

Must God's Ministers Be Ordained By The Hand of Man?

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How can you know who are the true called ministers of God? Does God ordain them privately and direct -- is it contrary to God's order to ordain by the hand of man?

IT'S VITAL that you know HOW God confers the authority of office in His Church.

Jesus conferred upon His called ministers of His Church the keys of the Kingdom of God. He vested them with AUTHORITY to guide His Church, and carry on His work, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

But how can you know who carries this authority? How are those upon whom it is conferred ordained to office? How can you recognize the one and only true Church of God -- the very Church Jesus said He would build -- HIS BODY, thru whom the Spirit of God today carries on THE WORK OF GOD?

Was the Apostle Paul Ordained by Man?

How was the Apostle Paul ordained to his office of authority? Did God ordain him privately -- secretly -- without any human witnesses to the fact, or was he ordained BY THE HAND OF MAN?

Is God's order, in His Church, to ordain men INDEPENDENTLY of each other, secretly, directly? And does God carry on His work thru different competing men, independently? Or is God's Church organized, working together IN HARMONY AND TEAMWORK, with one mind, actuated by ONE SPIRIT?

It is of vital importance that these questions be answered -- ACCORDING TO GOD'S OWN WORD!

First, then, how was the Apostle Paul ordained?

Let's trace the case-history of this Apostle from his conversion to the time he became an Apostle with full authority. You should be familiar with this chain of experiences.

Paul's Case History

As you know, this man's name was Saul, until God changed his name to Paul. Saul is first mentioned in Acts 7:58, in connection with the martyrdom of Stephen. In Acts 8:1 it is mentioned that Saul was

approving the stoning of Stephen. He was a young man at that time (Acts 7:58).

ACTS 8:3, Saul, filled with misguided zeal, participated violently in the persecution of the Church, making havoc of it, literally dragging men and women off to prison.

ACTS 9:1-2, Saul, passionately breathing threats of murder against disciples of Christ, obtained credentials from the high priest to the synagogue at Damascus, authorizing him to arrest and bring to Jerusalem any men or women disciples found at Damascus. As he approached Damascus, God struck him down blind with a blinding light, and there Jesus spoke to Saul and revealed himself to him, and commanded Saul to rise and go on into the city, where he would be told what to do (verses 3-6). He was blind for three days (verse 9).

Now in the conversion of Saul, did God work thru human agency, or did He do it all secretly, privately? God now used a disciple whom Saul would have murdered, or thrown into prison -- Ananias -- to whom Jesus spoke in a vision, instructing him to go to Saul. This Ananias was the HUMAN instrument thru whom Christ worked in converting Saul.

"And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him (Saul) said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit' (Acts 9:17). 'And now,' said Ananias (Acts 22:16), 'why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'"

Ananias laid his hands on Saul for the receiving of the Holy Spirit -- his actual conversion and begettal as a son of God -- as well as for the restoring of his sight.

Even Conversion by Man's Hand

Thus Saul's CONVERSION was accomplished BY THE HAND OF MAN, used as God's instrumentality. This was not his ordination as an apostle -- it was his setting apart as a begotten son of God. But God works thru HIS chosen human hands!

For several days (Acts 9:19-20), Saul was with the disciples at Damascus. Immediately, in the synagogues, he proclaimed that Jesus was the promised Messiah -- the Son of God. He did NOT at this time proclaim the GOSPEL of the Kingdom of God, for that had not yet been revealed to him. He merely knew, at this juncture, from his heavenly vision, that Jesus was the Christ.

Next, in verse 23, "after that MANY DAYS were fulfilled, ..." The events of this verse 23 occurred MANY DAYS later. What happened in the meantime?

Paul's account in his letter to the Galatians explains it.

"But WHEN it pleased God, ... to reveal His Son to me" -- at the time he was struck down blind and led to Damascus -- "... IMMEDIATELY I conferred nor with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I WENT INTO ARABIA, and returned again

unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem." (Gal. 1:15-18.)

So Saul did not go up to Jerusalem IMMEDIATELY, after his conversion. Instead, IMMEDIATELY -- after the few days proclaiming Christ in the synagogues in Damascus HE WENT INTO ARABIA! What happened there?

Notice I Cor. 9:1 and I Cor. 15:8: Paul had actually SEEN CHRIST! He had been WITH Christ! He did not receive his knowledge of THE GOSPEL from Peter or the apostles, or from men. He received it DIRECT FROM CHRIST! As one begotten into the apostolic family out of due time. When? Where? Why, during these three years in Arabia? He was in the Arabian desert -- away from civilization, and from men. He was there with Christ! Then he returned to Damascus. This, then, is what happened during the "MANY DAYS" mentioned in Acts 9:23. The "many days" were the three years Saul was in Arabia with Christ.

Now, Gal. 1:18, after these three years in Arabia Saul returned to Damascus, and went up to Jerusalem to see Peter -- to report to the CHIEF Apostle. But he saw none of the apostles on this trip, except Peter, and James, the Lord's brother. This must be the trip to Jerusalem described in Acts 9:23-27. After this "many days," the Jews at Damascus plotted to kill Saul, but Christian disciples let him down over the wall of the city in a basket by night, and he escaped, and went to Jerusalem, attempting there to join the disciples. But they were afraid of him. Then Barnabas took Saul and brought him to the apostles -- just the two, Peter and James, according to Gal. 1:18-19, to whom he reported his heavenly vision, Christ's commission, and his conversion. Thereupon Saul went in and out with Peter and James at the Temple, preaching boldly -- but the Jews soon sought to kill him. At this time, while Saul was in a trance, praying in the Temple, Christ again appeared, telling Saul to leave Jerusalem, and that he was to be sent to the Gentiles (Acts 22:17-21). Then the Christian brethren brought Saul to Caesarea, and sent him off to Tarsus, his home city.

Paul Ordained by Hand of Men in Authority

Jesus revealed to Saul, when he was first struck down blind, that he was to be sent to carry the Gospel to the Gentiles. But up to this point in the case history of Paul's call to this service, God had not opened salvation to the Gentiles. It was "to the Jew first," and then to the Gentiles.

It was while Saul was back home in Tarsus that God sent PETER to carry the Gospel, FIRST BY THE HAND OF PETER, to the Gentiles. The 10th and 11th chapters of Acts record the experiences of Peter being sent to the home of the gentile Cornelius, and the opening of the minds of the apostles at Jerusalem to the fact that God had now granted repentance to the Gentiles.

Now pick up the story in Acts 11:19. The disciples who were scattered as a result of Stephen's martyrdom traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching to Jews only. Then some of them at Antioch preached to the Greeks also, and God blessed their work, and a great number turned to Christ. News of this reached the Church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. Under the ministry of Barnabas a large number were added to the Lord there. Then (v. 25) Barnabas went to Tarsus after Saul, and brought him to Antioch to help in the growing work there. Barnabas (his name now mentioned first) and Saul taught in the Church there for one year. Here the disciples

for the first time were called "Christians."

In these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. These prophets ranked second to the apostles in the framework of God's Church. (Eph. 4:11.) Their mission seems to have been to receive messages or prophecies direct from God, and to convey these messages from God to the apostles or evangelists or elders. God's Word had not yet been completely committed to writing. The New Testament was still in process of being written. There is no evidence of the existence of any prophets in the Church since the New Testament was written.

Every example in the New Testament, however, shows that Christ carried on affairs in His Church according to HIS GOVERNMENT, and in definite order. There is no doubt, therefore, that THESE PROPHETS WERE SENT from Jerusalem BY AUTHORITY OF THE APOSTLES.

Then there was a great famine, foretold by the prophet Agabus. Barnabas and Saul were sent with relief provisions to drought-stricken Jerusalem (Acts 11:27-30). About this time Herod the king became violent against the Church. He killed James (brother of John), and put Peter in prison at Passover time. Peter was freed from prison by an angel (Acts 12:6-10). Verse 25, Barnabas (still named first) and Saul returned to Antioch with Mark. Up to this time, Saul had engaged only in a preparatory ministry -- had not yet entered his called mission to the Gentiles.

Now CHAPTER 13. At this time there were, at the Antioch Church, PROPHETS and TEACHERS (no apostles). But God's authority was vested in the Church at Jerusalem, and authority there was vested in the APOSTLES, who undoubtedly, in process of GOD'S GOVERNMENT, HAD SENT the prophets to Antioch. Barnabas and Saul were included among the TEACHERS at Antioch.

VERSE 2: While they were worshipping and fasting, GOD, thru the Holy Spirit, gave order: "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for THE WORK TO WHICH I HAVE CALLED THEM." THAT IS, ORDAIN THEM! UP to this time, Saul HAD NOT ENTERED UPON THE WORK TO WHICH CHRIST HAD CALLED HIM. He had been merely gaining preparatory experience. What is the Bible definition of "ORDAIN"? From "Cruden's Concordance," it is: "To appoint, or design to a certain end or use. To choose, or SET APART for an office."

So here we see in operation THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD IN HIS CHURCH, THROUGH His human officers chosen by Him, headed by prophets sent by Apostles! Verse 3: "And when they had fasted and prayed, AND LAID THEIR HANDS ON THEM, they SENT THEM away."

THERE IT IS! Barnabas and Saul, renamed in verse 9 PAUL, were then and there OFFICIALLY ORDAINED, after fasting and prayer, BY THE LAYING ON OF HANDS of those in authority, SENT there by the Apostles, and as DIRECTED by the Holy Spirit! God did not ordain Paul privately, secretly or INDEPENDENTLY of His CHURCH. He was ORDAINED BY THE HAND OF MAN, according to God's ORDER OF GOVERNMENT, as directed by Christ the HEAD of the Church, but THRU THOSE HUMAN INSTRUMENTS according to God's own ORDER.

GOD'S Order of Government

Up until this ordination, BY THE HAND OF MAN, the Apostle Paul never spoke with authority. He spoke boldly. He spoke convincingly. But never with authority. Never did he issue orders. HE WAS UNDER AUTHORITY. He OBEYED ORDERS.

But now, after this ordination by the laying on of hands, PAUL SPOKE WITH AUTHORITY of his OFFICE.

You read of Paul's ordination in verse 3, of Acts 13. Notice, verse 6, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, who opposed Barnabas and Saul. Now notice how Paul acted WITH AUTHORITY:

VERSE 9: "But Saul, WHO IS ALSO CALLED PAUL, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, 'You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind and unable to see the sun for a time.' Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him." (Verse 9-11.)

Never before had Paul assumed authority. Now, after being ordained by laying on of the hands of men in proper office, authorized by Christ, Paul assumed and wielded the AUTHORITY of God!

What is God's order of authority in His Church?

You find it in Ephesians 4:11-12: "And He (Christ, the HEAD of the Church) gave some, APOSTLES, and some, PROPHETS, and some, EVANGELISTS, and some, PASTORS (leading or presiding elders of local churches), and TEACHERS; for the perfecting of the saints, for THE WORK of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: TILL we all come to the UNITY OF THE FAITH ..." In other words, to PREVENT separate, INDEPENDENT, and competing work which would introduce confusion, and division, driving many out of the Body of Christ, GOD HAS ORGANIZED GOVERNMENT in His Church. That government is the government of GOD.

It operates from GOD, at the top, on down. It is government of and by and from GOD the Father, thru CHRIST, thru God-called and ordained APOSTLES, thru EVANGELISTS, thru PASTORS, thru TEACHERS, IN THAT ORDER. This government means TEAMWORK. It works for UNITY, not division.

In Christ's apostolic organization, during those first two 19-year time-cycles of His Church, there was always TEAMWORK, harmony, unity, in God's GOVERNMENT in His Church.

Teamwork Between Paul and Peter

Before Saul did any more than a little preparatory preaching, asserting that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah -- even before his ordination as an apostle -- he went to Jerusalem to see Peter -- to report to Peter his vision from Christ, and the commission Christ had given him. It is evident from the Scriptural account that Peter accepted him. During his 15 days with Peter in Jerusalem, he roomed with Peter (Gal. 1:18).

The Prophets with the teachers, who, under direct instruction from Christ, ordained Paul at Antioch, had come from Jerusalem. And in the operation of the GOVERNMENT OF GOD within His Church this could not have been except by authority from Peter and the Apostles. Nothing was at any time done contrary to, or in opposition to, Peter or the Apostles. There was always perfect harmony and cooperation.

Later, 14 years after his conversion (Gal. 2:1), Paul went up to Jerusalem again, with Barnabas, taking Titus also. God had revealed to him the command to go. He then communicated privately to Peter and the Apostles the Gospel he preached among the Gentiles. This was the same visit to Jerusalem recorded in Acts 15. It was a coming to the HEADQUARTERS Church, where the Apostles sat in COUNCIL, with AUTHORITY, for decisions inspired by the Holy Spirit, thru APOSTLES, God's chief human offices under Christ.

Upon seeing that the work of the Gospel to the Gentiles had been committed BY CHRIST to Paul, as chief apostolic office for that work, even as the chief apostolic office for the work of the Gospel to ISRAELITES had been committed to Peter -- that the SAME HOLY SPIRIT worked in both, but in their different, non-conflicting, non-competing fields -- they gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship in this APOSTOLIC MINISTRY -- Paul as Christ's Apostle in first authority under Christ in the work to the Gentiles; Peter as Christ's Apostle in first authority under Christ in the work to Israelites.

But still there was perfect harmony. There was no conflict. There was no abridgment of God's GOVERNMENT, thru Christ, thru Apostles -- IN THAT ORDER! And even so, Paul's position and office was recognized and accepted by Peter and other APOSTLES.

Titles of Office

It is well, here, to explain the titles God uses for those in office in His government. We have just considered such offices as those of APOSTLE, PROPHET, EVANGELIST, PASTOR, TEACHER. But what about such titles as "Elder," "Bishop," "Overseer", or "Presbyter." All these are used in the New Testament. Actually, all these latter four mean exactly the same thing. A Bishop, or an Overseer, is an Elder -- and the Presbyters are, simply, elders.

But some Elders hold higher office of AUTHORITY than others. Actually, Apostles are also elders, and the assistant pastors, or even non-preaching teachers and leaders in local churches are elders. The Apostle John called himself an Elder (II John 1, and III John 1). The Apostle Peter called himself an Elder (I Pet. 5:1). In other words, ALL ministers of Christ, no matter how high or low the office of authority, are Elders. All Apostles are Elders, BUT ALL ELDERS ARE NOT APOSTLES!

To understand the derivation of the term "Elder," let me briefly sketch for you the history of the title. The original government of the Hebrews, from Abraham, was patriarchal. The head of the family exercised the supreme rule (under God), over all his descendants. His married sons bore rule over their respective families, children and grandchildren, etc., but still remained subordinate to their father as supreme head. It was government from the TOP, DOWN. At the father's death, his firstborn son succeeded him in supreme headship over the family. Naturally, these positions, hence the

designation, "Elder," which simply meant the oldest one. Thus Jacob (Israel) was the supreme head over all who went to Egypt with him, also his sons had families of their own. Thus "Elder" became the official title of those in authority.

The earliest mention of "Elders" in government office (aside from family rule), is at the time of the Exodus. The seventy elders mentioned in Exodus and Numbers were a governing body, a sort of parliament. This was the origin of the Sanhedrin, or Council. This carried to the time of Christ. In the New Testament Church, the Elders, or Presbyters, were the same as Bishops -- the general title for ALL spiritual offices of authority over the Church.

God Works Thru only ONE Body

God's Church is CHRIST'S BODY. When Jesus was on earth in human flesh, He said that of Himself He could do nothing -- the Father that dwelt IN HIM, thru the Holy Spirit, did the works. The Spirit, or Power, of God, then, did the WORK OF GOD for that time thru the one human body of Jesus!

But Jesus said to His disciples that they should do the same works He did, because He would go to the Father, and send the SAME SPIRIT to work IN THEM. After Jesus ascended to heaven, the SPIRIT of GOD entered into the human bodies of those God had put into HIS CHURCH, and now worked THRU THEM as His human instruments. Thus THE CHURCH is the BODY of CHRIST -- the human body (composed of its many human members) by which, empowered by the Holy Spirit, THE WORK OF GOD is carried on.

The Word of God clearly teaches us that there is but the ONE Spirit, and the ONE Body. (I Cor. 12:12-13, 20.) God cannot, and does not, carry on HIS WORK thru ONE BODY, with headquarters at Pasadena, California, and also thru some one man, or different Body, working independently and out of harmony with the Pasadena Body, in Pittsburgh, and another man pulling in a still different direction of opposition, in New York.

God ALWAYS Ordains by Hand of Man

That ONE BODY of Christ, carrying on HIS WORK, must function as a UNIT. It must work in harmony and unity, with teamwork, for God is not the author of confusion. There must be no pulling off in different directions by different men IN that one Body. There must be no competition, or division. And anyone who knowingly promotes, or encourages anyone in promoting, such disharmony, competition, and division, becomes the enemy of God, and is serving the devil and not God!

In order that this ONENESS -- this UNITY of purpose and action -- this HARMONY and co-operative teamwork, be maintained and preserved in GOD'S WORK, God has ordained GOVERNMENT IN HIS CHURCH. And He has empowered His Church with DIVINE AUTHORITY.

That government in God's Church is government from God, thru Christ, thru apostles, thru

evangelists, thru pastors, thru other elders, IN THAT ORDER!

Now suppose God did NOT have these various officers ordained by the hand of man. What would happen? One man in New York would APPOINT HIMSELF, and come up and say, "I claim equal office and authority with those ordained from Pasadena. I wasn't ordained by the hand of man, but direct by the hand of God." And then this man carries on his own independent work. Such a work CANNOT be a PART of the work of GOD'S TRUE CHURCH, for the simple reason that sooner or later it will start pulling off in an opposite direction -- unless there is DIRECTION from Christ on down, in ONE CHURCH ORDER OF GOVERNMENT as God ordained. Sooner or later competition, misunderstanding, strife, and division will result! CHRIST IS NOT DIVIDED!

So you see, Brethren, WHY God always ordains men to office THRU HIS OWN CHURCH, THRU HIS OWN ESTABLISHED ORDER, as laid down in HIS WORD! GOD ALWAYS ordains to office BY THE HAND OF MEN, whom HE has placed in office. THERE IS NOT ONE EXAMPLE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT WHERE ANY MAN WAS SELF-APPOINTED, OR ORDAINED WITHOUT THE HAND OF MAN, SEPARATE FROM AND INDEPENDENT OF HIS ORDERED CHURCH! Any such claims to ordination or office are WITHOUT A SHRED OF SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY!

Notice a few Scriptural examples:

JOHN 15:16: Jesus Christ Himself ORDAINED His Apostles -- by His Hand in Person, direct. Also Mark 3:14.

ACTS 1:22: Matthias, after God thru the Holy Spirit directed that he be chosen, was ORDAINED thru the other eleven as one of the TWELVE APOSTLES (Also verses 23-26).

ACTS 14:23: Elders were chosen and ORDAINED in every city, by the hands of Paul and Barnabas, with fasting and prayer.

I TIM. 2:7: Was Paul actually ORDAINED, or just made an Apostle by God direct without ordination? Paul here says plainly, HE WAS ORDAINED! That settles it!

II TIM. 1:6 AND 4:1-5: Timothy was sent out by Paul as an evangelist, clothed with AUTHORITY to appoint and ordain elders and deacons in the local churches, and given authority over local pastors and churches. God did this THRU THE HAND OF PAUL, and in this Scripture, we see Paul had laid hands on Timothy. If for receiving the Holy Spirit, then certainly also for his ordination.

TITUS 1:5: Paul gave to Titus the evangelist authority to ORDAIN elders in every city, AS PAUL HAD APPOINTED HIM. Thus Titus was ordained to this authority by the hand of Paul, and elders in many churches were ordained by the hand of Titus, the evangelist. Here is the GOVERNMENT OF GOD, operating from Christ, thru Paul THE APOSTLE, thru Titus, THE EVANGELIST, thru local ELDERS, in the order of God's authority in His Church according to Eph. 4:11.

And so it goes. There is not one example in the New Testament showing that any man was ever ordained to an office of authority WITHOUT the hand of man! The ONLY examples and instructions we have show God doing it thru the hand of men of His choosing!

WHICH Is Christ's ONE Body?

Either the Church of God with headquarters in Pasadena is the ONE AND ONLY true Body of Christ, thru whom Christ carries on HIS WORK, or else it is deceived, or it is a fraud. There is no other possibility. You MUST FACE IT, and DECIDE WHICH ALTERNATIVE IS TRUE. If it IS the Body thru whom Christ works in carrying on HIS WORK to the world for this time, then it is THE ONLY BODY that is being used of Christ. CHRIST IS NOT DIVIDED!

Now what is the true WORK OF GOD? Jesus' first commission to His Church was: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Apostasy was prophesied. But, looking into our present end-time, Jesus said, "THIS GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM shall be preached (Mark 13, published) in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come."

Brethren, WHO is preaching the same Gospel Jesus taught, the Gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD, to the world? Do you know any other Church fulfilling this prophecy as to the WORK OF THE TRUE CHURCH for this very day and time?

This is the time when the "Philadelphia era of God's Church has been reached. Somewhere in the world today is this TRUE CHURCH of GOD, fitting the description of the "church in Philadelphia" of Rev. 3.

It follows the "Sardis" era of the Church. The Sardis Church had the NAME of being alive -- the NAME, "Church of God." But this Sardis Church died, spiritually. Christ, in His Messages to these seven Churches, or church eras, warned this church that its WORK was not perfect -- it was not performing the WORK OF GOD in power, but with such pitiful weakness there was NO SPIRITUAL LIFE in it. It had many true doctrines, else it could not have been the Church of God at all but Christ warned it to AWAKE, and strengthen itself, and to REPENT. In other words, acknowledge its errors in doctrine, and accept the NEW LIGHT now becoming available in these last days, and yield to God so it could be filled with HIS POWER. Otherwise, Christ warned, He would come on the people of this Church "like a thief," and they will not know "the hour" of His coming. This, of course (compare Mat. 24, Mark 13, Luke 21), refers to the Second Coming of Christ. This shows that members of this Church will still be physically alive AT THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST. Yet there were a few names in that Church who were not guilty of refusing to repent or accept new truth. Apparently they carry over, and form the nucleus of the following era -- the Philadelphia Church.

Of the "Philadelphia" Church, Christ says, "I know that you have but little power." It is probably the WEAKEST in numerical and physical strength and power -- the smallest in membership, of any of the Churches from the time of the Apostles until the Second Coming. It has but few ministers. Yet this Church has KEPT God's Word -- repented where it was wrong -- accepted the new knowledge now revealed -- lived by the Word of God -- and is also called by the NAME, The CHURCH OF

GOD. Because this Church, physically small and weak, has KEPT GOD'S WORD with patient endurance, it shall be PROTECTED and PRESERVED from the hour of trial -- the Great Tribulation, and Day of the Lord, soon coming on the earth! And THIS is the Church Christ USES as HIS INSTRUMENT in proclaiming His GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM -- the GOVERNMENT of God -- to the world. He sets before this Church an "OPEN DOOR," for the proclaiming of this Gospel to ALL THE WORLD. The meaning of this "DOOR" is explained in II Cor. 2:12-13. Paul said: "I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a DOOR was opened to me of the Lord." This was a means to preach the Gospel in EUROPE. Until then, for 19 years, the Gospel had been preached only in Asia!

For one 19-year time-cycle, God carried on the Gospel thru His Church to North America. He had opened the DOOR of radio and the printing press. Then, 19 years to the exact month, God OPENED THE DOOR for the Gospel to go to ALL EUROPE, and the very next year to ASIA. The same identical time-pattern of 19-year time-cycles is being fulfilled in God's work thru His Church today, as it was thru His Church in Apostolic days.

But SOME of those in the Church today will grow weary with well-doing. They will brag about being the true Church -- thinking they are spiritually rich, when they are, in fact, almost spiritually destitute. Because they are indifferent to the real WORK OF GOD, lukewarm, lacking in zeal, Christ will spew them out of His mouth. THEY cannot be used in His work! THEY shall lose the very salvation they boast of having unless they repent! God help YOU never to drift into the LAODICEAN church!

Ordained, and Under Authority

Finally, brethren, though I have mentioned it in the Autobiography, many may not realize the significance of the fact that I personally was fully ORDAINED by the laying on of hands after fasting and prayer of those in authority in GOD'S CHURCH. It was in the summer of 1931. I had held a short evangelistic campaign for the Oregon Conference, Church of God (Stanberry, Mo.), six months before, after three and a half years of receiving instruction in the Gospel from Christ, thru His written Word. In the summer of 1931 those in authority in this Church of God asked to enter the full time ministry, starting with a tent campaign in Eugene, Oregon. And for this ministry I was ORDAINED, by fasting and prayer and laying on of hands of the presbytery -- those in authority in God's Church. This Church is now clearly identified, in the light of carefully documented historical research, as the "Sardis" era of the Church described prophetically by Jesus in Revelation 3:1-6.

An abbreviated account of those early years in the ministry -- of being UNDER authority -- of preaching where and when I was SENT by those over me in authority -- of being SENT by them to the country school house west of Eugene, Oregon, in 1933, from where the present work and the "Philadelphia" era of the Church blossomed forth -- was published in the December GOOD NEWS, in Herman L. Hoeh's article "God Demands Teamwork."

There is not space in the present article to repeat this history of early experience -- of being considered, and accepting the status, of the LEAST of the ministers in the Church. But to continue!

God works thru HUMAN INSTRUMENTS! Of course God COULD carry on His work otherwise. God COULD carry on His work without relying on the tithes and offerings of His children in His Church. He COULD supply all the money by direct miracle. But it is for OUR good that He gives every begotten child of His a DIRECT PART in His great work.

God COULD ordain those He has called to office and authority in His work secretly and direct, without the hand of man. But there is no instance in the history of His Church where He ever did! God COULD do all His work HIMSELF, direct, without using any ministers or human agencies at all! BUT THAT IS NOT GOD'S WAY! God did His work on earth thru the human body of Jesus Christ while Jesus was on earth. Now, according to God's own Word, HIS CHURCH, with its many human members, is CHRIST'S BODY thru whom God carries on His work. There is no example in the Bible where God carried on HIS WORK under the New Covenant by any single individual OUTSIDE OF, INDEPENDENT OF, HIS ORGANIZED CHURCH AND HIS ORDER OF GOVERNMENT IN THE CHURCH. Anyone outside of God's Church is AGAINST God's Church!

Jesus said: "He that is not with me is AGAINST ME; and he that gathereth not with me SCATTERETH ABROAD!"