reference to bishops (5.6). It appears as if, at that time, the leaders of the congregation were the presbyters and deacons (5.3).

4. Hermes of Rome (ca. A.D. 100-140) does not have many references to the ministry in his book, <u>The Shepherd</u>.

On the two occasions where he uses the term "bishop," it is in the plural form. This is because he consistently uses the term interchangeably with "presbyter" (Vision 3.5.1). It is the presbyters who rule in the church (Vision 2.4.2).

5. The Didache makes reference to the charismatic ministry of traveling teachers, apostles, and prophets (11.6; 12,13). Bishops and deacons are referred to in connection with the local church. They rank with prophets as teachers as honored men of the community (15.1-2). The word "bishop" is in the plural and appears to be synonymous with elders.

6. Irenaeus of Gaul (died ca. A.D. 200) refers to ministerial succession. He also uses the terms "bishop" and "presbyter" interchangeably (3.2.2; 3.3.2; 4.26.4).

Hippolytus and The Apostolic Tradition

The above references give information on the different ministerial offices, but they do not shed light on the process of appointment. References "to a rite of ordination are almost nonexistent."[1] One source, though, has "assumed crucial importance," as it provides the only full account of the procedure employed in ecclesiastical appointment prior to the fourth century.[2] This source is

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[1]Paul F. Bradshaw, Ordination Rites of the Ancient Churches of East and West (New York: Pueblo, 1990), 3.

[2]Ibid.

the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus (ca. A.D. 160-ca. 236).[1]

It is the earliest record in which church appointment is presented outside of Scripture.[2] Bradshaw suggests that difficulty exists in determining "exactly what the author wrote" partly because the original work is not extant.[3] Furthermore, other scholars have suggested that it "may have been retouched by fourth century hands" so as to bring it into line with the current practice and teaching.[4]

Hippolytus' Teaching on Ecclesiastical Appointment

With the preceding proviso in mind, Hippolytus' teaching on ecclesiastical appointment is examined.

From the Apostolic Tradition the following emerges:

1. Three categories of officers are set apart, viz., deacons, priests, and bishops.[5]

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[1]A. J. Maclean states that the first record of ordination was around the 4th century. "Ordination," The Encyclopedia of Religion & Ethics (1917), 9:541.   However, Jerald C. Brauer, The Westminster Dictionary of Church History (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), 401, amongst others, places Hippolytus as writing in the early third century.

[2]Pelikan, 161. See also, Centre de Pastorale Liturgique, The Sacrament of Holy Orders (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1955), 6.

[3]Bradshaw, 3-4.

[4]Ibid., 3.

[5]The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus, trans. Burton Scott Watson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934), 33,37,38.

2.   Their hierarchical ranking is demonstrated in the appointment process.

3.   In the setting apart of the deacon, the bishop alone lays his hands on him.[1] The deacon is not set apart for sacred tasks (*sacerdotum*), but as the servant to the bishop.[2] He does not receive the Spirit as do the bishop and the presbyter.[3]

4.   In the appointment of the presbyter, the bishop lays his hands on the candidate while the other presbyters present would touch him. The bishop pronounces "the formula."[4]

5.   In the appointment of the bishop, the hands of all the bishops present are laid on the candidate, after which the prayer for the descent of the Spirit is offered.[5]

6.   Ecclesiastical appointment consisted of two distinct actions: the election of the candidate and the prayer through which the "bestowal of the gifts" needed to fulfill the particular ministry is conferred.[6]

7.   The presbyter and the deacon are defined with

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[1]Ibid., 38.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid., 37.

[5]Ibid., 33,35.

[6]Ibid., 33.

reference to the bishop.[1]

   8. The tasks of the bishop are to feed the flock; perform a sovereign priesthood, serving God night and day; offer gifts to the Holy Church; "remit sins, to assign the lots, [and] to loose every bond according to the authority which thou gavest to thy Apostles."[2]

   9. Appointment is initiated by the local church, and the act of election is the primary focus.[3]

Church Appointment as "Election"

   The pattern of the Apostolic era seems to suggest that the process of commissioning a person to church office involved election and appointing. The passages in Acts indicate the election of Matthias, the seven, and Paul and Barnabas, as involving not only the Apostles, but the other officers, as well as the members of the church. Hippolytus seems to indicate that this practice was still being adhered to during his time.

   However, in succeeding centuries, it appears as if a departure from this pattern arose.

> [Later] . . . the ritual of prayer and the imposition of the hand came to be thought of as the 'real' act of ordination . . . and . . . the means by which the gift of the office itself was bestowed on the candidate.[4]

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[1]Ibid., 38,39.

[2]Ibid., 34.

[3]Ibid., 33.

[4]Bradshaw, 22.

This developed to where the process of election, choice, and appointment by the congregation was considered unimportant. _The_ act of setting apart came to be associated with the blessing from the clergy: the "passing on of the power."

The Role of the Eucharist

One of the factors that contributed towards the shift from the New Testament pattern of appointment was the development of the sacramental nature of the Eucharist.[1]

The New Testament is totally silent on the presbyter/bishop presiding at the Eucharist.[2] However, in the later writings emphasis seems to be applied to the "importance and greatness of the work of administering the sacraments."[3] Ignatius refers to the fact that the presidency of the bishop, or his appointee, was required at the celebration of the Eucharist.[4]

Griffiss, a contemporary Anglican commentator, says

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[1]COD, s.v. "Eucharist," states that "it was . . . widely held from the first that the Eucharist was in some sense a sacrifice, though here again definition was gradual."

[2]Brown, 63.

[3]Richard H. Niebuhr, _The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry: Reflections on the Aims of Theological Education_ (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 61. An attempt is made by Brown to show an unbroken line of succession from Christ, through the Disciples and Apostles, to the Presbyter/Bishop. This line, according to Brown, extended on to the Priests. Thus, presiding over the Eucharist was a prerogative which had been passed down directly to the bishops and priests by Christ, 21-45.

[4]Ignatius, _Epistle to the Smyrneans_, 8.

that one of the main purposes of appointment was the setting aside of the priest or minister to serve the Eucharist. The sacramental function placed the appointed priest as an "*alter Christus*," another Christ.[1]

Towards the end of the first century or the beginning of the second, the Eucharist came to be considered an unbloody sacrifice.[2] This factor added a priestly dimension to the function of the bishops and presbyters.[3] As the Old Testament era required a priest to preside over the sacrifice, so a "priest"[4] was needed to preside over the "sacrifice" of the bread and wine.

Justin Martyr (100-165) refers to the sacrificial language as being part of the prayer of thanksgiving at the Eucharist.[5] Tertullian (c. 160-c. 225) makes reference to the bishops as priests.[6] Cyprian (d. 258) writes about the

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[1]Griffiss, 66.

[2]Brown, 19. See also Didache 13.3 and 14.

[3]To Tertullian, the bishop was "the high priest." Tertullian, On Baptism, 17.1. Cyprian, a disciple of Tertullian, spoke about the Christian "priesthood." Cyprian, Epistles, 63.19.

[4]Up to the end of the second century, the terms "priest" and "priesthood" were not used. The Encyclopedia of Early Christianity (EEC), ed. Everett Fergusson (New York: Garland, 1990), s.v. "Priesthood."

[5]Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, 41. The same concept is found in Irenaeus, Against Heresies (4.17.5 and 4.18.4).

[6]Tertullian, On Baptism, 17:1-2.

bishop as a priest and "his sacrifice on the altar."[1] In the writings of Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386), the Eucharist is described as "a propitiatory sacrifice."[2] Chrysostom (347-407) summarized the language of the Eucharist in this way: "The Lord being sacrificed and laid upon the altar and the priest standing and praying over the victim."[3] This appears to have become the "accepted practice."[4]

The sacredness of the Eucharist raised those who were to preside, the bishop and presbyter, but more so the bishop, to a position of "supreme eminence." Robinson affirms that no "more important factor in developing a single office of supreme eminence [for the Bishop] is to be found [than] in the . . . presidency at the Eucharist."[5]

By the third century the presiding at the Eucharist had become the prerogative of the bishops.[6] In addition to presiding at the Eucharist, the process developed to where

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[1]In Cyprian we find the full development of priestly terminology, Epistles, 3; 63.14,17; 67.3; On the Unity of the Church, 17.

[2]Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures, 23.8-10.

[3]Chrysostom, On the Priesthood, 3.4.177.

[4]Pelikan, 25.

[5]Robinson, 87.

[6]Brauer, 309. Ignatius (c. 35-c. 107) Epistle to the Smyrnaeans, 8.1, indicates that the churches addressed by him were following this practice as early as the second century.

the bishop, through having been set apart, was authorized to "preach, bless and absolve in God's name--that is, to do the godly actions."[1] By the fourth and fifth centuries the functions of the bishop, as priest, were: (1) teaching, (2) baptizing, (3) reconciling sinners to God, and (4) administering the Eucharist.[2]

Towards the end of the sixth century the functions of the priest began to undergo some changes. With the end of the great heresies, the reduction of catechumenate instruction due to the installation of infant baptism, the decline of discipline through public penance, the "attention increasingly focused on the ritual activity of priests."[3]

The Status of Bishop

The progression to the position of "supreme eminence"[4] by the bishop is witnessed to by the change in his sphere of influence.[5] Originally, the bishop or

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[1] Urban T. Holmes, "Women, the Priesthood and Catholicism," in Toward a New Theology of Ordination: Essays on the Ordination of Women, ed. Marianne H. Micks and Charles P. Price (Somerville, MA: Greeno, Hadden & Co., 1976), 54.

[2] EEC, s.v. "Priesthood."

[3] Ibid.

[4] Robinson, 87.

[5] The New Testament uses the designation of bishop, interchangeably with that of steward, pastor, and presbyter (Acts 20:17,28; 1 Pet 5:1-4; Titus 1:5-7).

overseer was appointed to serve in a local church,[1] possibly
as chief of the presbyters (elders).[2] Ignatius, on his way
to Rome, wrote letters to single bishops of Ephesus,
Philadelphia, Magnesia, and Smyrna.[3]

The difference between a bishop and a presbyter was
that the presbyter served jointly with a governing college.
The bishop, in addition to serving with the governing
college as a presbyter, also served individually in
ministering to a church. They were "both rulers and
instructors of the congregation."[4] However, in later years,
the bishop's position changed so that he had jurisdiction
over many clergymen and churches.[5]

These circumstances conspired together to create the
situation which lead the way to the establishment of an
elaborate liturgical service of appointment. The ceremony

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[1]Nicea, canon 8, indicates that initially there was
one bishop to a city.

[2]Niebuhr, 82. This is seen in Paul and Barnabas
appointing elders in every church (Acts 14:23). Also, Titus
was instructed to do the same (Titus 1:5). Clement of Rome
uses "bishop" interchangeably with "presbyter." He states
that the position of bishop was an institution of the
apostles. 1 Clement 42; 44.

[3]See Ignatius' Epistle to the Magnesians, 6.1. He
refers to a single bishop being at the head of the church.
He served as the representative of God. The method of
church government appears to have been Congregational.

[4]Robinson, 83.

[5]Niebuhr, 82. See also Ignatius' Epistle to the
Smyrnaeans. Here he indicates that nothing was to be done
without the bishops (second century).

evolved and developed to match the office.

This chapter has attempted to present the teaching
and practice of ecclesiastical appointment in the primitive
Church. It looked at the transition of church organization
from the Apostolic era to the Early Church. It also
examined some of the writings of the early fathers to
determine the pattern of appointment and the factors that
influenced it. Chapter 3 examines ecclesiastical
appointment in the Seventh-day Adventist Church up to 1904.

CHAPTER III

ECCLESIASTICAL APPOINTMENT WITHIN

THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

The previous chapter presented an overview of the
practice of setting apart during the early years of the
Christian era. This chapter presents a survey of the
practice of ecclesiastical appointment in the Seventh-day
Adventist (SDA) Church up to 1904. It looks at the
development of church organization, the rise of ministerial
appointment, and the rationale behind the practice of
appointment.

The Emergence of SDA Church Organization

A brief background to the history of the SDA Church
is given. This is done in order to facilitate an
understanding of the development of the appointment of
ministers within the church.[1]

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[1]For a comprehensive background to the rise of the
SDA Church, see Land; Leroy Edwin Froom, _Movement of Destiny_
(Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1971); and Richard W.
Schwarz, _Lightbearers to the Remnant_ (Mountain View, CA:
Pacific Press, 1979).

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The Rise of the SDA Church

Adventism[1] grew out of the Millerite Movement[2] that arose towards the end of the Great Awakening that swept across America during the early- to mid-nineteenth century.[3] The Millerite Movement called for Christians to leave their churches and to prepare for the coming of Christ on October 22, 1844.[4] When Christ did not come, a split developed in the ranks of the Adventists.[5]

The Movement spawned several Adventist groups. One of them--which was to become the largest and most widespread--was Seventh-day Adventism.[6]

The Resistance to Organization

From their Millerite heritage, the early Adventists[7] resisted any move in the direction of church organization.[8]

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[1]The term "Adventism" refers to those who expected the return of Christ to this earth during the mid-nineteenth century.

[2]SDAE, s.v. "Organization, Development of, in SDA Church."

[3]Mustard, 17, 25.

[4]Leroy Edwin Froom, Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, 4 vols. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1946), 4:770.

[5]Land, 33.

[6]Ibid., 35.

[7]From this point on the term "Adventist" and its derivatives refers exclusively to the branch of Millerites that later became the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

[8]SDAE, s.v. "Organization, Development of, in SDA Church."

Having responded to the call to come out of Babylon (i.e., "corrupted Christianity,")[1] they saw any form of organization as a return to Babylon.[2]

However, the members of the fledgling group--James White in particular[3]--soon recognized that the growth of the group presented particular problems. One of these was the difficulty to monitor the development of theology and biblical understanding among its adherents.[4] The leaders of the group methodically searched the Scriptures to ensure that their beliefs were based on the Bible and the Bible only.[5] However, many itinerant preachers and others addressed the believers without the same concern for biblical accuracy as the pioneers who were in the process of formulating the doctrines of the Church.[6] The result was

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[1] James White, "Gospel Order," Review and Herald (RH), December 6, 1853, 173. See also Charles Fitch, "Come Out of Her, My People," Midnight Cry, September 21, 1943, 35.

[2] Mustard, 114, 118.

[3] Along with his wife, Ellen G. White, he is considered to be one of the co-founders of the SDA church. SDAE, s.v. "White, James Springer."

[4] Froom, Movement of Destiny, 136.

[5] James White, Ellen White, and Bates, A Word to the "Little Flock", 13.

[6] James White, "Gospel Order," RH, December 20, 1853, 189. See also J. N. Loughborough, The Church, Its Organization, Order, and Discipline (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1907), 101.

that "every man was his own interpreter, and not disposed to listen to another."[1]

Thus, despite the initial aversion to any form of organization,[2] it was recognized that steps needed to be taken in order to prevent the infiltration of "bizarre interpretations of Scripture."[3] Later, reflecting on these developments, Ellen White supplied a statement as to the reasons for organization. These can be summarized as follows:

1. To provide for the support of the ministry[4]

2. For the carrying on of the work in new fields

3. For the protection of the churches and the ministry from unworthy members

4. For the holding of church property

5. For the publication of truth through the press.[5]

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[1]Arthur Whitefield Spalding, _Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists_ (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1961), 1:292.

[2]James White, in a _Review and Herald Article_ of August 5, 1873, stated that "organization [was] entered into very cautiously by some, and rather reluctantly by others." See also Ellen G. White, _Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers_ (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1962), 26-27.

[3]Land, 50.

[4]The "support" in this instance referred to a plan whereby a salary was paid to those persons who were officially recognized by the church as full-time ministers of the gospel.

[5]Ellen G. White, _Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers_, 26.

Of interest is the fact that three of the five items pertain
to the appointment of ministers and their work. This seems
to underline the importance attributed to the need for
setting up an official ministry as a counter to false
teachers and leaders within the church.

The Credentialing of Ministers

The step taken to thwart impostors[1] was the decision
to give endorsement to "qualified ministers"[2] who would be
considered as carrying the approval of the brethren. This
endorsement was later referred to as "credentials."[3] Thus
"in 1853, Loughborough received a ministerial card signed by
James White and Joseph Bates."[4] As one of the first steps
in organization,[5] credentialing was considered a necessity
in order to "consolidate [the] belief and practices of the
group."[6] Unauthorized persons could therefore not gain

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[1]Mustard, 124.

[2]Land, 61.

[3]James White, "Michigan General Conference," RH,
October 8, 1861, 148.

[4]John N. Loughborough, The Great Second Advent
Movement: Its Rise and Progress (Washington, DC: Review and
Herald, 1905), 348-349. The first cards were signed by
White and Bates, as these two men were known by all of the
believers. Land, 50, says that as time elapsed, subsequent
cards were signed by other "leading ministers" as well.

[5]M. Ellsworth Olsen, A History of the Origin and
Progress of Seventh-day Adventists (Washington, DC: Review
and Herald, 1925), 246. See also SDAE, s.v. "Organization,
Development of, in SDA Church."

[6]Mustard, 124.

access to preach to or address the members of the group.[1]

Reasons for Issuing Credentials

The initial system of issuing credentials appears to have arisen as an interim measure instituted to meet a particular need.[2] Land describes it as "a haphazard arrangement."[3] At that stage it does not appear as though the practice of issuing credentials was motivated by any desire to establish a ministry based on biblical grounds.[4] The following circumstances appear to have prevailed:

1. The credentials were considered "cards of identification."[5]

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[1]Land, 50. See also SDAE, s.v. "Organization, Development of, in SDA Church."

[2]The same conclusions seem to have been reached by Stanley Aufdenberg in "The Adventist Ministry before Organization," Term Paper, Andrews University, n.d. On page 1 he states that the "primary concern of the 1850's was the self-appointed preachers who were responsible to no none but themselves. The solution to the problem was a credential or license authorizing the holder to be worthy of the people's respect and support."

[3]Ibid.

[4]A number of statements exist in which James White states that initial organization came about through the "sheer necessity of the case." Life Incidents, in Connection with the Great Advent Movement, As Illustrated by the Three Angels of Revelation XIV (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of Seventh-day Adventists, 1863), 299. See also "Organization," RH, July 16, 1861, 52.

[5]Mustard, 124.

2. Credentials were issued to thwart impostors and unauthorized preachers.[1]

3. They were issued to those "who gave evidence of having received a divine call," stating that they had been approved to serve as Gospel ministers.[2]

4. This was an interim measure until "a more orderly system of ordaining and credentialing ministers would come into being."[3]

Authority for Credentialing

A number of the leaders of the early Sabbatarian Adventists had been appointed as ministers in the congregations they had served prior to their joining the Millerite Advent revival.[4] These included James White, appointed in 1843 as a minister in the Christian denomination;[5] Frederick Wheeler (1840),[6] and John Byington, appointed as Methodist Episcopal ministers; A. S. Hutchins,

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[1]Land, 50; Mustard, 124.

[2]M. E. Olsen, 246.

[3]Land, 50.

[4]Ibid.

[5]James White, Life Incidents, vol. 1 (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of Seventh-day Adventists, 1868), 104.

[6]S. B. Whitney, "Life Sketch of Elder Frederick Wheeler," RH, November 24, 1910, 24.

a minister in the Freewill Baptist Church; and H. G. Buck.[1]
It appears that these appointments served as authorization
to these "leading ministers" to assume responsibility for
the group and to issue credentials.[2]

While Bates was one of the leaders to sign the early
credentials, it is interesting to note that "it does not
appear that Joseph Bates was ever ordained or even
licensed."[3] This is remarkable, given the prominent role he
played among the Sabbatarian Adventists.[4]

Spalding proffers a possible reason for this.

> He [Bates] received credentials from the Michigan
> Conference, and later from the General Conference
> when these were organized; but being the oldest and
> most experienced minister among them, the father of
> them all, who should ordain him? Above all others,

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[1]Spalding, 295.

[2]Mustard, 125. While the early Adventists
considered the churches that they had left as being
"Babylon," the ecclesiastical authority conferred by those
same churches was not renounced or considered invalid. This
is in contradistinction to the practice of the early
Puritans in New England. In their break with the Anglican
Church, their first ministers, while having been previously
ordained by the Church of England, were elected and ordained
by the members of the new congregation formed shortly after
their arrival. "Four weeks after the arrival of Higginson
and Skelton at Salem in 1629, a day was set aside for the
appointment of church officers. They were to choose a
teacher and a pastor. Skelton was elected as Pastor.
Higginson, chosen as teacher, along with 'three or four of
the gravest men, laid their hands on Mr. Skelton's head, and
prayed.' In this manner the first minister was inducted
into office." Gerald T. du Preez, "The Development and
Practice of Ministry within Early New England Puritanism,"
Term Paper, Andrews University, March 1994.

[3]Spalding, 295.

[4]See SDAE, s.v. "Bates, Joseph."

he was under the ordination of God.[1]

The above commentary by this Adventist historian deserves closer examination. The implication that can be drawn from the above statement is that, due to his seniority and the fact that he was known to everyone, the act of "ordination" was not necessary in the case of Bates. Thus it can be concluded that the act of "ordination" was viewed as an endorsement of the legitimacy and authority to serve--an act not required for Bates, due to the status he already had. Being "under the ordination of God," an identification card, or credential, was all that was needed.

Appointment of Ministers

Differing accounts exist with regard to the first appointments. Spalding states that Washington Morse was appointed to the ministry in 1853, followed by J. N. Loughborough on June 18, 1854.[2] However, a letter written to James White by Mrs. F. M. Shimper states that Morse's setting apart took place in 1851.[3] According to James White, the first appointment service for ministers was held

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[1]A. W. Spalding, Captains of the Host (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1949), 269.

[2]A. G. Daniels, "Elder J. N. Loughborough," (obituary) RH, June 19, 1924, 17. See also Spalding, 295.

[3]Mrs. F. M. Shimper to James White, RH, August 19, 1851, 15. It cannot be accurately ascertained whether he was ordained to the ministry or just to administer the Lord's Supper, possibly as a local elder. See SDAE, s.v. "Ordination."

September 5, 1853. Horace W. Lawrence was the first of seven men to be appointed in that service. As part of the proceedings, he was "set apart . . . to the work of the gospel ministry, to administer the ordinances of the church of Christ, by the laying on of hands."[1]

It should be noted that prior to these appointments, ministerial tasks such as baptisms, funerals, and the Lord's Supper, were being administered within the Church. These were conducted by men such as White, Byington, and Buck, their previous appointments being considered justification for this.[2]

Further Organization

At the formation of the first conference--the Michigan Conference on October 6, 1861--it was decided that all ministers in that state should "carry papers consisting of a certificate of ordination and credentials."[3] These were to be renewed annually. The plan was also adopted to pay the ministers "a certain sum per week"[4] for their services.

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[1]James White, "Eastern Tour," RH, September 20, 1853, 85.

[2]Mustard, 125.

[3]Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, 353.

[4]Ibid.

As the conferences grew, the practice of "apprentice ministers or 'licentiate[s]'" arose.[1] By 1903, according to the General Conference Year Book of 1904, there were sixty-seven "ordained and licensed ministers."[2]

The preceding sections looked at aspects of the development of a system of ministerial appointment within early Adventism. The following section suggests possible ideological and theological determinants that influenced this development.

Reasons for the Organization of the Ministry

The study of the practice of credentialing and appointment demonstrates that it grew out of a necessity to protect the church from impostors and unauthorized ministers. It thus appears that the system developed before a theological basis was established.

Biblical or Pragmatic?

James White, who was at the forefront of church organization,[3] had by 1854 established for himself the "practical need and biblical basis" for the appointment and

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[1]Land, 68. Many of these licentiates began as caretakers of the evangelistic tents.

[2]Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, 356.

[3]Mustard, 128.

financial support of the ministry.[1] However, it does appear as though "it was the occurrence of immediate practical necessities that led the church to study the biblical norm and express a more explicit theological rationale."[2]

A statement which appears to reflect the pragmatic nature of early ecclesiastical appointments is recorded by White:

> Men who are called of God to teach and baptize, should be ordained, or set apart to the work of the ministry by the laying on of hands. Not that the church has power to call men into the ministry, or that ordination makes them ministers of Jesus Christ; but it is the order of the gospel that those who are called to the ministry should be ordained, for important objects (emphasis supplied).[3]

The objects of "ordination" were, according to White, (1) to give assurance to those ordained of support by their local congregation as they went out to preach; (2) to produce and secure union in the church; and (3) to guard against false teachers.[4]

As stated earlier, the desire of the early Adventists was to be true to the biblical model in all of their teachings.[5] Thus the initial consideration with

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[1]Ibid., 129.

[2]Ibid., 268.

[3]James White, "Gospel Order," RH, December 20, 1853, 189.

[4]Ibid.

[5]White, White and Bates, A Word to the "Little Flock", 13.

regard to church organization was that every detail had to reflect the New Testament precedent. However, it is significant to note that the "important objects" of "ordination," to White, do not appear to reflect a desire to adhere to any particular biblical injunction or model. The pragmatic needs of the fledgling movement appear to be the prime motivating factor.

An article by Bates on "Church Order" gives an indication of the theological concern that church organization should return to the New Testament ideal with regards to simplicity and effectiveness as "introduced by Christ and His apostles."[1] However, it appears that "later, almost entirely through [James] White's strong leadership, a broader approach was adopted."[2]

Through this "broader approach," the leaders recognized that there was a developmental progression from the pattern given by Christ in the Gospels and the subsequent system as implemented by the Apostles. Accordingly, the view was espoused that the precise pattern

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[1]Joseph Bates, "Church Order," RH, August 29, 1854, 22.

[2]Mustard, 188.

was not demonstrated, but only the principles.[1] A departure

from the specific biblical pattern thus seemed reasonable,

legitimate, and logical.[2]On this issue, Mustard concludes as

follows:

> Thus White, and later the other leaders, came to the
> conclusion that <u>any practice that would increase the
> effectiveness of the church's work was appropriate,
> as long as it was not directly opposed in Scripture</u>
> (emphasis supplied).[3]

Ecclesiastical Appointment as a Concept

Given the reluctance to move towards organization

as discussed earlier, it is "noteworthy," as stated by

Mustard, that the Seventh-day Adventist church did not pay

particular attention to the underlying bases of

ecclesiastical appointment.[4] He states that "an extensive

discussion on the significance of ordination does not appear

in early Sabbatarian Adventist writings."[5]

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[1]Bates, "Church Order," 22. Bates recognized within
the perfect system found in the New Testament a progressive
development in methods of church order. This was said to be
seen in differences between the system described by Acts and
that as found in Paul's writings.

[2]James White, "A Complaint," <u>RH</u>, June 16, 1859, 28.

[3]Mustard, 188.

[4]In surveying the publications of the early
Adventist church, Mustard observes the following: "It is
noteworthy that none of the . . . articles reviewed examined
in depth the <u>meaning of ordination</u> (emphasis supplied)."
Mustard, 226.

[5]Ibid. This is supported by Aufdenberg who states:
"It is . . . apparent that the young church never sat down
and collectively studied and defined the role of the
minister within the body of believers. His role was assumed

Aufdenberg succinctly encapsulates this apparent anomaly in the following statement:

> The early [SDA] church did not move toward
> organization without a sensitivity to the failings
> of other denominations and their ministers, yet they
> seemed to incorporate many of their assumptions
> about the ministry.[1]

He goes on to pose the question as to why "this group of people called out of 'Babylon' [did not] examine the office which helped to mold the apostate church in the first place?"[2]

Upon closer examination, it is not surprising to find that the burgeoning Adventist Church during the early 1850's, struggling for survival and theological identity against attacks from many different quarters, would institute a system without a thorough theological basis. There were larger issues to be fought. However, as the Movement grew, developed, and began to mature, it appears as though a system, adopted in the "heat" of battle, became entrenched, and, subsequently, part of the fabric of the new Church.

This is seen in articles appearing more than twenty years after the first credentialing and appointments.

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from the very beginning." Aufdenberg, 9.

[1]Aufdenberg, 9.

[2]Ibid.

George Butler[1] published two articles in the church's official publication, The Review and Herald. These articles give an insight into the understanding of the meaning and significance of ecclesiastical appointment--referred to as "ordination."

Butler's views as to the reasons for setting apart appear to be pragmatic. He states that the minister, as the representative of the church, receives affirmation of the fact that the "minister goes out by [the church's] concurrence, and this, we believe, is all that ordination signifies."[2]

Five years later he wrote that "ordination is but a solemn ceremony marking the point when the candidate steps from the ranks of the laity into those of the ministry."[3] Thus Butler, as James White, appears to have viewed appointment as an administrative process. This is in the sense that it is an affirmation of the church of the ability and right of the individual to adequately represent the church. Note a further statement from Butler: "The official act of ordination shows that a person is now entrusted with the authority of the church to act in this

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[1]George I. Butler became president of the Michigan Conference in 1865. He later went on to serve as General Conference president for eleven years.

[2]George I. Butler, "Thoughts on Church Government," RH, September 1, 1874, 51.

[3]George I. Butler, "Ordination," RH, February 13, 1879, 50.

[as its representative] capacity."[1]

He, however, goes further. He not only discusses the necessity for the endorsement and approval of the church to be given to those who were to act as its representatives, but goes on to define and defend the establishment of a liturgical ceremony to accompany the appointment. Butler states that

> ordination is simply an outward ceremony by which a body of believers set[s] apart . . . a person into some official position, as that of minister, local elder, or deacon.[2]

The ceremony of appointment, in which a public service is held involving the appointee and a group of believers, appears to have become equated with the act of appointment itself.[3]

He argues for the necessity of a liturgical ceremony. He points out that when two people marry, "the laws of God and man prescribe that there shall be some public act or ceremony. . . . So in ordination."[4] He argues

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Ibid.

[3]The act of appointment is the process whereby an individual is declared to be an authorized representative of the Church. This does not necessarily involve a liturgical ceremony. Butler's statement seems to link the ceremony inextricably with the act of appointment. The possibility exists that the declaration of appointment can stand independently of the ceremony, and thus does not need the validation of the ceremony.

[4]George I. Butler, "Ordination," 50.

for the "reasonableness" of "appropriate ceremonies."[1]
Butler states that "if a person is to be separated from the
ranks of the laity, and placed in an official position,
there must be some act by which this is done; and ordination
is this act."[2]

To Butler, the act of appointment included prayer
and the laying on of hands. James White also refers to the
laying on of hands as being the act whereby men are set
apart for ministry.[3] The laying on of hands is supported by
Butler on the grounds that it is enjoined by Scripture. It
is also required, according to Butler, as "nearly all
professed Christian churches have ordained by the laying on
of hands."[4] He thus appeals to Scripture and to the
tradition of the Christian community in requiring the laying
on of hands as part of the act of appointment.

Butler argues against the teaching of some other
denominations with regards to the concept of an
uninterrupted ministerial succession as the basis for its
legitimacy.[5] However, he goes on to state that it is

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Ibid.

[3]White, "Gospel Order," December 20, 1853, 189.
This is echoed in the following definition: "The act by
which the church sets apart an individual for a special
function in the church by prayer and the laying on of hands
(emphasis supplied)." SDAE, s.v. "Ordination."

[4]Butler, "Ordination," 50.

[5]Ibid.

"through the hands" that the church "bestow[s] a blessing."[1]
Those "hands," by implication, and reflected in practice,
belonged to persons previously appointed in other
denominations, or those subsequently set apart by them.[2]

This chapter traced the development of the
appointment of ministers. It discussed the reasons for the
issuing of credentials, and the subsequent practice of
licensing. The chapter also discussed some of the
ideological and theological bases of ecclesiastical
appointment. A summary, conclusions, and some
recommendations follow.

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[1]Ibid.

[2]The proviso with regard to Joseph Bates as
discussed earlier, pages 54-55, applies to this situation as
well.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The practice of ecclesiastical appointment within the New Testament, the Early Church, and early Seventh-day Adventism has been outlined in the preceding chapters. This chapter provides a summary and some conclusions, followed by a few recommendations.

Summary

This section has three sub-sections, providing summaries for the preceding chapters.

New Testament Teaching and Practice

The witness of the four Gospels does not appear to place any great emphasis on the appointment of the disciples. The biblical terminology does not suggest a particular term that can be considered to be specifically liturgical in nature. The emphasis is placed on the fact that the disciples are called by Christ and are sent as His messengers.

No difference is seen in the process of appointment of the Seventy of Luke 10 when compared to that of the Twelve. The parameters set forth by Christ as to their task are essentially the same as that of the Apostles.

The Book of Acts reveals an inconsistency in method

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and practice. This is demonstrated in the appointment of Matthias, the Seven, Paul and Barnabas, and the Elders. The methods and elements vary, yet there is nothing in the ritual which would specifically identify the individual offices, viz., apostles, elders or deacons. The laying on of hands does not consistently appear to be associated with setting apart for ministry.

As with the Gospels and Acts, in the Pauline Epistles the practice and terminology do not seem to indicate an established form with regard to church appointment.

Developments in the Early Church

The transition from the Apostolic Era to the Early Church does not demonstrate a clearly defined system or teaching with regard to church government. Various persons served the church in different capacities. Not all of them served by virtue of appointment by the Apostles.

The pattern of leadership that emerges is presbyter-oriented. From the councils of presbyters, or elders, the overseers (later called bishops) as chief elders developed.

When the appointment ceremony does appear as recorded by Hippolytus, it is primarily a ceremony of commissioning, confirming the election of the individual. The three-fold ministry is in place, with the bishop as the chief officer. Even though an elaborate ecclesiastical appointment ceremony seems to have developed by this time,

the election/appointment concept is still important.

The rise of the importance of the Eucharist appears to have influenced the role and importance of the bishop. The sanctity appropriated to the Eucharist is matched by as great a sanctity being conferred upon the bishop. He assumes godly functions.

The emphasis is no longer on the election and appointment by the congregation. There is a shift: the power and grace are transferred to those appointed by the clergy through the laying on of hands by the bishop.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church

The Seventh-day Adventist Church had its origins in the Millerite Movement of the mid-nineteenth century. After breaking away from the other Adventist groups, the Church, initially rejecting any sort of organizational formation, recognized the need to protect itself from unauthorized preachers.

The step taken to thwart this practice was to issue cards of identification to those whom the church authorized to be its representatives. This was first done in 1853. These persons could preach, administer the Lord's Supper, baptize, etc. These cards of identification were later called "credentials."

In that same year, on September 5, 1853, the first ministers were formally set aside in a liturgical ceremony called "ordination." The appointment service was

characterized by prayer and the laying on of hands.

A system was introduced whereby those taken into the ministry but not formally "ordained" were called "licentiates." They were considered apprentice ministers. By 1903, there were sixty-seven ordained and licensed ministers.

The Church had thus moved from issuing cards of identification for its ministers to a formal appointing service, accompanied by a liturgical ceremony. A two-tier system of licensed and credentialed ministers was also in place.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn:

1. The Bible does not appear to present a definitive, consistent pattern regarding the practice of ecclesiastical appointment. Modern ecclesiastical usage and understanding of church appointment seems to require a fairly well-established method and ceremony of appointment. The basis of this cannot consistently be derived from Scripture. The practice of Christ, the Apostles, and Paul do not offer a consistent pattern that can readily be fitted into the practice of the Early Church or the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

2. Where appointments are made in the New Testament, the criteria are:

a. in the Gospels, individuals are chosen by

Christ and commissioned by Him to perform the tasks He selects for them;

    b. in Acts, the appointments are made by the congregation or by those assembled together under the direction of God's Spirit;

    c. in Paul's writings, persons are placed in charge of churches at the direction of Paul, the elders, or those given responsibility in fostering the nurture and growth of the congregations. The role of the congregation in these appointments is not clear. This can be partially attributed to the fact that, where appointments are discussed, they are in the context of correspondence with individuals.

3. The term "ordination" in relation to New Testament ecclesiastical appointments does not seem to find its origin in the Bible. It appears as though the terminology evolved not to define, but to reflect, practice.

4. Various factors, including the development of the Eucharist as an unbloody sacrifice, led to the rise of the status of the bishop within early Christendom. This rise in eminence parallels the evolution of clerical appointment from the simple to the elaborate. This, I believe, compelled the church to expand the appointment process to match the heights to which the ministering servanthood, as originally established by Christ, had risen.

5. The pattern of "ordination," developed outside of the biblical framework by the Early Church, appears to have influenced subsequent eras.

6. Ecclesiastical appointment in the early SDA Church first took the form of issuing cards of identification. This practice later became known as "credentialing." This practice appears to have arisen out of practical necessity.

7. A further development to the issuing of these cards was that of appointing. This process was called "ordination." As with the later period of the Early Church, it appears that the members of the congregation were not involved in the election or appointment. The process seems to have been initiated and executed by the leadership of the Church.

8. In common with the practice of the Early Church, the SDA Church appears to have moved away from the biblical parameters in certain respects. Some of its practices with regard to appointment were established and adopted on the grounds of necessity and tradition.

9. One of these practices is that of the consistent pattern of "ordination" employed. While Christ's practice and that of the New Testament church does not show a fixed pattern of installation, the SDA Church adopted the practice of appointment in which a liturgical ceremony was essential.

Integral elements to this ceremony were the laying on of hands and prayer.

       10. A similarity to the concept of ministerial succession found in the Early Church appears to find a parallel in the early SDA Church. This was through the concept that the laying on of hands, by those previously set apart, constituted the passing on of a blessing.

       11. The SDA Church appears to have inherited a concept of appointment that finds its roots in the latter part of the Early Church era. The concept of "ordination" as a liturgical process whereby a minister is installed into clerical office had become an integral part of ecclesiastical thinking by the mid-nineteenth century. It seems as though this concept was transferred without critical evaluation into the fledgling organization.

      Thus, appointment as practiced by Christ and the Apostles, which underwent critical ideological and theological changes during the Early Church era, does not appear to have served as the criteria for ecclesiastical appointment for the early SDA Church. The evidence seems to indicate that the Church embraced the practices of the existing churches of the day. These practices were apparently adapted to meet the particular needs of the SDA Church.

Recommendations

1. A comprehensive study needs to be undertaken in which the practice of ecclesiastical appointment is traced along the entire spectrum of Christian history.

2. A study should also be made of current SDA teaching and practice on ecclesiastical appointment to determine if there have been any changes subsequent to the early 1900's. This study should also examine which factors have had the greatest impact on present practices within the SDA Church: ecclesiastical or biblical tradition.

3. The SDA Church has been involved in an intense debate over the ecclesiastical appointment of women for more than twenty years. A study which might be of benefit to the Church could be one in which the focus is shifted away from hermeneutical issues regarding the role and equality of women, to the biblical and historical data concerning ecclesiastical appointment per se, and its application to the Church today.

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