

A BAPTIST DOCTRINE OF ORDINATION
STUDIED IN CONFSSIONAL TRADITION,
THE WORKS OF J. R. GRAVES AND R. B. C. HOWELL
AND ACTUAL PRACTICE IN KENTUCKY

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Doctor of Theology

by
W. Thomas Lane

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FOREWORD

FOREWORD

In the past fifty years there has been very little work done on defining and setting forth a Baptist doctrine of ordination. Recently, however, interest in the subject has been stimulated by renewed study and investigation of the nature of the Church and its Ministry. H. Wheeler Robinson in The Life and Faith of the Baptists (Revised edition; London: The Kingsgate Press, 1946); A. Dakin, The Baptist View of the Church and Ministry (London: The Baptist Union Publication Dept., 1944); Earnest A. Payne, The Fellowship of Believers (Enlarged edition; London: The Carey Kingsgate Press, Ltd., 1952); Robert C. Walton, The Gathered Community (London: Carey Press, 1946) and Henry Cook in What Baptists Stand For (Second edition; London: The Carey Kingsgate Press, 1953) discussed Baptist views of the Church and Ministry. These books dealt with a British doctrine of ordination and, therefore, did not attempt to interpret the tradition and thought of Baptists in America.

Robert G. Torbet in The Baptist Ministry Then and Now (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1953) investigated the American view of the Ministry from English and American sources. In doing this he inadequately treats the subject of ordination. With the exception of Torbet, Baptists of America have made little literary and theological contribution to this subject.

The writer has recognized a particular need among Southern Baptists for a study and interpretation of the doctrine of ordination. This thesis is an attempt to develop a Baptist view of ordination which is true to the New Testament, Baptist tradition and adequate for our contemporary needs. The investigation in the first four chapters draws from three sources: Baptist confessions of faith and manuals of discipline in England and America, the thought of J. R. Graves and R. B. C. Howell, and actual practice in Kentucky. Including the confessions of faith, this study covers a period of three hundred years (1600-1900). The fifth chapter is a constructive statement of the author's understanding of what Baptist tradition, interpreted in the light of the New Testament, has to say about the significance of ordination for our witness today.

In this thesis the writer uses several terms in a special sense. In the first four chapters the word church refers to a local, visible congregation while the word Church signifies the Elect of all ages (i. e., the invisible Church). In the fifth chapter the word Church is employed to describe the universal, visible, collective society of all who confess Christ as Lord and Saviour. Neither polity nor structure of organization are essential to this Church. Faith in Christ is the basis of this

fellowship. In the fifth chapter the word church means a local, visible congregation.

The terms, ministry and Ministry, are used throughout the thesis with two particular meanings. The word ministry conveys the idea of service or function while the term Ministry refers either to an ordained man or to a group of ordained men.

The author is greatly indebted to Dr. Theron D. Price, Dr. William L. Lumpkin and Dr. G. Hugh Wamble for guidance and direction in this study. The writer thanks Dr. Leo T. Crismon for placing the source materials of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Library at his disposal. Appreciation is also expressed to Mr. and Mrs. Robert S. Alley and Mr. Edgar McKnight for their assistance in preparation of the final copy.

W. Thomas Lane

Louisville, Kentucky

May, 1958

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
FORWARD.	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.	viii
CHAPTER	
I. THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY IN A BAPTIST DOCTRINE	
OF ORDINATION.	1
Baptist Confessions of Faith and Disciplines	2
English General Baptist confessions	
and disciplines.	2
<u>A Declaration of Faith of English People</u>	6
<u>The Faith and Practise of Thirty</u>	
<u>Congregations.</u>	10
<u>The True Gospel-faith.</u>	12
<u>Standard Confession.</u>	14
<u>Orthodox Creed</u>	16
Grantham's <u>Christianismus Primitivus</u> . .	19
English Particular Baptist confessions	
and disciplines.	22
<u>First London Confession.</u>	25
Collier's <u>Right Constitution</u>	26
<u>Somerset Confession.</u>	27
Myles' <u>An Antidote</u>	28
<u>Second London Confession</u>	30
Mitchill's <u>Jachin & Boaz</u>	34

CHAPTER	PAGE
American Baptist confessions and	
disciplines.	35
<u>Philadelphia Confession</u> and disciplines.	36
<u>Charlestown Confession</u> and discipline. .	43
<u>New Hampshire Confession</u>	48
The Works of J. R. Graves and R. B. C. Howell	52
Background	52
J. R. Graves	61
R. B. C. Howell.	69
Actual Practice in Kentucky.	72
Associational minutes and periodical	
literature	75
The Whitsitt controversy	82
II. THE MINISTERIAL OFFICE AND ITS RELATION TO	
THE CHURCH	88
Baptist Confessions of Faith and Disciplines	89
English General Baptist confessions and	
disciplines.	89
<u>A Declaration of Faith of English People</u>	89
<u>The Faith and Practise of Thirty</u>	
<u>Congregations</u>	91
<u>The True Gospel-faith</u>	93
<u>Standard Confession</u>	94
<u>Orthodox Creed</u> and Grantham's	
<u>Christianismus Primitivus</u>	96

CHAPTER	PAGE
English Particular Baptist confessions and disciplines.	100
<u>First London Confession</u>	100
Collier's <u>Right Constitution</u>	102
<u>Somerset Confession</u> and Myles' <u>An</u> <u>Antidote</u>	104
<u>Second London Confession</u>	105
Mitchill's <u>Jachin & Boaz</u>	107
American Baptist confessions and disciplines.	110
<u>Philadelphia Confession</u> and disciplines.	110
<u>Charlestown Confession</u> and discipline. .	114
<u>New Hampshire Confession</u>	117
The Works of J. R. Graves and R. B. C. Howell	119
J. R. Graves	119
R. B. C. Howell.	124
Actual Practice in Kentucky.	128
Summary.	134
III. VOCATION AND LICENSE IN BAPTIST ORDINATION . .	135
Baptist Confessions of Faith and Disciplines	136
English General Baptist confessions and disciplines.	136
<u>A Declaration of Faith of English People</u>	136
<u>The Faith and Practise of Thirty</u> <u>Congregations</u>	137
<u>The True Gospel-faith</u>	139

CHAPTER	PAGE
<u>Standard Confession</u>	140
<u>Orthodox Creed</u>	142
Grantham's <u>Christianismus Primitivus</u> . .	143
English Particular Baptist confessions and disciplines.	145
<u>First London Confession</u>	145
Collier's <u>Right Constitution</u>	147
<u>Somerset Confession</u> and Myles' <u>An</u> <u>Antidote</u>	148
<u>Second London Confession</u>	149
Mitchill's <u>Jachin & Boaz</u>	151
American Baptist confessions and disciplines.	153
<u>Philadelphia Confession</u> and disciplines.	153
<u>Charlestown Confession</u> and discipline. .	156
<u>New Hampshire Confession</u>	158
The Works of J. R. Graves and R. B. C. Howell	161
J. R. Graves	161
R. B. C. Howell.	165
Actual Practice in Kentucky.	166
Summary.	175
IV. BAPTIST PRACTICE AND DOCTRINE IN ORDINATION. .	177
Baptist Confessions of Faith and Disciplines	178
English General Baptist confessions and disciplines.	178

	xiii
CHAPTER	PAGE
<u>A Declaration of Faith of English People</u>	178
<u>The Faith and Practise of Thirty Con-</u> <u>gregations, The True Gospel-faith</u> <u>and the Standard Confession.</u>	183
<u>Orthodox Creed and Grantham's</u> <u>Christianismus Primitivus.</u>	191
English Particular Baptist confessions of faith and disciplines	198
<u>First London Confession.</u>	198
<u>Collier's Right Constitution, Somerset</u> <u>Confession and Myles' An Antidote. . .</u>	202
<u>Second London Confession and Mitchill's</u> <u>Jachin & Boaz.</u>	209
American Baptist confessions and disciplines.	220
<u>Philadelphia Confession and disciplines.</u>	220
<u>Charlestown Confession and discipline. .</u>	230
<u>New Hampshire Confession</u>	237
The Works of J. R. Graves and R. B. C. Howell	244
J. R. Graves	244
R. B. C. Howell.	254
Actual Practice in Kentucky.	261
Summary.	274

	xiv
CHAPTER	PAGE
V. A BAPTIST DOCTRINE OF ORDINATION--AN APPRAISAL	276
Conclusions of Historical Study.	277
The source of authority.	277
The ministerial office and its relation	
to the church.	279
Vocation and license	281
Practice and doctrine in ordination.	283
A Baptist Doctrine of Ordination	287
The source of authority.	287
The ministerial office and its relation	
to the church.	293
Vocation	300
The significance of ordination	304
BIBLIOGRAPHY	312
APPENDIX A	325
APPENDIX B	327

CHAPTER I

THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY IN A BAPTIST
DOCTRINE OF ORDINATION

CHAPTER I

THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY IN A BAPTIST

DOCTRINE OF ORDINATION

The search for authority demands an examination of the Baptist doctrine of the Church. This chapter investigates the problem of authority in ordination. The inquiry is summarized in the question: "Where does the source of authority lie?" The investigation will be confined to three areas: Baptist confessions of faith and manuals of discipline, the works of J. R. Graves and R. B. C. Howell, and actual practice as seen in the associational minutes and periodicals of Kentucky Baptists from 1785-1900. The chief field of interest is centered in the quest to discover whether or not local churches, associations or councils held de jure, original power for ordination to the Ministry.

The English Reformation had been mild compared to that on the Continent. Henry VIII (1509-1547) threw off papal jurisdiction but in other respects left the English Church largely unreformed. When Edward VI came to the throne in 1547 exiles from Henry's despotism returned bearing the doctrines of Calvin and Luther. Reform began within the Establishment but due to the death of Edward in 1553 was short-lived. Mary, sister of Edward VI, ascended to the throne in the same year with determination

to return England to the Catholic fold. Protestant exiles fled to the Continent and gathered in the cities where Reformation ideas were the strongest. Elizabeth took the crown in 1558. Because of her policy of comprehension, the Marian exiles returned to England and to the Establishment forming the nucleus of the Puritan party. The Puritan aim was to reform the Anglican communion from within. This effort seemed to be stillborn in the latter years of Elizabeth's reign. Consequently those Puritans who despaired of reform from within were driven to radical measures. They left the Anglican Church and became known as Separatists who insisted upon a "gathered church." The leaders of this Separatism or Independency were Robert Browne, John Greenwood, Henry Barrow, and John Penry.¹ Parliament, in 1593, passed a statute which banished all Dissenters who refused to recognize Elizabeth's authority in ecclesiastical affairs. This ban drove many of the Separatists to Amsterdam where they settled under the leadership of Francis Johnson and Henry Ainsworth.²

All of the Puritans had not left the Church of England. Some of them felt that James I, who succeeded Elizabeth in

¹A. C. Underwood, A History of the English Baptists (London: Kingsgate Press, 1947), pp. 28-32.

²Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918), p. 463.

1603, would listen to their requests by leaving the question of whether or not to wear vestments up to the clergyman and by refusing to require a declaration of belief in the absolute truth of the Common Book of Prayer. These wishes were presented to the king in the Millenary Petition of 1603 and debated before him at the Hampton Court Conference, 1604.³ James refused the Petition of the "illegitimate Scotch Presbyterians" and published a proclamation which required conformance to the existing church service by the end of the year or banishment. Three hundred Puritan clergymen refused to sign and were ejected. This action placed a large number of eminent Puritan leaders outside of the Established Church.⁴ The Separatists gained valuable support. James, therefore, continued the Elizabethan Settlement which left the ecclesiastical machinery and system with the Anglicans rather than the Puritan Presbyterians when the Roman Catholics were driven out in 1558.⁵ The policy of coercive uniformity pursued by king and prelates operated against Nonconformists and, when they were discovered, drove them to the Continent.

³George Macaulay Trevelyan, England Under The Stuarts ("A History of England," Vol. V / London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1946/7), pp. 63-64.

⁴Ibid., p. 66.

⁵Underwood, op. cit., p. 31.

Such a Nonconformist was John Smyth, a Puritan driven into Separatism and ordained as pastor over a Separatist congregation at Gainsborough around 1606. This church, discovered by the authorities, emigrated to Amsterdam in 1608.⁶ Contact with other Separatists led Smyth into controversy and a clarification of his own views. In search of a church that would conform to the New Testament model he moved into the Baptist position and adopted believers baptism. Smyth and his followers disbanded and, after he baptized himself, Thomas Helwys and others by affusion, the church was reconstituted in Amsterdam, 1609, as the first English Baptist church.⁷

Much criticism arose over Smyth's baptism of himself. These charges turned his attention to the problem of authority in baptism. He made contact with the Waterland Mennonites. The church was divided. A minority including Helwys feared the ministerial succession emphasized by the Mennonites. Helwys' group excommunicated Smyth and declared itself the true church.⁸

Helwys and his group returned to England in 1612 and planted at Spitalfields, near London, the first Baptist

⁶Ibid., p. 34.

⁷Ibid., pp. 37-38.

⁸Ibid., pp. 38-39.

church on English soil. Having accepted some of Smyth's Arminian views the church was General Baptist.⁹

Before Helwys left for England he composed a confession of faith, possibly prompted by the split with Smyth, and printed it in 1611. This confession of twenty-seven articles is generally considered to be the earliest English Baptist confession.¹⁰

In the mind of Helwys as seen in A Declaration of Faith of English People the nature of the church was two-fold. The Church was composed of the faithful separated from the world by the Holy Spirit, united in the Lord and to one another by baptism and confession of sin.¹¹ He recognized the universal aspect of the Church but his emphasis lay on the Church's second characteristic, the particular congregation and its authority:

. . . though in respect off CHRIST, the Church bee one . . . yet it consisteth off divers particuler congregacions, even so manie as there shall bee in the World, every off which congregacion, though they be but two or three, have CHRIST given them . . . and Are the Bodie off CHRIST . . . and a whole Church. . . . And therefore may, and ought, when they are come together, to Pray, Prophecie, breake bread, and administer in all the holy ordinances,

⁹Ibid., p. 46.

¹⁰W. J. McGlothlin, Baptist Confessions of Faith (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1911), p. 84.

¹¹Ibid., p. 88 (art. 10).

although as yet they have no Officers, or that their Officers should be in Prison, sick, or by anie other means hindred from the Church . . .¹²

By examination of the preceding the source of authority was seen to be located in the local church even where only two or three believers were gathered. The believers so gathered were a whole church and had the necessary power to administer the ordinances though officers had not been appointed. For Helwys the basis of authority appeared in the gathering of faithful people who had Christ given to them. Each congregation governed its own affairs and exercised no prerogative over another because Christ and God's Word had been given to each.¹³ Officers were to be chosen ". . . By Election and approbacion off that Church or congregacion whereoff they are members . . ."¹⁴ The essential power of election inhered in the congregation and not its officers.¹⁵

The church at Spitalfields, guided by Helwys,

¹²Ibid., p. 89 (art. 11).

¹³Ibid., (art. 12).

¹⁴Ibid., p. 91 (art. 21).

¹⁵The exiled Separatist churches under John Robinson at Leyden, Henry Ainsworth, Francis Johnson and John Smyth at Amsterdam agreed that each church had power to elect and ordain its own officers though they were dependent on each other in "mutual counsel and help." Robert Barclay, The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1879), p. 99.

endured repression common to Dissenters during the reign of James I. Helwys was dead by 1616, and care of the church passed into the hands of John Murton, a citizen of Gainsborough and member of the Helwys group who returned from Amsterdam in 1612.¹⁶ In spite of restrictive measures against Nonconformists the cause of the General Baptists grew. The evidence given in extant correspondence of 1626 between the Waterland Mennonites in Amsterdam and Murton's church showed there were five Baptist congregations. There was no hint that any others existed.¹⁷

No General Baptist confessions of faith appeared until the latter half of the Seventeenth Century. The policy of suppression and persecution inflicted on the Dissenters by James I (1603-1625) and his successor, Charles I (1625-1640) with the zealous co-operation of the established Church and Archbishop Laud strangled any effort to draw up a confession on an inter-church basis. Baptists grew slowly. Occasional references to them may be found in a few of the undestroyed records of the Star Chamber and

¹⁶Underwood, op. cit., p. 48.

¹⁷Whitley lists these churches as at London, Sarum, Coventry, Lincoln and Tiverton. W. T. Whitley, A History of British Baptists (London: Charles Griffin & Company, 1923), pp. 47-50. Underwood, op. cit., p. 50 substitutes Salisbury for Sarum though evidently in the same district.

High Commission.¹⁸ Confessional evidence was lacking until the Civil War and Commonwealth Period (1640-1660).

When Laud became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633 the pace toward Civil War increased. He combined with the political ineptness of Charles a determined effort to rid England and the Anglican Church of Puritanism. His method was to stop up every outlet of Puritan expression through the press, in church services and conventicle worship.¹⁹ His essay in 1637 to substitute the Anglican Common Book of Prayer for Knox's Book of Common Order involved Charles in war with Scotland. His attempt to levy additional taxes for battle, the ensuing contemptuous dissolution of the Short Parliament, May, 1640, and his brazen effort personally to arrest in the House of Commons five men, helped to throw Parliament and the Nation against the king, Laud and the High Church party. The result was Civil War.²⁰ Cromwell defeated the King's troops at Naseby, June, 1645, but Charles was not executed until January, 1649. With the advent of the Protectorate under Cromwell a large measure of toleration was allowed.²¹ The Common Book of Prayer

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 56-57.

¹⁹Trevelyan, op. cit., p. 139.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 154-85.

²¹Walker, op. cit., p. 473.

could not be used, but otherwise any form of Protestant worship was acceptable. Cromwell's ecclesiastical polity sheltered ". . . the infancy of the Nonconformist sects and the Society of Friends."²²

Toleration and support of the New Model Army, whose existence extended from 1645-1660, provided great opportunity for Baptist growth. Seven London Particular Baptist churches published a confession in 1644, and by 1651 it had passed through three revisions. The General Baptists, prompted perhaps by their brethren, issued in the same year a confession speaking for thirty congregations in the Midlands.²³ This declaration of The Faith and Practice of Thirty Congregations was the first document representing more than one General Baptist church.²⁴

This confession omitted any explicit reference to an invisible Church. Believer's baptism was into ". . . the visible Church of God . . ."²⁵ Gifts were given to the ". . . Saints or Church of God . . .";²⁶ candidates then were set apart. The authority for the election of officers

²²Trevelyan, op. cit., pp. 260-61.

²³Underwood, op. cit., p. 73.

²⁴McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 94.

²⁵Ibid., p. 103 (art. 50).

²⁶Ibid., p. 105 (art. 58).

was considered to be in the hands of the particular church as seen in the appointment of Deacons.²⁷ But this emphasis did not exclude or limit the power of ordination to the congregation alone. It left room for a later development, extra-local ordination, which can be seen from the following:

. . . it is the good pleasure of God, which hath given gifts of his grace to the Saints or Church of God, that some gifted men should be appointed or set apart to attend upon the preaching of the word, for the further edifying of the Churches . . .²⁸

The congregation based its power on the "directions of God"²⁹ found in the Scriptures. Acts 6:3 and Titus 1:7-9 were given as scriptural proof that the church was required to judge the competency of its officers.³⁰

The organization of General Baptist life, though these churches had never thought of themselves as completely independent, developed rapidly after the death of Charles. Political conditions prior to his death did not permit the growth of associational authority. The confession of 1651 declared that in case of failure to settle a controversy between members of the same church ". . . use be made of some other society which they are in fellowship with, for

²⁷Ibid., p. 106 (art. 64).

²⁸Ibid., p. 105 (art. 58).

²⁹Ibid., p. 106 (art. 64).

³⁰Ibid., pp. 106-7 (art. 66).

their assistance therein . . ."³¹ The power to elect and ordain was still exclusively in the hands of the particular church.

In 1654 another London General Baptist confession was published. By this time the Quakers had invaded the city in numbers, and as a refutation and affirmation against the Quakers several churches, represented by their leaders, used Thomas Lover's³² confession³³ and published it as a declaration of their churches' faith.³⁴

The True Gospel-faith declared that believers baptized and united with other believers baptized were the church of Christ.³⁵ In this church the prerogative of election and ordination was lodged for ". . . they have power to chuse Messengers, Pastors, and Teachers from among themselves, Acts 1.21,22. . . ."36

³¹Ibid., p. 107 (art. 70).

³²Nothing is known about Thomas Lover or his church but he was probably an early General Baptist. William Latane Lumpkin, "The Local Baptist Confessions of Faith of the Civil War--Commonwealth Period" (unpublished Doctor's thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1948), Chap. III, p. 33.

³³"The Confession of Some London General Baptists, 1654: The True Gospel-faith declared according to the Scriptures" is hereafter abbreviated as The True Gospel-faith and can be found only in Lumpkin, op. cit., Appendix E, pp. 1-6.

³⁴Lumpkin, op. cit., Chap. III, pp. 30-31.

³⁵Ibid., Appendix E, p. 39 (art. 13). No reference was made to the Church.

³⁶Ibid., p. 4 (art. 22). The office of Messenger occurs in a confession of faith for the first time.

The power of a congregation to choose its own officers was supported by the minutes for 1655 of the General Baptist church at Fenstanton. At the request of the church at Wisbeach, Fenstanton sent two Elders, Denne and Mayle, to ordain Elders and Deacons. Returning to the church at Fenstanton they reported their activities. The Wisbeach church had been questioned as to whether or not a free election was held according to the Scripture and unanimous consent of the congregation. Such an election had occurred, therefore, Denne and Mayle proceeded with the ordination.³⁷ Though the church at Wisbeach had the necessary authority to choose its own officers it requested Elders from Fenstanton to ordain the men. Obviously the practice of extra-local ordination had appeared and was considered wise.

The authority to choose Messengers, whose function and office will be discussed in another chapter, lay in the power of the churches. The General Assembly, meeting in 1656, said that "Messengers may not without the common Consent of ye Churchs Chuse Messengers . . ." ³⁸ Earlier separate churches appointed a Messenger but this was

³⁷E. B. Underhill (ed.), Records of the Churches of Christ, Gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys, and Hexham (London: Hanserd Knollys Society, 1854), pp. 156-57.

³⁸W. T. Whitley (ed.), Minutes of the General Assembly of the General Baptist Churches in England, with Kindred Records (edited with Introduction and Notes for the Baptist Historical Society; London: Kingsgate Press, 1909), I, 7. These minutes are hereafter referred to as MGA. The General Assembly had been organized by 1654. See Whitley's Introductory Essay to MGA, I, xvi.

generally restricted to cases dealing with destitute or unevangelized areas.³⁹ The prerogative of choice shifted from the individual church to the common consent of several churches but the right of selecting Elders and Deacons remained with the congregation as will be seen in examination of the General Baptist Standard Confession of 1660.

The Protectorate era ended in 1660 but the political stability of the Puritan rule was wiped out with the death of Cromwell, September 3, 1658.⁴⁰ Oliver's son, Richard, ruled until May, 1659. For over a year and a half, until the Restoration, political chaos reigned. The army which Oliver Cromwell bequeathed to England was united in harassing the civilians but bitterly divided within itself. Again Civil War was imminent but an occupation army led by Monk and quartered in Scotland joined forces with the civilians, occupied London, and called for a "free Parliament" which in March, 1660, asked Charles II to return.⁴¹ Most Baptists were relieved and glad to see Charles land. In their minds, as well as in other citizens', the Restoration seemed to be the only escape from chaos.⁴²

³⁹Adam Taylor, The History of the English General Baptists (London: printed for the author, by T. Bore, and sold by Button and Son, etc., 1818), I, 413-14.

⁴⁰Trevelyan, op. cit., pp. 270-71.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 273.

⁴²Underwood, op. cit., p. 89.

But charges of being Anabaptists were revived and directed toward the Baptists. This epithet associated them with the revolutionaries of Munster. In order to meet the dangers involved in this attack the General Baptists held an Assembly, March, 1660, in London. A Brief Confession or Declaration of Faith was drawn up to refute the charges and present their tenets.⁴³ This declaration, known also as the Standard Confession, was the first to represent all General Baptists in England.⁴⁴

The confession dealt only briefly with either the source of authority in ordination or the nature of the church. The latter question was set out in terms of a regenerated church, preceded by baptism, the only form of which was immersion.⁴⁵ The authority for ordaining gifted men to the work of the Ministry derived from the congregation for ". . . among such gifted members some are to be chosen by the Church, and ordained . . . for the work of the Ministry . . ." ⁴⁶ The authority for election was in the congregation but it did not exclude the possibility of

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 110.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 115 (art. 11). This is the second reference among General Baptists to immersion or dipping as the essential form. The first reference is to be found in The True Gospel-faith of 1654.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 113 (art. 5).

extra-local appointment seen in the office of Messenger.

Following the Restoration of Charles II, General Baptist confessional history was meager through a decade and a half. Active persecution set in with little respite until the Edict of Toleration was granted by William and Mary, 1689. The Cavalier parliament passed between the years, 1661-1665, four laws, the Corporation Act, the Act of Uniformity, the Conventicle Act and the Five Mile Act, which were known as the Clarendon Code. These Acts enforced by the Established Church and King ". . . created the division of England into Church and Dissent."⁴⁷ The Code was not primarily aimed at the Baptists but at Presbyterian Puritanism whose ascendancy was a birthmark of the Civil War and Commonwealth Periods.⁴⁸ The expulsion of the Presbyterians and their consequent persecution ". . . hurled them down into the common clay of other sects . . .,"⁴⁹ identified them with the Dissenters and deflected the blows of oppression. With a few exceptions the Clarendon Code was enforced until the Revolution of 1689.⁵⁰ Baptists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians discovered a common

⁴⁷Trevelyan, op. cit., p. 283.

⁴⁸Underwood, op. cit., p. 96.

⁴⁹Trevelyan, op. cit., p. 284.

⁵⁰Ibid.

basis of unity. The confessions issued by General and Particular Baptists expressed this agreement and accord with other Dissenters.⁵¹

The Orthodox Creed, a General Baptist confessional statement, was issued in 1678 by "fifty-five Messengers, Elders and Brethren . . .,"⁵² not by the General Assembly and was an effort to concur in the current anti-Catholic sentiment⁵³ and destroy the Arian and Socinian heresies.

The doctrine of a universal, invisible Church composed of the elect of all ages, under the headship of Christ, and gathered by the Holy Spirit was delineated for the first time.⁵⁴ But the particular, visible church or congregation was stressed:

Nevertheless, we believe the visible church of Christ on earth, is made up of several distinct congregations, which make up that one catholic church, or mystical body of Christ.⁵⁵

The Creed set forth the particular church as the constitutive element but it did not destroy the inter-relatedness

⁵¹Underwood, op. cit., pp. 104-5.

⁵²Ibid., p. 106.

⁵³Ibid., pp. 106-7; McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 123. The Creed was not recognized by all General Baptist churches but by the conservative element of the Midlands. It was never approved by the General Assembly.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 145 (art. 29).

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 145-46 (art. 30).

of one congregation to another or their unity in the "mystical body of Christ."

Government was given to the church by Christ, ". . . the great king, and lawgiver . . .,"⁵⁶ however, it was ". . . a subordinate power, or authority, for the well-being, ordering, and governing of it . . ."⁵⁷ From this gift of government and discipline the church committed the ". . . executive part . . . to his ministers, proportionable to their dignities and places in the church in a most harmonious way . . ."⁵⁸

The marks of a truly constituted church reflected Calvinistic influence. Yet the source of authority was considered to be located primarily in the church's right of election to office through its power of government. The marks of a true church were:

Where the word of God is rightly preached, and the sacraments truly administered, according to Christ's institution, and the practice of the primitive church; having discipline and government duly executed, by ministers or pastors of God's appointing, and the church's election . . .⁵⁹

A single congregation had the prerogative to elect a

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 149 (art. 34).

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 145-46 (art. 30). This confession is based on the Westminster Confession of 1648.

Messenger for he could be ". . . chosen thereunto by the common suffrage of the church . . ." ⁶⁰ This authority, however, was not confined to the particular church. Bishops or Messengers had ". . . the government of those churches, that had suffrage in their election, and no other ordinarily . . ." ⁶¹ Thus churches in agreement also possessed the power of appointment and ordination to the office of Messenger. In the election and ordination of an Elder or Pastor the authority was restricted to the particular congregation. The Elder was to be ". . . chosen by the common suffrage of the particular congregation, and ordained by the bishop or messenger God hath placed in the church he hath charge of . . ." ⁶²

This dual concept of authority among General Baptists was supplemented in 1678 by the publication of Christianismus Primitivus, a work of Thomas Grantham. ⁶³

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 146 (art. 31).

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 147.

⁶² Ibid. It will be noted that ordination by bishop embraced the idea of a Ministry wider than the particular church. The Bishop had authority to ordain, not elect i.e. the Bishop's power was delegated; not direct.

⁶³ Grantham, a native of Lincolnshire and Pastor of a General Baptist church near Spilsby, was ordained to the office of Messenger in 1666. He died in 1692. Underwood, op. cit., pp. 110-11. Taylor, op. cit., I, p. 362, said this work of Grantham's received wide approval among General Baptists and should be recognized as a public document.

In discussion of the Lord's Supper, Grantham advised against laymen presiding, and he insisted that the church should elect a man as Pastor and ". . . after the example of the Church at Antioch, Act. 13. delegate that power, which as a Church resides in them, that he may be their lawful Minister."⁶⁴ Again, in the context of episcopacy, he dealt with the question of election and ordination tracing its power to the congregation.⁶⁵

Though Grantham believed that a congregation of baptized believers contained all the authority necessary to create its officers, he regarded ordination by the church without co-operating help as irregular and to be in ". . . contempt or neglect of that way which is more ordinary . . ."⁶⁶ Neither did Messengers have the exclusive power of appointment. In new churches where there were no officers Messengers ordained. In places where churches had been established and an Eldership elected

⁶⁴Thomas Grantham, Christianismus Primitivus: or, The Ancient Christian Religion, in Its Nature, Certainty, Excellency, and Beauty . . . particularly Considered, Asserted, and Vindicated, FROM The many Abuses which have Invaded that Sacred Profession . . . (London: Printed for Francis Smith, at the Sign of the Elephant and Castle in Cornhill, 1678), Part II, Second Treatise, Chap. 7, p. 93. Hereafter cited Christianismus.

⁶⁵Ibid., Part II, Second Treatise, Chap. 9, p. 129.

⁶⁶Ibid.

they could ordain their own officers and send out Messengers.⁶⁷

The practices and views declared in the Orthodox Creed and supported by Grantham were typical of General Baptists into the Eighteenth Century. No other important confessional evidence was available that indicated a transfer of authority from the congregation. With one exception the foregoing was true. The approbation required for the ordination of a Messenger shifted from the church or churches to the General Assembly. By 1691 the Assembly was approving the ordination of Messengers,⁶⁸ and in 1696 a "Bror Hoke . . . [was] presented to the Assembly to be approved a Messenger," therefore, "The Assembly do Approve of him and do appoint him to be speedily ordained."⁶⁹ In September, 1696, Francis Stanley, a Messenger, ordained Hoke. But the Lincolnshire Association had presented his name to the Assembly for approval.⁷⁰

In summary, then, these things may be said about the General Baptists' view of authority in ordination. A congregation of baptized believers, given subordinate power

⁶⁷Ibid., Bk. IV, Fifth Treatise, p. 165.

⁶⁸MGA, I, 31.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 42.

⁷⁰Ibid., footnote #7.

of government by Christ, had the essential authority to elect and ordain its own officers including Deacons, Elders or Pastors and Messengers. At first the election of a man to the office of Messenger lay in the power of a church to send him out to plant new churches, but as denominational consciousness grew this authority shifted to churches acting jointly or in an associational capacity. In the election and ordination of Deacons and Elders the electing and ordaining power remained in the congregation, its original source. In practice, however, ordination was considered irregular unless Messengers or Elders representing sister churches were invited to participate.

The origin of the Particular Baptists, so called because of their restricted or limited view of Christ's atonement, was far more obscure than that of the General Baptists. The formation of Particular Baptist churches ". . . represent s the last stage in the evolution of English Separatism as it moved forward to its logical outcome in believer's baptism."⁷¹ The early history of these Baptists having their origin in what has been called the "Jacob-Lathrop-Jessey church" was complex, and regarding early records greatly involved.⁷² The three successive

⁷¹Underwood, op. cit., p. 56.

⁷²Champlin Burrage, The Early English Dissenters in the Light of Recent Research (Cambridge: at the University

Pastors of this church established at London, 1616, were Henry Jacob, John Lathrop and Henry Jessey. Each of these men had travelled from Puritanism into Separatism. The problem of baptism involving the question of whether or not it should be accepted from the Church of England was discussed and as a result several groups parted on a friendly basis. Samuel Eaton, in 1633, led one of the parties and established a church, but it is unknown if this congregation rejected infant baptism. However, in 1638, six people who denied infant baptism were dismissed from Jessey's church and either joined Eaton's church in which Spilsbury became Pastor or found another congregation with Spilsbury as its Pastor. Since clear evidence is lacking the only accurate statement that can be made is that Particular Baptist churches arose during the period, 1633-1638.⁷³

These churches had settled the subject of baptism but now had to answer the question of the proper mode and administrator. Richard Blunt, who was dismissed with Eaton's group in 1633, became convinced that baptism should be by "dipping" or immersion. Since no one could be found

Press, 1912), I, 312-35, has detailed analysis of the church and formation of Particular Baptists. It also discusses the question of Richard Blunt's immersion.

⁷³Underwood, op. cit., pp. 57-58.

in England who immersed, Blunt journeyed to Holland in 1641, and received immersion at the hands of the Collegiants, a sect of Mennonite provenance. He returned to England, baptized a Mr. Blacklock, and they ". . . in 1642 baptized fifty-one others."⁷⁴

The subject of baptism had also come up in Jessey's church and was discussed in a friendly and thorough manner. Hanserd Knollys, in addition to others from Jessey's church, accepted believer's baptism. These members withdrew some joining the congregation of which William Kiffin was Pastor and others following Knollys to establish a new church. In 1645 Jessey himself became convinced of believer's baptism and was baptized by Knollys. Jessey then baptized other members of his congregation who wanted believer's baptism.⁷⁵

The growth of the Particular Baptists, as that of the General Baptists, was affected by the alternating political currents of English government. But by 1660 they had overtaken the General Baptists.⁷⁶ For this study the confessional tradition of the Particular Baptists becomes more important since the doctrinal development of American

⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 58-59. The question of Blunt's receiving baptism at the hands of the Collegiants is doubtful, and can only be inferred from the evidence. It is more likely that in Blunt's contact with the Collegiants he learned their method, returned to England and baptized Blacklock. Burrage, op. cit., p. 330-35.

⁷⁵Underwood, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

⁷⁶Whitley, A History of British Baptists, p. 63.

Baptists proceeded largely through them.

The first confession of Particular Baptists was drawn up by seven churches in London and published in 1644 to deny the charge of being Anabaptists and to distinguish their churches from the General Baptists.⁷⁷ Doctrinally this First London Confession was moderately Calvinistic and ". . . probably still represents the views of the Baptists of the world more nearly than any other single Confession. . . ." ⁷⁸

The church was defined as Christ's spiritual kingdom on earth and seen as a company of faithful people who had been called and separated by the Holy Spirit. They had made a visible profession of faith and had been baptized ". . . and joynd to the Lord, and each other, by mutuall agreement . . ." ⁷⁹ Churches so constituted had power given to them by Christ to ". . . choose to themselves meet persons . . . for the feeding, governing, serving, and building up of his Church . . ." ⁸⁰ No church had the

⁷⁷McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 169; Joseph Ivimey, A History of the English Baptists (London: Printed for the Author, by Burditt, Button, Hamilton, and others, 1811-1830), I, 175. This confession is based on a Separatist confession of 1596.

⁷⁸McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 169-70.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 183 (art. 33).

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 184 (art. 36).

authority to create officers for any other church. Consequently the authority to elect and ordain came directly from Christ through a congregation of Christians baptized and gathered in His Name. But this theory did not mean independency and arrogant "local autonomy." Though the congregations were complete in themselves they were to use every wise method for counsel and help with each other because they were ". . . as members of one body in the common faith under Christ their onely head."⁸¹

Thomas Collier,⁸² a Particular Baptist, published in 1654, ten years after the first edition of the First London Confession, several treatises⁸³ the purpose of which, as Collier himself said, was to furnish ". . . a certain rule of direction according to the Scripture for the right mannaging of the affaires of the house of the

⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 186-87 (art. 47).

⁸² Little is known of Collier's life. He was a Particular Baptist leader in the West. In 1656, he led some churches in Wessex to draw up a confession showing agreement with the Calvinism of London Baptists. He lived through 1689. Underwood, op. cit., p. 109; Whitley, A History of British Baptists, pp. 71-72.

⁸³ Thomas Collier, The Right Constitution and True Subjects of the Visible Church of Christ . . . (Early Baptist Publications; a Selection of Source Materials in A Baptist Bibliography (British). Selected by the Faculty of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and filmed by University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan. 46 reels and Index volume, 1952), Reel 7, no. 12. Hereafter cited as Baptist Publications.

Lord."⁸⁴ He followed the doctrine of the church defined in the First London Confession and insisted that though the Holy Spirit may work through Christians and fit them for the ministry ". . . the Church calls, for there is not only God's call, but the Church being made partaker of the same Spirit, they call where the Lord calls."⁸⁵ The authority for ordination and election was jointly held by the particular congregation and the call of God. Collier said that the first step in ordination and calling a man to minister in a church was election by the church. This election in some circles amounted to ordination for commenting on Acts 6:3,5; 14:23, he wrote, ". . . Some read it ordained them Elders by election or lifting up of hands . . ."⁸⁶ Collier himself would not omit ordination because he believed it to be one of the three essentials in calling a man to minister as an Elder in the church.⁸⁷

In 1656 the Somerset Confession was published. Since the First London Confession had been put forth by seven city churches in 1644, there had arisen some jealousy and fear on the part of several rural congregations in the west of

⁸⁴Ibid., The Epistle Dedicatory.

⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 18-19.

⁸⁶Ibid., pp. 31-34.

⁸⁷Ibid. The three steps were approbation or approval of gifts, election and ordination.

England. In order to demonstrate their agreement with the London churches on Calvinism and as a defense against the Quakers, Somerset and other counties, recently formed into an association, drew up a confession.⁸⁸ This document placed emphasis on the visible church, the particular congregation composed of baptized or "dipped" believers.⁸⁹ To this church Christ gave power to ". . . make choice of such members, as are fitly gifted and qualified by Christ, and approve and ordain such . . . for the performance of the several duties, whereunto they are called . . ." ⁹⁰ The authority for election and ordination lay in the congregation. This was not to say that such power was to be used without the help and consideration, even cooperation of other churches. As in preceding confessions this one recognized that it was the duty of those in Christ ". . . tho' in several congregations and assemblies (being one in the head) if occasion be, to communicate each to other, in things spiritual, and things temporal . . ." ⁹¹

Another confession, An Antidote Against the Infection

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 201.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 208 (art. 24).

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 211 (art. 31).

⁹¹Ibid., p. 210 (art. 28).

of the Times,⁹² was published by John Myles⁹³ in 1656 as a refutation of Quakerism and as an attempt to provide a doctrinal norm for some of the churches which he had organized.⁹⁴ There was no article on the Church in the Antidote but Myles expressed a very high doctrine of the ministry ". . . to whom he hath committed the Ministry of reconciliation . . ." for which the people should ". . . esteem very highly the Ministers thereof . . ."⁹⁵ With this elevation of the Ministry⁹⁶ the church retained the power to elect but ordination was performed by Elders.⁹⁷ Thus a change in the theory of authority had occurred. The power to set aside to the Ministry though located in the congregation was shared with the Elders. Separation

⁹² [John Myles], An Antidote Against the Infection of the Times, 1656 (edited by T. Shankland; Cardiff: The Welsh Baptist Historical Society, 1904), Hereafter cited as Antidote.

⁹³ Myles was a graduate of Oxford but converted to a Particular Baptist and in 1649 began work in Wales where he established churches. These churches, after organizing the Welsh Association, 1651, kept in contact with London Particular Baptists by letters and personal representatives. Lumpkin, op. cit., pp. 193-96.

⁹⁴ Myles, a closed communionist, had not been able to convince these churches of their error in open communion. Ibid., p. 199.

⁹⁵ Myles, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

⁹⁶ Lumpkin, op. cit., pp. 195-96.

⁹⁷ Myles, op. cit., p. 23.

was not complete until ordination by Elders was performed. This action indicated a shift from an idea of authority which derived full prerogative from the particular congregation to an idea of sharing this authority with extra-local officers. It must be remembered that this theory was not characteristic of all Particular Baptist churches. As late as 1694, the Particular Baptist church at Kensworth elected and ordained its own Pastor without outside help for the church already had an elder as a "co-pastor."⁹⁸ There was no completely uniform practice.

The Protectorate ended in 1660 and the Restoration bringing Charles II to the throne lasted until 1685. Anglicanism returned throwing Presbyterians into the Dissenter camp and established a consciousness of doctrinal agreement rather than disagreement. This situation produced a confessional movement marked by unity rather than diversity. The Assembly or Second London Confession, drawn up by representatives in London and the surrounding country, was a product of this spirit. The second edition of the confession, adopted by the first Particular Baptist Assembly in 1689, became the most important and influential of all Baptist confessions extending its influence to

⁹⁸Ivimey, op. cit., II, 173-74.

America.⁹⁹

In this confession the Particular Baptists joined other Dissenters in affirmation of a universal, invisible Church including all the Elect. But the visible church or particular congregation was composed only of "visible Saints" those who professed their faith in Christ and the Gospel.¹⁰⁰ To these churches Christ gave the power of government:

To each of these Churches thus gathered . . . he hath given all that power and authority, which is any way needfull, for their carrying on that order in worship, and discipline . . .¹⁰¹

Authority, therefore, was entrusted by Christ to the congregation. And in the thinking of these Baptists the only power existing outside of the particular church arose when either a church or churches differed in matters of doctrine or administration. On such occasions messengers representing the churches met in an Assembly whose authority was limited to advice and not to ". . . any Church-power properly so called; or with any jurisdiction over the

⁹⁹The Second London Confession drew very strongly on the Presbyterian Westminster Confession of 1648. With the exception of articles on the church and ordinances which were revised to suit Baptist views the confession is strongly Calvinistic. McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 215-19.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 264 (arts. 1-2).

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 265 (art. 7).

Churches themselves . . ."¹⁰² The officers of the church were to be chosen by the congregation and set apart to their work. In choosing an Elder ordination to office by the Eldership of the electing church was preferred if any such existed but it was not considered essential.¹⁰³ The particular church had all necessary power to elect and ordain its own officers.

The church's authority to elect and ordain as seen in the Second London Confession was defined more clearly in an ordination sermon preached by Nehemiah Coxe.¹⁰⁴ Christ ". . . is the first Subject, and Head of all Ecclesiastical Power and Jurisdiction . . ."¹⁰⁵ and with the passing of all Apostolic Offices authority outside of the particular church also died. Congregations, henceforth, were governed by the Scripture which teaches that ". . . every particular Congregation hath not only right, but is in duty bound to dispose her self in that Order,

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 268 (art. 15).

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 266 (arts. 8-9).

¹⁰⁴Coxe was Pastor of a Particular Baptist church with William Collins in Petty France, London, 1673. He was also Pastor at Hitchin and Cranfield and probably was the son of Benjamin Coxe. Ivimey, op. cit., II, 403-4; III, 330-31.

¹⁰⁵Nehemiah Coxe, A Sermon Preached at the Ordination of an Elder and Deacons in a Baptized Congregation in London (Baptist Publications), Reel 26, No. 35, p. 7.

and under that Rule and Government, which Christ hath appointed in his Testament."¹⁰⁶

By 1691 the Glorious Revolution had passed and religious toleration was two years old. A letter of the same year sent by four Particular Baptist churches in Southampton to the London Association requested their help in ordaining Elders. The Association answered and agreed on sending help and advised that the church should get things in order and for them to ". . . look out from amongst you such persons yt judge copedently [sic] Qualified . . . and to Elect such person or persons . . . so all things may be done yt are previous in order to yt great work . . ."¹⁰⁷ The power of election still lay in the hands of the church but as noticed from the letter there was a growing consciousness that in order for an ordination to be complete Elders representing other congregations should be present even though one Elder lived among the Southampton churches.¹⁰⁸ Here then, the authority to set aside to the office of Elder, though in the congregation, was shared

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁰⁷"Ordination at Southampton, 1691," Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society (London: Baptist Union Publication Department, 1910-1911), 2:65-66. Hereafter cited as Transactions.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 65.

with outside help, men from the Eldership.¹⁰⁹

The same concept of authority among Particular Baptists prevailed at the close of the Seventeenth Century and early years of the Eighteenth. William Mitchill, a Pastor and itinerant Minister in Yorkshire and Lancashire wrote a confession of faith and discipline which he called Jachin & Boaz.¹¹⁰ He reinforced the view of authority set forth in the Second London Confession, i. e., the particular church is given all necessary power of order and government to elect its officers.¹¹¹ But for an ordination to be "regular" Mitchill considered it expedient that either Elders of the church ordaining or assistants from other

¹⁰⁹It must be admitted that for Seventeenth Century English Baptists there were two views of authority in ordination. One group held that only the local congregation had the power to elect and ordain. This view defined the Minister as one who held the office of Pastor in the church, and if an occasion should arise in which he held office in another church, he must again be ordained. The other group of Baptists believed in a wider view of the Ministry that expressed brotherhood in assemblies and associations. Thus representatives or Elders took part in ordinations. The essential qualification was that the candidate had been called and chosen by the church to the Ministry. Ordination by Elders from other churches certainly implied a more inclusive view of the Ministry and authority. Robert C. Walton, The Gathered Community (London: Carey Press, 1946), pp. 98-101.

¹¹⁰The work was published by David Crosley, in 1707, after Mitchill's death. Doctrinally it is strongly Calvinistic with a high view of the Ministry and church. "William Mitchill's 'Jachin & Boaz' 1707," Transactions, 3:65-69, 1912-1913.

¹¹¹Ibid., 3:165 (art. 6).

churches be present regardless of whether or not the ritual, laying on of hands, was used.¹¹² This again represents shared authority and a development of denominational consciousness which saw the Minister in a larger context than the local church.

In summation, the Particular Baptists in their confessional tradition held that the local congregation possessed all necessary authority to elect and ordain its own officers. This theory continued to receive expression in the confessions until 1689, when with the Edict of Toleration, denominational consciousness grew. Inter-church communion through associations and assemblies helped develop the view that ordination was not complete without the aid of Elders from the ordaining church itself or more generally from sister churches. The authority to elect always resided in the congregation but the power to ordain became a shared authority.

The doctrine and polity of English Particular Baptists were brought to the New World by Baptist settlers many of whom were seeking religious freedom. New England was established by Puritans who sought respite only for themselves while Pennsylvania, the Middle Colonies and

¹¹²Ibid., 3:166-67 (art. 12).

Rhode Island provided room for the religious radicals.¹¹³ By 1650, the Baptist church at Providence had been founded by Roger Williams; the church at Newport had arisen under the direction of John Clarke.¹¹⁴ But the colonies whose environment furnished the most fertile soil for Baptist beginnings were not these of New England. The most important centers of Baptist work and influence in the Colonial Period were the Middle Colonies and particularly Pennsylvania and New Jersey.¹¹⁵

William Penn, a Quaker, had purchased the Pennsylvania territory from Charles II with the purpose of using it for those seeking religious freedom. The appeal of such a colony was great and Baptist work, beginning around 1684, prospered with that of the Quakers and Mennonites.¹¹⁶

¹¹³Henry C. Vedder, A History of the Baptists in the Middle States (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1898), p. 10; William Warren Sweet, The Story of Religion in America (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1939), pp. 2-3.

¹¹⁴Sweet, op. cit., pp. 102, 107.

¹¹⁵Ibid., pp. 111-12; Henry C. Vedder, A Short History of the Baptists (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1907), p. 302. For this study Pennsylvania and more especially the area surrounding Philadelphia is vital because the first Baptist association in America, the Philadelphia, adopted the Second London Confession, and by its agents extended the confession's influence among Baptists of the South.

¹¹⁶A. H. Newman, A History of the Baptist Churches in The United States (Revised edition; Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1898), p. 201.

Baptists in this area, because of their doctrinal and ecclesiastical uniformity and their strength, proved to be a strong molding influence throughout the country.¹¹⁷ By 1707 five churches had formed the Philadelphia Association.¹¹⁸ But no reference to a confession of faith was made until 1724 when, in answer to a query about the Sabbath, the Association referred to the London Confession of 1689 as being "owned by us."¹¹⁹ The implication was that the confession had already been established as their norm of doctrine.¹²⁰ The body of the confession was not altered, but two articles, one on singing in worship and the other on the laying of hands on the newly baptized, were added.¹²¹

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 200.

¹¹⁸Sweet, op. cit., p. 112; McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 294.

¹¹⁹A. D. Gillette (ed.), Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, from A. D. 1707, to A. D. 1807; Being the First One Hundred Years of Its Existence (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1851), Minutes of 1724, p. 27. Minutes hereafter referred to as Philadelphia Minutes.

¹²⁰McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 294.

¹²¹Ibid., pp. 293-95, discusses the occasion for adoption of the two articles. The first edition of the Philadelphia Confession to be printed in America is that of 1742. Ibid., p. 295. The adoption of this confession, according to Sweet, op. cit., p. 112, and Vedder, A History of Baptists in the Middle States, pp. 92-93, turned Baptist doctrinal emphasis away from Arminianism, which had been predominant until 1742, to a Calvinistic theology.

Here in America the Calvinistic Baptists followed out in practice the idea of authority in ordination as inherited from and brought over by their Particular Baptist brethren. The Philadelphia Confession¹²² placed the power to elect and ordain officers in the membership of the particular church. As implied in the Second London Confession the presence of Elders was not essential to valid ordination.¹²³ Yet the theory of authority as expressed in the Discipline and actual practice of the Association bore out the fact that Elders were necessary.¹²⁴

With the publication of the Discipline¹²⁵ in 1743 the theory of authority in ordination as practiced by the associated churches was defined more clearly. While the

¹²²Detailed examination of the confession will not be undertaken again but the Philadelphia Association's minutes and disciplines will be reviewed in light of the confession to point out actual practice in the churches.

¹²³McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 266 (art. 9). The Association did rule that an election to any church office was not valid unless unanimous consent was given by the membership. Philadelphia Minutes, 1724, pp. 27-28.

¹²⁴Infra, pp. 222-23.

¹²⁵The Association in 1743 adopted A Short Treatise of Church Discipline prepared by Benjamin Griffith. Sources for the Discipline included a tract by Elias Keach, a manuscript by Abel Morgan, some works of "Doctors Owen and Goodwin" and excerpts from actions by the Association in cases of discipline. This Discipline was printed with the Philadelphia Confession in 1743. McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 295.

doctrine of an invisible Church was recognized stress was laid on the particular church, composed of baptized believers who ". . . under Christ their mystical head . . ." were ". . . the first proper subject of the keys, and [had] . . . power and privilege to govern themselves, and to choose out their own ministerial officers . . ."126

The principle of congregational authority to choose or elect officers was so firmly fixed that in case no "gifts for the ministry" could be found within the church and a man from a sister church accepted the call, it was essential that he move his membership to that of the electing and ordaining church ". . . so that they may chuse him among themselves, Acts vi.3."127 This idea of authority was expressed in associational life. In answer to a query from the church at Philadelphia, the Association responded that each church possessed the power to decide the length of time needed for "trial of gifts" and that ". . . the call, choice, and ordination of her own officers [was] . . . a special privilege that Christ had given to his

¹²⁶ A Short Treatise of Church Discipline, p. 4, appended to A Confession of Faith . . . Adopted by the Baptist Association met at Philadelphia, September 25, 1742 (New edition; Philadelphia: W. W. Woodward, 1810). Hereafter referred to as Discipline.

¹²⁷ Ibid., pp. 7-8.

church under the gospel dispensation."¹²⁸ The Association refused to assume the authority for ordination. The church at Newtown, Pennsylvania requested that the Association set the time and appoint a Minister to ordain a Mr. Nicholas Cox but the petition was denied because ". . . the appointment of both properly belongs to his church."¹²⁹

The revised edition of the Discipline placed more emphasis on the particular church.¹³⁰ The source of authority, the power to appoint or choose officers independently of any church was stressed.¹³¹ But a new idea, a legal

¹²⁸Philadelphia Minutes, 1746, pp. 50-52. This theory of authority was also supported by an "Essay" in the minutes for 1749 which said that a church had the power to try and ordain its own officers independently of other churches. "Essay," Philadelphia Minutes, 1749, pp. 60-61.

¹²⁹Ibid., 1771, p. 119.

¹³⁰The Association meeting in 1795 appointed a committee to revise the Discipline of 1743 judging it ". . . to be materially defective . . ." In 1796, the work was not completed so the Association advised the committee to report in 1797. The report of the committee was read before the Association. Still not satisfied the Association appointed one representative from each church to a committee which ". . . after making some alterations, chiefly verbal, it was agreed it should be printed for the use of the churches." The chief author of this edition was Samuel Jones, Pastor of the Pennepek or Lower Dublin Church (1762-1812). There is no record that the Association ever adopted the Discipline of 1797. A Treatise of Church Discipline, Adopted by the Sansom-Street Baptist Church, Philadelphia (Philadelphia: Sansom-Street Baptist Church, 1818), pp. 1-2, 5-6 (arts. 1, 2,4). Hereafter cited as Revised Discipline.

¹³¹Ibid., p. 8 (art. 12).

concept of authority, entered the Revised Discipline. A church, independent and having full power to elect its officers, had only executive power given by Christ who kept the legislative authority in his own hands. The church possessed power to execute Christ's laws only.¹³²

As in the first Discipline the revised edition provided that one or more Ministers assist in the ordination. Ministerial help and imposition of hands was considered the regular means of setting apart but the ". . . essence of ordination [consisted]. . . in the call of the church, in their voting in his favour, and designating him by said vote to the ministerial work . . ." ¹³³ The insistence on this definition of ordination reemphasized the "independency" of the churches.

The authority of the particular congregation was closely guarded in both editions of the Discipline limiting associational power to matters of mutual benefit to all churches. Associations were to serve in an advisory capacity with no coercive power.¹³⁴

Thus the theory of congregational prerogative over election and ordination of its officers was expressed.

¹³²Ibid. (art. 13).

¹³³Ibid., pp. 11-12 (art. 6).

¹³⁴Discipline, pp. 37-40; Revised Discipline, pp. 31-32 (art. 5).

But the practice of these churches betrayed an unconscious view of ordination which demanded that in order for an ordination to be regular Elders must assist in the service. This sentiment appeared in the Discipline which provided that after election the candidate was ". . . to have the hands of the presbytery of that church, or of neighbouring elders called and authorised by that church . . . laid upon him . . ." ¹³⁵ The evidence from associational records though sparse did not mention an occasion on which ordination took place without the assistance of an Elder or Elders. This view of authority, then, was one of shared prerogative and it expressed a principle, that the congregation through the agency of the Holy Spirit separated a ministry responsible to its authority but also representative of a more extensive fellowship and communion declared in the ordination service where Elders assisted. Morgan Edwards, clerk of the Association, conveyed this idea when he commented that:

. . . Christ is the door to the ministry, and his church is the porter, for to it hath he given the keys; and whoever comes in at the door, to him the porter openeth, John x.3; he that climbeth into the pulpit any other way, climbeth thither by an extra-ordinary call and mission, and must give

¹³⁵ Discipline, pp. 6-7. The language states this as common procedure and other methods would have been irregular.

an extra-ordinary proof thereof, as the Apostles did . . .¹³⁶

The influence of the Philadelphia Association through its agents, the confession and the first edition of the Discipline reached into early Baptist life in South Carolina. Especially was the Association influential throughout Charleston and surrounding areas. The first church in South Carolina was begun in 1696 with the emigration from Kittery, Maine, of William Screven and a group of Baptists who settled on the Cooper River.¹³⁷ Dissenters had settled as early as 1670; it was possible that Baptists were among these.¹³⁸ By 1699 there was a Baptist church in Charleston under the leadership of Screven.¹³⁹ Other churches of the Particular Baptist lineage organized by the middle of the Eighteenth Century. In 1751, under the leadership of Oliver Hart who had come out of the Philadelphia Association¹⁴⁰ and become Pastor of the church in

¹³⁶Philadelphia Minutes, 1771, pp. 121-22.

¹³⁷The date of Screven's emigration is debated. Newman, op. cit., p. 221, gives 1684. For discussion of evidence favoring the date of 1696 see Leah Townsend, South Carolina Baptists: 1670-1805 (Florence, South Carolina: The Florence Printing Company, 1935), pp. 5-6.

¹³⁸Newman, op. cit., pp. 221-24, says that two groups, one from Somersetshire, England, and the other under Lord Cardross, emigrating from England and reaching the Charleston area in 1682-1683, contained Baptists.

¹³⁹Townsend, op. cit., p. 10.

¹⁴⁰Newman, op. cit., p. 278.

Charleston, an association was formed. Four churches, the Ashley River, Welsh Neck, Euhaw and Charleston, composed this new body, the second in America. These churches and others uniting with the Charleston Association, being of Calvinistic persuasion, followed the Philadelphia Association's example and adopted the Second London Confession in 1767.¹⁴¹ This declaration, now referred to as the Charlestown Confession influenced the older churches in the coastal areas much more than those of the "back country." But after the initial advance of the Separate Baptists¹⁴² and their winning of inland territory in the mid Eighteenth Century there was a tendency to realign with the Charlestown Confession and the Regular Baptist position.¹⁴³

The doctrine of the Church in the Charlestown

¹⁴¹Townsend, op. cit., pp. 111-12. The article on imposition of hands was deleted but the one on singing in public worship was kept. McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 298.

¹⁴²The origin of the name, Separate, stems from New England and the Great Awakening. Those members of the Congregational Church that approved of the new revival methods, confronting opposition from brethren who refused sanction, withdrew from the churches into Separatist congregations some of which became Baptists, other eventually returned to the Congregational fold. Many of these, prodded by persecution, migrated to the South where growth was rapid. Sweet, op. cit., pp. 194, 217-18.

¹⁴³Townsend, op. cit., pp. 287, 292, 294. This confession, perhaps, was the most influential of all documents in the South. McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 298.

Confession¹⁴⁴ as in that of the Philadelphia Confession recognized an invisible Church composed of the elect of all ages. Nevertheless the authority to govern and appoint officers was given by Christ, the Head of the Church, to particular, visible churches who could separate their own officers preferably but not essentially with the help of Elders.

The Charlestown Discipline showed considerably more insight into the doctrine of authority as held and practiced by early Baptists of this area.¹⁴⁵ The Discipline adhered to belief in the universal Church, ". . . Christ's mystical Body, of which he is the Head, Col.1.18 Eph.1.22."¹⁴⁶ The word, invisible, was not used but the language made it clear that this meaning was understood when the Church was

¹⁴⁴Since this declaration of faith is identical with the Second London and Philadelphia Confessions only passing reference will be made to the doctrine of the Church. Closer examination will follow in discussion of the Charlestown Discipline.

¹⁴⁵This Discipline was drawn up by Oliver Hart and Francis Pelot in 1773, and revised by David Williams and Morgan Edwards. Townsend, op. cit., p. 112. It was published in 1774 along with the Charlestown Confession and reprinted in 1794, 1804, and 1831. The Discipline was written and published because the Philadelphia Discipline was out of print, was not explicit as the Charlestown Confession and ". . . some things appear to us exceptionable." For sources the authors drew on the Discipline of Philadelphia, and the Body of Divinity by John Gill. The Preface, to the Discipline, no page.

¹⁴⁶A Summary of Church-Discipline, pp. 2-3 (art. 1), appended to A Confession of Faith . . . Adopted by the Baptist Association in Charlestown, South Carolina (Charleston: Printed by David Bruce, in Church-street, 1774). Hereafter cited as Charlestown Discipline.

spoken of in a collective sense. In line with Baptist tradition the Discipline stressed the particular, visible church. This church consisted of a ". . . Company of Saints, incorporated by a special Covenant, into one distinct Body, and meeting together in one Place . . ." ¹⁴⁷ Profession of faith and baptism by immersion were prerequisites to church membership. ¹⁴⁸ A church constituted on the basis of mutual consent, generally but not essentially with the help of at least one Minister, ¹⁴⁹ had the ". . . Keys, or Power of Government, within itself, having Christ for its Head, and his Law for its Rule. . . ." ¹⁵⁰ Such a church possessed the power to choose its own officers without the interference of other churches, councils or associations. ¹⁵¹ The Association, though, could withdraw fellowship if a church persisted in ". . . corrupt principles or . . . vicious Practices . . ." ¹⁵² As in the Philadelphia Association, the prerogative of election and ordination belonged inherently to the church. Yet in actual practice this authority was shared. A candidate

¹⁴⁷Ibid.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 14-17 (art. 1).

¹⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 3-4 (art. 3).

¹⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 5-6 (art. 4).

¹⁵¹Ibid., p. 6 (art. 4).

¹⁵²Ibid.

being a member of the electing church,¹⁵³ chosen by the congregation to the office of Pastor, was set apart by Elders who were necessary for complete separation. ". . . If there is not a sufficient Presbytery in the Church," so the Discipline instructed, "neighbouring Elders are to be called and authorized to perform that Service."¹⁵⁴ Such authority was guarded because the church held the power to sanction the Elders' participation. The minutes of the Charleston Association for 1775 required that, after the call of a church, a man must be ordained by Elders before he entered the Ministry. This theory was borne out in answer to a query from the Coosawatchee Church as to the proper method of ordaining a candidate. The Association replied:

A person to be ordained to the work of the Gospel Ministry, must be called thereto by the voice of the Church to which he belongs, & Set apart by . . . laying on of the hands of the Presbytery (two or more Ministers of the Same faith & order) 1 Tim.4.14; Who then give him the right hand of fellowship. . . .¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³Ibid., p. 9 (art. 1).

¹⁵⁴Ibid.

¹⁵⁵Minutes of the Charleston Baptist Association (Louisville: Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Library /hereafter abbreviated as SBTSL7), 1775, no page. Hereafter cited as Charleston Minutes. The minutes of the Association preceding 1775 have either been lost or destroyed. Townsend, op. cit., footnote, p. 111. One possible reason for the insistence of ministerial aid in ordination was the increase

Consequently, the power to ordain was shared.¹⁵⁶ This surrender of authority involved a view of the Ministry whose right to exist stemmed from the particular congregation but whose function and prerogatives were limited only by the churches' consent. The Ministry was extra-local.¹⁵⁷

The Nineteenth Century among Baptists in America was not a confessional age. The only declaration of faith of wide influence and relevant to the subject of ordination was the New Hampshire Confession.¹⁵⁸ The

of unqualified candidates and growing laxness in requirements for admission to the Ministry. The church at Lynch's Creek asked the Association what could be done about ". . . too hasty laying on of hands . . ." and it replied that two but preferably three esteemed Ministers should assist in the service. Charleston Minutes, 1791, p. 2; 1808, p. 3.

¹⁵⁶Townsend, op. cit., p. 293, says that there was a growing tendency before 1800 in the Association to consider any ordination illegal unless a presbytery examined and laid hands on the candidate.

¹⁵⁷By 1830 a very high view of the Ministry had evolved in the Association. The "Circular Letter" of this year spoke of the Ministry as a ". . . distinct order of men . . . to be perpetuated to the end of time . . . Without such an arrangement, we can hardly imagine that the church could maintain its visibility . . ." "Circular Letter," Charleston Minutes, 1830, p. 8. This letter also stated that a church by itself could not ". . . invest any one with full authority as a minister of the gospel, without ministerial concurrence and aid. . . ." Ibid., pp. 16-17.

¹⁵⁸The origin of this confession lay in the work and influence of Benjamin Randall, a Congregationalist, who in reaction from Calvinism and infant baptism became a Baptist and began in 1780 a movement which ended in formation of

visible church was held to be composed of immersed believers joined in a covenant relationship.¹⁵⁹ The doctrine of the Church was not mentioned.¹⁶⁰ Evidently the source of authority was in the hands of the local congregation for the church exercised ". . . the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word . . ." ¹⁶¹ The confession

the Freewill Baptists at New Durham, New Hampshire. Organization of these Baptists was connectional. In 1827, at the formation of the General Conference, a statement of faith was suggested. The committee which had been appointed reported in 1833, and after slight revision at the Conference it was published in 1834 as the doctrinal statement of the Freewill Baptists. The theology was Arminian and the definition of the church included both the visible and invisible ideas. The New Hampshire Baptist Convention, organized in 1826, conscious of Freewill Baptist success had a confession drawn up with the purpose of counteracting their influence. This confession was published in 1833. The articles were mildly Calvinistic in doctrine but in ecclesiology the confession referred only to the particular church in an effort to stem the centralizing tendency seen in the Freewill organization. William W. Barnes, "The New Hampshire Confession of Faith, Its Origin and Use," The Review and Expositor, 39:3-6, Jan., 1942. In 1853, J. Newton Brown, editorial secretary of the American Baptist Publication Society, added two articles, one on "Repentance and Faith" and the other on "Sanctification." J. M. Pendleton, in 1867, incorporated the confession into his Church Manual and E. T. Hiscox, in 1890, into his Standard Manual and later in his New Directory for Baptist Churches. The confession was widely used in the East, North and West and became the norm of doctrine for Landmark Baptists. McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 299-301.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 305-6 (arts. 13,14).

¹⁶⁰Barnes, op. cit., pp. 5-6, says that the reason for an article on the particular church only was to provide room for those who ". . . believed in the particular church and no more . . . and those who believed in the particular church and some more . . ."

¹⁶¹McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 305-6 (art. 13).

failed to mention any matter dealing with the subject of ordination other than the officers required for a church.

William Crowell, however, in The Church Member's Manual, provided a commentary or discipline based on the New Hampshire Confession.¹⁶² This work, following in the tradition and atmosphere of the confession, generally expressed the views of those accepting it.

The doctrine of an invisible, catholic Church was not mentioned. Emphasis instead was placed on the particular church it being the New Testament model.¹⁶³ These churches were composed of immersed believers united with each other on the basis of a mutual covenant.¹⁶⁴ Christ, the source of all power, gave to the churches a polity and organization which were to be obeyed not changed.

¹⁶²Crowell was Pastor of the Baptist church at Waterville, Maine, and later editor of the "Christian Watchman," the most influential Baptist paper of New England.

¹⁶³The reason for such emphasis and change in doctrine can be found in the ecclesiological controversy of the Nineteenth Century. Baptists defended themselves against the attacks of Methodists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians, who held Crowell said, that there was ". . . a national provincial, or geographical church." William Crowell, The Church Member's Manual (New revised edition; Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1852), p. 35. Crowell, in addition to other Baptists, identified and confused the universal, visible church with the universal, invisible Church and thus in ecclesiological controversies cut down Scripture and confessional tradition to defend the doctrine of a visible, particular church.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 46, 57, 78.

Therefore, churches were to function only in an executive capacity, fulfill and carry out the polity given by Christ. A church so constituted received authority directly from Christ and possessed all power essential to church government and election of its own officers.¹⁶⁵

Election by the church was the essential act in separation to the Ministry, whereas ordination by a presbytery was secondary. The purpose of a council in ordination was ". . . that he ought to be recognized by all other churches and their ministers."¹⁶⁶ Theoretically election by the congregation was the door through which a candidate entered the Ministry. This action assured the validity of his ordination¹⁶⁷ yet since the church lived in a social context, in relationship to other churches and Ministers, it had "sacred moral obligations" to seek the cooperation and representation of other churches and Ministers.¹⁶⁸ The churches, then separated the Ministry; a Ministry which reached beyond the particular church and the office of Pastor to a fellowship including sister

¹⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 60-67, 93-95.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 107, 109.

¹⁶⁷The corruption of existing Baptist churches and the organization of a church in areas inaccessible to other churches were the only circumstances under which ordination could be omitted. Ibid., p. 108.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 107-8.

churches and Ministers. The ordination service symbolized this fellowship. The ultimate temporal source of authority for ordination was the church not the Ministry.

The view of the source of authority in ordination as held by J. R. Graves and R. B. C. Howell in Tennessee, and as actually practiced in Kentucky found its origin in the Regular and Separate Baptists of Virginia and the Carolinas, and their subsequent emigration west of the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains.

In Virginia the Regular or Particular Baptists had organized a church on Opequon Creek as early as 1752 when the Philadelphia Association sent two men, at the request of the church, to aid them. The same year ministerial aid was also given by the Association to a newly organized church at Kettocton. By 1765 the strength and growth of the Regulars had enabled them to organize the Kettocton Association. The four churches in this union continued to follow the Calvinistic tradition and the Philadelphia Confession.¹⁶⁹

Separate Baptists came into Virginia from North Carolina. Shubeal Stearns, one of the Separates from New England, made an unsuccessful attempt with his

¹⁶⁹Garnett Ryland, The Baptists of Virginia, 1699-1926 (Richmond: The Virginia Baptist Board of Missions and Education, 1955), pp. 9-10, 17.

brother-in-law, Daniel Marshall, to evangelize at Cacapon, near Opequon, in 1754. Stearns' party then left and settled on Sandy Creek in North Carolina, 1755. Here they organized a church. Other churches were established and growth was so rapid that by 1758, they joined in formation of the Sandy Creek Association. From this point the Separates, led by Marshall, Dutton Lane and others, invaded and evangelized Virginia. By 1771 Virginia Separates had joined in a General Association of Separate Baptists the organization resulting from division of the Sandy Creek Association, 1770.¹⁷⁰

By 1772 the Separates had outgrown the Regulars who had fourteen churches while the former had twenty.¹⁷¹

Though the theological emphasis of the Regulars was Calvinistic and the Separates' theology contained strains of Arminianism and moderate Calvinism, the hindrances to union between the two groups were not insurmountable. Both positions were modified and a spirit of union between the two parties was engendered by common suffering in persecution from the Established Anglican Church. Thus in spite of the fact that the Separates objected to and shied away from a creedal emphasis and the Regulars disliked

¹⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 37-38, 51-52.

¹⁷¹Ibid., p. 59.

Arminianism, the latter quarter of the Eighteenth Century brought union with both sides granting concessions. In 1783 the General Association adopted the Philadelphia Confession with the understanding that it was not to be strictly observed, that the Scriptures were superior to the confession, and that it could be revised whenever the General Association saw fit.¹⁷² Then, in 1787, on the basis of the foregoing agreement and a provision that urged all Christians to believe in the ". . . free, unmerited grace of Christ,"¹⁷³ the Separates and Regulars united. After this the dominant influence of the Separate tradition and the diversion of attention from doctrine to expansion brought a creedal de-emphasis. In 1804 confessional representatives at a meeting of the associations made their last attempt to have a revision of the confession adopted. This effort failed and confessional emphasis disappeared.¹⁷⁴ Union was thus accomplished on a broad platform of toleration of each others' distinctive traits. This provision made a larger degree of uniformity possible as old practices fell into disuetude.

In North Carolina, as in Virginia,¹⁷⁵ during the

¹⁷²Ibid., p. 121.

¹⁷³Ibid., p. 139.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 162-64.

¹⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 9-10.

decade of 1750, General Baptists, the earliest group in both states, became Regular Baptists. This transformation was brought about through the agency of zealous representatives sent out by the Charleston and Philadelphia Associations.¹⁷⁶ Ten churches, at one time General Baptist, had become by 1762, Regulars and were associated with the Charleston Association. In this same year some of these churches withdrew to form their own organization. For some unknown reason their organization was not perfected until 1769 when they met together and became the Kehukee Association.¹⁷⁷

The same decade saw another important and more influential movement among the Baptists, that of the Separates. As mentioned before¹⁷⁸ the Separates organized the Sandy Creek Association, 1758, the first and most important center of Baptist work in North Carolina. The influence of this Association and its churches extended into Virginia and South Carolina. By 1770 the Association had divided into three divisions, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia each forming

¹⁷⁶George Washington Paschal, History of North Carolina Baptists (Raleigh: The General Board North Carolina Baptist State Convention, 1930), I, 204-10.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 417-19.

¹⁷⁸Supra, pp. 52f.

distinct bodies.¹⁷⁹ No other association, native to North Carolina, was formed until 1790 when the Yadkin was organized.¹⁸⁰

Doctrinally the Separates and Regulars of North Carolina were no different from those in the two states to the north and south of them. In fact the three state area provided a common source and a cohesive unity for Regular and Separate activity. Separates inclined toward Arminianism while the Regulars were Calvinistic. But these factors plus the Separate anti-creedal emphasis and the Regular confessional stress did not prevent gradual merger of the two parties.

The first phase of union began when the reforming churches of the Kehukee Association joined in 1777 to form a new body. This Association included both Separate and Regular churches.¹⁸¹ A confession of faith, largely

¹⁷⁹Paschal, op. cit., p. 404.

¹⁸⁰George Washington Paschal, History of North Carolina Baptists (Raleigh: The General Board North Carolina Baptist State Convention, 1955), II, 265.

¹⁸¹The Kehukee Association, organized in 1769, was Regular Baptist, but contact with the Separates in ensuing years made some of the churches insist on a regenerated church membership rather than placing emphasis on a "baptized" congregation as the old North Carolina Regulars had done. These reforming churches stressed the necessity of a convincing conversion experience while the others were lax and required only the "desire for baptism" as evidence for church membership. Ibid., I, 417, 427-428.

Calvinistic, was adopted but the evangelical zeal of the Separates modified it.¹⁸²

The last step in bringing the two groups together occurred in 1787, when the Separates and Regulars of Virginia united on a provisional confessional basis.¹⁸³ The Yadkin Association, covering extensive territory, adopted the same plan of union in 1790, while the Kehukee Association had agreed to it in 1788.¹⁸⁴ From this period union of the two parties was gradually accomplished and emigrants crossing the Blue Ridge Mountains after 1800 carried with them an admixture of Regular and Separate Baptist traditions.

Emigration of Baptists from North Carolina and Virginia had begun as early as 1768, in Tennessee, and 1775, in Kentucky, but the flow remained small.¹⁸⁵ From 1781 Baptist movement into Kentucky from Virginia increased.¹⁸⁶ By 1785 there were eleven Regular and seven

¹⁸² Ibid., I, pp. 474-77.

¹⁸³ Supra, pp. 53f.

¹⁸⁴ Paschal, op. cit., II, 259-64.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., I, 383; David Benedict, A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America and Other Parts of the World (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., 1856), p. 811

¹⁸⁶ After the Revolution emigration into Kentucky and Tennessee greatly increased. This flow westward came because of poor economic conditions along the Atlantic coast. Deep

Separate churches.¹⁸⁷ Two associations both Regular Baptist, the Salem and Elkhorn, were organized in 1785, and two years later the first Separate Baptist association, the South Kentucky,¹⁸⁸ was formed.

The doctrinal tradition of the early Kentucky-Tennessee frontier was anything but uniform. Many of the settlers and preachers coming into Kentucky before 1781 changed from Separate to Regular Baptists,¹⁸⁹ but as emigration continued the Separates balanced off the Regulars. Thus two streams of thought were inherited by Baptists in this area. The Calvinistic doctrine of election and adherence to the Philadelphia Confession was stressed by one wing while the Arminian view of the atonement and an aversion to creeds was embraced by the other. These tenets,

in debt and with no market for their products the population moved over the mountains through the passes of the Blue Ridge. Improved economic conditions in the North slackened the flow from that direction but it continued to cross from Virginia and the Carolinas. Population in the two states was sufficient to admit Kentucky, in 1792, and Tennessee, in 1796, into the Union. Sweet, op. cit., p. 299; William Warren Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier: The Baptists, 1783-1830, A Collection of Source Material (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1931), pp. 19-20.

¹⁸⁷J. H. Spencer, A History of Kentucky Baptists, From 1769 to 1885 (Cincinnati: J. R. Baumes, 1885), I, 102-3.

¹⁸⁸Benedict, op. cit., pp. 811-12; Spencer, op. cit., I, 147.

¹⁸⁹Ibid., I, 482.

especially in Kentucky made union of the Separates and Regulars difficult until 1801. Before this year three attempts had been made to join forces but because of the Separates' fear of confessions these ended in failure. The great revival on the frontier, 1800-1803, brought a mood of reconciliation, doctrinally and personally, between the two parties, and in 1801 the Separates and Regulars united on the basis of brief articles which represented a compromise between the opposing parties.¹⁹⁰ The basis of agreement, called the "Terms of General Union," was used by many associations organized in Kentucky after 1801.

Settlement by Baptists had also begun in eastern Tennessee before the Revolution but these efforts were weak and scattered. In 1781 there were five or six churches, one of them coming from the Sandy Creek Association in North Carolina. By 1786 the churches had joined in formation of the Holston Association adopting the Philadelphia Confession though the majority of members were Separates.¹⁹¹ Baptists in middle Tennessee were strong enough by 1796 to organize the Mero Association and in western Tennessee to form the Western District

¹⁹⁰Ibid., I, 543-46; Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier, pp. 22-23. For the articles of union see Benedict, op. cit., pp. 821-22.

¹⁹¹Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier, pp. 26-27; Paschal, op. cit., I, 383-85.

Association in 1823.¹⁹²

Doctrinally the heritage was identical with that in Kentucky. The Separates did not organize an association as did their neighbors to the North but their influence was great. The union of Separates and Regulars resulted in modified Calvinism. Six of the early associations organized before 1810 either adopted the Philadelphia Confession or an "abstract of principles" that clearly reflected the influence of Calvinism at the point of the Ministry, atonement and sacraments.¹⁹³ Extreme forms of Calvinism and Arminianism in addition to Campbellism were to cause violent trouble and rupture among Baptists both in Kentucky and Tennessee before the middle of the Nineteenth Century.

A Baptist doctrine of ordination was developed against this kaleidoscopic background in which a contrasting and changing emphasis could be seen through J. R. Graves and R. B. C. Howell of Tennessee and actual practice in Kentucky.

¹⁹²Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier, pp. 27-28; William R. Seat, "A History of Tennessee Baptists to 1820-25" (unpublished Doctor's thesis, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, 1931), pp. 87, 123. No definitive work on the history of Tennessee Baptists has been done and the sources are scattered.

¹⁹³Ibid., pp. 55-57, 95, 98, 101.

J. R. Graves¹⁹⁴ completely rejected the doctrine of the invisible Church which R. B. C. Howell accepted.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁴J. R. Graves (1820-1893) was born in Chester, Vermont. With little opportunity for schooling he educated himself, and after brief tenure as principal of an academy at Kingsville, Ohio, he moved in 1841, to Jessamine County, Kentucky, where he became principal of Clear Creek Academy. He joined Mt. Freedom Baptist Church by which he was later ordained. In 1845, Graves moved to Nashville where he was Pastor of a church, and in 1846 became editor of The Baptist, a paper previously edited by R. B. C. Howell, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of that city. Assuming the editorship of this paper Graves became the foremost advocate of "Landmarkism," a high-church doctrine which insisted that through baptismal succession the validity of Baptist orders was secured and consequently no preacher outside a Baptist church could be recognized as a Minister. Neither could his acts, baptism, Lord's Supper, preaching, be sanctioned as valid. Graves zealously and sometimes bitterly proclaimed these doctrines. In 1858 he was dismissed from the First Baptist Church chiefly because of an acrid personal conflict with R. B. C. Howell who also did not agree with him on the principles of Landmarkism. Graves, supported by J. M. Pendleton, Pastor at Bowling Green, Kentucky, and professor at Union University of Tennessee, and A. C. Dayton, author and editorial assistant to Graves, carried his defense and advocacy of Landmarkism throughout the frontier and Southwest until a few years before his death in 1893. O. L. Hailey, J. R. Graves, Life, Times and Teachings (Nashville: [n.n.], 1929), pp. 12, 16-17, 22, 52-55.

The influence of Graves on the Southern Baptist Convention has been great. Particularly is this true in the doctrine of the church.

¹⁹⁵R. B. C. Howell (1801-1868) was a native of North Carolina and of Episcopalian ancestry. He was converted to the Baptist faith and later ordained in Norfolk, Virginia, where he became Pastor of Cumberland Street Church, 1827. He was Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee, 1834-1850, 1857-1868. In the intervening years, 1850-1857, he held the pastorate at Second Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia. Howell, relinquished editorship of The Baptist, a paper which he founded, to Graves in 1846. The doctrine of Landmarkism and growing personality conflict led to separation of Graves and Howell, and the former's expulsion from the First Baptist Church in 1858.

Graves developed his doctrine of the church in reaction to and defense against the attacks of the Methodists whose government was episcopal, the Presbyterians whose practice of infant baptism polluted the church and the Campbellites who in Graves' mind taught baptismal regeneration.¹⁹⁶ In order to protect the Baptists from the subversive influence of doctrine and polity foreign to their usage he hammered out a literalistic, authoritarian interpretation of Scripture which provided solely for the doctrine of the visible church. In doing this he fell into the error of identifying the "kingdom of God" with the visible churches. In refutation of Methodist polity Graves wrote:

In the days of these kings [Dan. 2.44]--kings of the 4th universal Empire not of England--the Caesars--not the Georges, "SHALL THE GOD OF HEAVEN, (Not Luther or Calvin, Wesley or Campbell,) SET UP A KINGDOM which shall never be destroyed." This Kingdom must have been

R. B. C. Howell, "A Memorial of the First Baptist Church Nashville, Tennessee, from 1820-1863" (unpublished manuscript, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, 1863), I, 80-86; II, 6. Hereafter cited as "Memorial."

¹⁹⁶The period, 1830-1861, along the frontier was an era of sectionalism both in church and political circles. This trend resulted in numerous divisions in churches. Each denomination emphasized its distinctive tenets and loyalty to one's religion became a strong issue. But this age was also one of individualism. The frontier man never doubted his ability to succeed. Thus religion was marked by strange vagaries. Sweet, The Story of Religion in America, pp. 373-75.

something visible and tangible--a distinct organization, otherwise it could not have been seen or assaulted . . . It was a kingdom that was set up, and there can be no kingdom without some sort of government and organization . . .¹⁹⁷

Passages such as Ephesians 1:22; 4:12 in which the Church was spoken of as Christ's body, Graves applied to a visible church.¹⁹⁸ This visible church, the first one of which was the Baptist church of Jerusalem¹⁹⁹ was of divine origin and Christ himself called it ". . . his Kingdom, 'the Kingdom of God,' 'the Kingdom of Heaven.'" This kingdom God set up²⁰⁰ on earth as His churches. To these churches,

¹⁹⁷ "Great Iron Wheel," Tennessee Baptist [Nashville, Tennessee], May 8, 1852. Graves referred to William Jones', The History of the Christian Church from the Birth of Christ to the XVIII Century (Fifth edition, 2 vols.; London: [n.n.], 1836) in which the author identified the "kingdom of God" and the visible church in his comments on Acts 2:38, I, 70, and for proof of the historical succession and perpetuity of the church he used Dan. 2:44. The pattern, order, laws and faith of the churches had divine origin. I, 69-70, 74.

¹⁹⁸ Editorial, Tennessee Baptist, Feb. 28, 1850.

¹⁹⁹ "Letters to N. L. Rice--No. XI.," Tennessee Baptist, Oct. 17, 1857.

²⁰⁰ "Protestantism, Why Baptists are Compelled to Oppose and Repudiate it.," Tennessee Baptist, Sept. 1, 1860; "Queries," The Baptist [Memphis, Tennessee], May 10, 1873. [The name of the paper was changed when Graves moved to Memphis, 1867. The title was not altered again until 1882 when it became Tennessee Baptist.] "The Queryist," The Baptist, July 1, 1876; "Church-Kingdom," The Baptist, July 20, 1878; J. R. Graves, The Relation of Baptism to Salvation (Texarkana: Baptist Sunday School Committee, 1928), footnote, p. 36. Graves in his commentary on the parable of the wicked husbandmen, Matt. 21:33-45, identified the "kingdom" with the visible church. J. R. Graves, The Dispensational Expositions of the Parables and

composed of baptized believers only²⁰¹ Christ gave only one form of church organization. This polity was essential to a true church.²⁰² Republicanism, authority to choose officers and discipline members, was given by Christ to each independent church.²⁰³ The nature of this authority was embodied in legal terms. Christ retained the judicial and legislative power while the churches were given executive

Prophecies of Christ (Second edition; Texarkana: Baptist Sunday School Committee, 1928), pp. 142-44; J. R. Graves, Intercommunion Inconsistent, Unscriptural, and Productive of Evil (Memphis: Baptist Book House, Graves, Mahaffy & Co., 1881), pp. 150-51; J. R. Graves, Infant Baptism (The Graves-Ditzler: or, Great Carrollton Debate, 6 vols., Memphis: Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1876), II, 618, 797.

²⁰¹"The Church at Jerusalem not Pedobaptist," Tennessee Baptist, Nov. 1, 1849; "What Societies are Republics, or Churches of Christ?," Tennessee Baptist, Mar. 7, 1850; "Queries," Tennessee Baptist, Feb. 4, 1854; "Aid and Comfort to Our Enemies," The Baptist, Oct. 16, 1869.

²⁰²"The Querist," Tennessee Baptist, Feb. 7, 1850. "Six Important Facts," Tennessee Baptist, Mar. 1, 1851; "Preface to 'Question of the Age,'" Tennessee Baptist, May 2, 1857; "Queries," The Baptist, May 23, 1874; "Questions and Answers," Baptist & Reflector (Nashville, Tennessee), Nov. 21, 1889. Graves' paper consolidated with the Reflector of eastern Tennessee in August, 1889, and he became a special editor.

²⁰³"The 'Ism' of Pedobaptism," Tennessee Baptist, Aug. 9, 1849. Graves' emphasis on republicanism continued throughout his life. To him it was the spirit of the Gospel. In fact he called the Baptist church the "parent of democratic and republican government." cf. "Six Important Facts," Tennessee Baptist, Sept. 8, 1860. He identified the political culture and spirit of his day with his ecclesiological views. To be a patriot was to be a Baptist and to be a Baptist was to be a patriot.

power, that is the right to carry out only those laws set forth in the New Testament. This form of polity Graves called an "executive democracy."²⁰⁴ The true or scriptural church was one, then, that agreed with the New Testament in its organization, membership, doctrines and ordinances. Only one form of these was divine.²⁰⁵

One other step was necessary to insure the purity of Baptist churches from Apostolic times. Graves found the key in the doctrine of the historical succession of churches. This succession was accomplished through a lineage of immersed churches and their Ministers:

There is no church, but a body of immersed believers, who have been immersed by one who has himself been immersed, after conversion and a hope of salvation.

If baptism is essential to church membership and Christ declared his church as an institution should continue to the end of time, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it, then it is to be taken for granted, in the absence of proof to the contrary that baptized churches have continued in regular succession from that day to this, and any particular baptized church must be regarded in the absence of proof to the contrary, as in the succession . . .²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴"Christianity is as Much Monarchial, as It is Republican," Tennessee Baptist, Nov. 1, 1849; "What Societies are Republics, or Churches of Christ?," Tennessee Baptist, Mar. 14, 1850; "The Great Iron Wheel," Tennessee Baptist, Aug. 12, 1854; "Editorial Brevities," The Baptist, Feb. 5, 1870.

²⁰⁵Editorial, Tennessee Baptist, Nov. 12, 1853.

²⁰⁶"Baptist Postulates," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 3, 1857; "Review of Elder R. Fuller's Views of the Immersion of Pedobaptists," Tennessee Baptist, Apr. 4, 1857.

Immersed Ministers became the links that guarded the perpetuity of the churches for it was to them that the authority to baptize had been given by the congregation.²⁰⁷

All of the elements essential to succession were present; the transmission of authority to a church or Minister for valid ordinances and acts depended on immersion.

Therefore, each congregation, fulfilling the requirements of this succession and adhering to the qualifications for a true church, had the "inalienable right" to elect its officers.²⁰⁸

The churches were the ultimate source of temporal authority, Christ's representatives on earth. When ". . . he left his church he delegated authority to no other organization or body of men."²⁰⁹

Consequently the role of a council or presbytery was confined to advice. Ordination was the act of the church

²⁰⁷"Queries and Difficulties," The Baptist, Dec. 11, 1869; "Administrators of Baptism," The Baptist, Apr. 30, 1870.

²⁰⁸"What Societies are Republics, or Churches of Christ?," Tennessee Baptist, Mar. 7, 1850; "Queries," Tennessee Baptist, Feb. 4, 1854.

²⁰⁹"An Important Question--Is it the Presbytery or the Church that Ordains?," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 18, 1862. The background of this as Graves said lay in the practice of associations to ordain and appoint standing committees on ordination. Each church was "the highest court of appeals . . ." "Queries," Tennessee Baptist, Feb. 4, 1854; "Baptist Postulates," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 3, 1857.

and could be performed by the congregation alone.²¹⁰ For ". . . it is the church," as Graves wrote, "that ordains and commissions them as her servants . . ." ²¹¹ Even the formal act of ordination belonged to the church because it was through the congregation's authority that the presbytery assisted and performed the ordination on behalf of the church.²¹²

Graves guarded the church's authority to ordain with an extreme doctrine of church independence, one which bordered on isolationism. This trend was reflected when he wrote:

Any local church, with its own officers, is qualified to ordain her own officers and deacons as well as ministers. The idea that a presbytery of ministers, called in from other churches, alone can ordain to the ministry or deaconship smacks sharply of the sacramental and sacerdotal; i. e., that such a body can impart the Holy Ghost . . .²¹³

If the church wished, a presbytery could have been constituted from out of the membership alone. No abnormal

²¹⁰"An Important Question--Is it the Presbytery or the Church that Ordains?," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 18, 1862.

²¹¹"To Whom Was the Commission Given?," The Baptist, Dec. 17, 1870; "The Seven Dispensations--The Fourth and Baptist Theory Teaching the Apostolic Commission--The Only Source of Ministerial Authority--The Church," The Baptist, Feb. 4, 1871.

²¹²"Who Ordains?," The Baptist, Aug. 2, 1873; "Remarks," The Baptist, Sept. 29, 1877; "Questions and Answers," Tennessee Baptist, May 9, 1885.

²¹³"Questions and Answers," Tennessee Baptist, July 18, 1885.

circumstances were necessary.²¹⁴

Hence there was no idea of a doctrine of shared authority divided between Elders and an ordaining church. Graves' atomistic conception of visible churches and denial of the doctrine of an invisible Church stemmed from his revulsion to Calvinism and infant baptism, fear of episcopacy and his abhorrence of Roman Catholicism.²¹⁵

²¹⁴"Questions and Answers," Baptist and Reflector, Dec. 3, 1891. Graves did not deal with the problem of ordination by a church without officers in its membership.

²¹⁵Graves referred to the Philadelphia Confession as the one with ". . . this Romish definition of the church . . ." and evidently adopted by the Philadelphia Association "without examination." J. R. Graves, Intercommunion Inconsistent, p. 113. The reason he rejected the London Confession of 1689, as he said, was that "The existence of a church, 'a particular church,' and 'churches,' is recognized, but in no one of the thirty-five articles is a church, or a particular church, clearly defined, nor the faintest idea given of what constitutes it. It is not even intimated that baptism is an ordinance of a particular church, or that it is essential to the existence of a church or to participation of the Lord's supper." "The Baptist Confession of Faith, 1689," Baptist and Reflector, Apr. 10, 1890. Instead, Graves recommended a short confession of faith containing ten articles free from Calvinism, referring only to the local, visible church, and making immersion a prerequisite to the Lord's Supper. These articles were adopted by the Newport, Rhode Island, Baptist church, which Graves claimed was the first in America. See S. Adlam, Part I., The First Baptist Church in America, with an introduction and editing by J. R. Graves; Part II., A Brief History of Roger Williams, Dr. John Clarke, and O. Holmes, to which is appended The First Church in Providence not the Oldest Baptist Church in America (edited by J. R. Graves; Texarkana: Baptist Sunday School Committee, 1928), pp. 194-98. His next recommendation was the New Hampshire Confession. "Edigrams," Baptist and Reflector, May 22, 1890.

The outcome of such thought was an individualistic concept of the Ministry.

On the other hand R. B. C. Howell²¹⁶ acknowledged the doctrine of the invisible Church, but as common among Baptists he stressed its visible aspect. "The Church in its broadest sense, includes all the saved . . . who shall in the last day, stand accepted before the throne of God. . . ." ²¹⁷ This Church he divided into the triumphant, Christians of all ages, past and present, and the universal, those in the world who had a living faith in Christ. ²¹⁸ These who constituted the latter group ". . . may not, by the force of peculiar circumstances, be literally connected with the visible Church; yet they are true worshippers, and really constitute a part of the mystical body of Christ. . . ." ²¹⁹ With this universal, invisible Church Howell identified the "kingdom of God." He wrote:

The kingdom of Christ upon earth is purely spiritual. It is consequently invisible. All those persons are subjects of this kingdom in whose hearts Christ reigns . . . All such persons will be saved whether baptized or not, or whether in or out of the visible church. . . . The universal invisible kingdom--call it church if you wish--is composed of

²¹⁶Supra, footnote 195, pp. 61, 62.

²¹⁷R. B. C. Howell, The Way of Salvation (Charleston: Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1849), p. 268.

²¹⁸Ibid.

²¹⁹Ibid.

all the saved . . .²²⁰

All visible churches were composed of believers baptized on their profession of faith and ". . . voluntarily united for the worship of God, in one assembly . . ."²²¹ These churches, modeled after those of the New Testament, have held the same doctrinal tenets in comparative purity and have existed since the Apostolic period though they were not called Baptist.²²² To congregations gathered in this

²²⁰R. B. C. Howell, "Memorial," II, 156-58. Howell wrote the above quotation in refutation of the Landmark doctrine which denied recognition to Ministers outside Baptist churches and rejected any of their acts such as preaching, baptism and the Lord's Supper as valid. Since preaching was an "official act" it demanded non-pulpit affiliation, that is the refusal to permit non-Baptists to speak in Baptist pulpits. The foregoing thought was based on the premise that Baptist churches were the only true churches outside of which there could be no valid orders. J. M. Pendleton, "An Old Landmark Re-Set," Landmarkism, Liberalism and The Invisible Church (Third edition; Fulton, Kentucky and St. Louis: National Baptist Publishing House, 1899), pp. 14-16. Howell aimed his argument directly at "An Old Landmark Re-Set," which he said ". . . has done in the Southwest an amount of injury that all our best efforts cannot repair in fifty years . . ." Howell, "Memorial," II, 160-61.

²²¹Howell, The Way of Salvation, p. 269; Howell, Three Sermons, on The Sacrament of Baptism (preached in the Baptist Church in Cumberland Street, Norfolk; Norfolk: James C. West, 1833), p. 19; Howell, "No. 46. The Church: Notes of a Sermon delivered in the First Baptist Church, at Nashville," The Baptist [Nashville, Tennessee], Oct. 25, 1845. Hereafter cited "Notes of a Sermon." Howell, The Terms of Communion at The Lord's Table (Second edition; Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1846), p. 44. Hereafter cited as Terms. Howell, "Memorial," I, 156-58.

²²²"Remarks," The Baptist, May, 1835; Howell, Terms, p. 256. Howell placed very little emphasis on church succession when compared to Graves. Howell's interest was that a historical witness for believer's baptism and immersion be maintained against infant baptism in the churches from the New Testament to the present. The validity of orders did not depend on a historical baptismal succession.

manner Christ has given ". . . all the requisite authority to create and ordain ministers . . ." ²²³ Christ entrusted this executive power of self government to his churches all of which were independent and equal. ²²⁴ Baptist polity which placed the authority to elect and ordain officers in the hands of each particular congregation was of divine origin. ²²⁵

But the strain of isolationism and supreme sovereignty characteristic of Graves' doctrine of church authority did not appear as the dominant note in Howell. He insisted that the particular church had the essential authority to appoint or ordain, synonymous words, its officers but unless they were ordained by the Ministry the action was defective. ²²⁶ One of the qualifications included with that of election by the church for entrance

²²³ Howell, Terms, p. 249.

²²⁴ "Two Baptist Concord Associations," The Baptist, Sept., 1835. "Communications--Letter III, To Dr. John M. Watson," The Baptist, Feb. 1, 1837; "Notes of a Sermon," The Baptist, Oct. 25, 1845; Howell, "Memorial," II, 244, 268-69.

²²⁵ "Notes of a Sermon," The Baptist, Oct. 25, 1845.

²²⁶ Howell, The Deaconship (Second edition; Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1851), pp. 65-66. The above thought comes from a discussion on the ordination of Deacons who had no right to the office unless elected by the church but they were not Deacons until ordained by the Ministry. "Similar checks and balances," Howell wrote, "exist with regard to the ordination of pastors and evangelists . . ." Ibid.

into the Ministry was ". . . regular ordination by a lawfully constituted presbytery. . . ." ²²⁷ This presbytery represented the churches as their "executive officers." ²²⁸ Thus the particular congregation had the essential prerogative to elect and ordain but the authority was shared with the presbytery. The Ministry, taking part in ordination services, symbolized the sanction and concurrence of sister churches as well as the approval of the Ministry itself.

In Kentucky the problem of authority in the doctrine of ordination was affected indirectly by controversy with the Presbyterians over the subjects of baptism, by the influence of the Christians or Disciples who rejected creeds and viewed baptism as regeneration and directly by Landmarkism, a defense from and reaction to the two preceding indirect issues. By 1850 these issues and movements had led Baptists to surrender the doctrine of the invisible Church. This change in emphasis was reflected after 1800 in a growing aversion to any but the simplest of doctrinal statements. The earliest associations,

²²⁷ Ibid., pp. 99-100.

²²⁸ "Notes of a Sermon," The Baptist, Oct. 25, 1845; "A True Minister of Christ," The Baptist, Mar. 13, 1847, p. 466; "Ministerial Ordination: A sermon by R. B. C. Howell, D.D., . . . at the ordination of David Breidenthall," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 13, 1848.

Elkhorn and Salem organized in 1785, were formed on basis of the Philadelphia Confession while the South Kentucky, a Separate Baptist association constituted in 1787, was founded on the "Scriptures alone."²²⁹ Only two other associations, Tate's Creek in 1793 and Bracken in 1799, were constituted before 1800. The former was a "United Baptist" association²³⁰ and evidently indicated a union of Regulars and Separates with only the briefest of doctrinal statements. Between 1800 and 1850 only seven associations were organized with the Philadelphia Confession as their basis while fourteen accepted the "Terms of General Union."²³¹ Around 1826 when the followers of Alexander Campbell began to separate from Baptist churches, a creedal deemphasis appeared.²³² This reaction coupled with

²²⁹Frank M. Masters, A History of Baptists in Kentucky (Louisville: Kentucky Baptist Historical Society, 1953), pp. 51, 58, 63.

²³⁰Ibid., p. 67.

²³¹"History of Hay's Fork Church," Minutes of the Tate's Creek Association of United Baptists (Louisville: SBTSL), 1885, p. 4. Hereafter cited as Tate's Creek Minutes.

²³²Alexander Campbell and his followers were nominally Baptists between 1813-1830. From 1820-1830, he attacked human innovations and urged a return to the purity of the Gospel. Sweet, The Story of Religion in America, p. 343. Biblical authority became the sole norm of judgement in faith, order and practice. Creeds fell within this emphasis and since the "Reformers," as they were called, presented such a threat to Baptist life and churches, they too swerved away from any creed as an expression of faith.

controversy between Baptist and Presbyterians over the subject of baptism forced the former into a defense of believer's baptism and a regenerated church. A clear line of demarcation had to be drawn between the church and the world. In doing this Baptists forgot about the doctrine of an invisible Church. Therefore, the ground had already been prepared for Landmarkism with its insistence on the divine origin of church order and the exclusive validity of ordination as coming from a Baptist church alone. This movement, entering Kentucky around 1846 when Graves became editor of the Tennessee Baptist, discovered the New Hampshire Confession ideally suited for doctrinal warfare since its exclusive emphasis was visible, particular congregations gathered on the basis of believer's baptism and immersion. In the 1840's associations accepted churches into fellowship on basis of the New Hampshire Confession.²³³ From the middle of the century to 1900, this confession stated the Baptist doctrinal position.²³⁴

²³³Goshen Association, organized 1817, admitted two churches, one in 1848 and the other 1851, on the New Hampshire Confession. Minutes of the Goshen Association of United Baptists (Louisville: SBTSL), 1848, p. 3; 1851, p. 3. Cited hereafter as Goshen Minutes.

²³⁴The confession was circulated by inclusion in J. N. Brown, The Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (Brattleboro, Vermont: Brattleboro' Typographic Company, 1842), pp. 1275; in J. M. Pendleton, Church Manual (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1867), pp. 180; and in Edward T. Hiscox, The Baptist Directory (New York: Sheldon & Co., 1867), pp. 287.

Associational minutes and periodical literature indicated the almost complete eclipse in Baptist theology of the invisible Church. In 1836 at the request of the Long Run Association, the Baptist Banner, printed from Shelbyville, Kentucky, published a "Declaration of Faith" containing an article on the Church.²³⁵ From this point on reference to the Church as a Baptist doctrine was either referred to reluctantly and condescendingly or unequivocally denied by a majority of the denomination. The North Bend Association with a Calvinistic tradition acknowledged the doctrine in two circular letters but quickly passed on to assert the independence and visibility of the local congregation.²³⁶ ". . . That there is a sense in which he has an Invisible Kingdom," wrote a correspondent in The Baptist Monthly, "I suppose may be granted."²³⁷ But a statement more characteristic of Baptist thought and generally reflecting opinion in Kentucky was given by J. T. Hedger who said:

²³⁵"The Baptist Declaration of Faith; revised and adopted by several District Associations of the United Baptists in Virginia," Baptist Banner [Shelbyville, Kentucky], Oct. 22, 1836.

²³⁶Minutes of North Bend Association (Louisville: SBTSL), 1859, pp. 6-7; 1867, p. 11. Hereafter cited as North Bend Minutes.

²³⁷W. Pope Yeaman, "Alien Immersions," The Baptist Monthly, 2:50-51, Aug., 1866.

. . . Many people in speaking of Christ's Kingdom evidently mean to embrace within it all true penitents, those who have failed to comply with the law of the Kingdom [baptism into a gospel church], as well as the obedient subjects. Such a Kingdom of Heaven exists only in thought. The Bible gives no more information respecting this imaginary institution, than it does of 'the universal Church' . . . The New Testament furnishes no information of the Universal Church nor of its branches . . .²³⁸

H. Boyce Taylor, Pastor at Murray, Kentucky, demonstrated the effects of Landmarkism and its rigid insistence on church visibility when the Blood River Association passed a resolution condemning Southern Baptist Sunday School literature for allowing materials to be printed which taught that the true Church of Christ was universal and invisible.²³⁹

On the other hand, as protection against infant baptism and inter-denominational communion, a common practice between Methodists and Presbyterians, Baptists

²³⁸J. T. Hedger, "A Sermon on the Distinctive Principles and Practices of the Baptists," Western Recorder [Louisville, Kentucky], Nov. 3, 1866. Hereafter cited as WR. J. N. Hall wrote that "The idea of church invisibility is a modern one, my text and the entire Word of God being witnesses. The Church is not invisible because as a light it must shine, as salt it must have savour . . ." J. N. Hall, "The Annual Sermon," Minutes of the West Union Association of United Baptists (Louisville: SBTSL), 1890, pp. 6-7. Hall preached this sermon against the background of other denominations claiming to be churches.

²³⁹"Report on Literature," Minutes of the Blood River Association of United Baptists (Louisville: SBTSL), 1900, pp. 11-12.

elevated the doctrine of the visible church to a position that demanded historical succession to safeguard church authority and valid ordinances. A visible church according to the New Testament ". . . consists exclusively of baptised believers--those who have made a credible profession. . . ."²⁴⁰ Baptism was confined to immersion.²⁴¹ which was made essential to church membership.²⁴² Along with Graves they made the "kingdom of God" visible and identified it either with a single church or with the aggregate of churches.²⁴³ Since valid baptism could be administered

²⁴⁰"Circular Letter," Minutes of the Franklin Association of Baptists (Louisville: SBTSL), 1828, p. 10. Similar references may be found in "Circular Letter," Minutes of the Concord Association of United Baptists (Louisville: SBTSL), 1858, p. 7. Hereafter cited as Concord Minutes. "Articles of Faith," Minutes of the Russell's Creek Association of United Baptists (Louisville: SBTSL), 1885, p. 15. Hereafter cited Russell Creek Minutes. James M. Pendleton, "The 'Old Land-Mark' Vindicated," The Christian Repository, a Religious & Literary Monthly, 4:230, Apr., 1855. Hereafter cited as CR.

²⁴¹"Circular Letter," Concord Minutes, 1858, p. 7; Minutes of the Barren River Association of United Baptists (Louisville: SBTSL), 1858, pp. 5-8. Hereafter cited Barren River Minutes. Pendleton, "The 'Old Land-Mark' Vindicated," CR, 4:230, Apr., 1855.

²⁴²"Circular Letter," Tate's Creek Minutes, 1859, p. 41; "Circular Letter," Minutes of the Baptist Association of United Baptists (Louisville: SBTSL), 1872, p. 12. Hereafter cited Baptist Minutes.

²⁴³W. Pope Yeaman, op. cit., pp. 52-53. "Every county in our state has its court of justice where the temporal rights of the people are to be strictly regarded according to the constitutional laws of the commonwealth,

only by an authorized administrator, that is one who belonged to the visible kingdom, i. e., one of the churches of Christ, and had been given authority by the church,²⁴⁴ historical succession through the medium of immersion and qualified Ministers appeared as the guarantor of this power. The faith and polity of Baptists had been maintained in purity through a succession of churches from the Apostolic Period:

. . . we claim that we as Baptists are the true Church, for we have descended directly from this people /Novatians, Waldenses, etc./, who preserved pure the word of God and its doctrine, through the decades of time to the present, and in accordance

by which all the courts are to be governed. So in like manner every local church of Christ is a member of his kingdom . . ." J. G. Durham, "The Kingdom of Christ," WR, July 25, 1895.

²⁴⁴W. Pope Yeaman, op. cit., pp. 55-56; "Essay," Green River Baptist /Hartford, Kentucky/, Mar. 18, 1864; "Denominational Peculiarities of the Baptists," WR, Sept. 7, 1861. The preceding was an essay read before the Ministers' meeting in Daviess County Association. This whole question of a valid administrator was developed in the context of "alien immersion" or baptism by Ministers outside the Baptist denomination. Baptists were divided on the question of the validity of such baptism, and from 1850-1880, heatedly debated the matter. The Bay's Fork Association recognized that the practice of churches had not been uniform, that it had not been grounds for disfellowship but ". . . to preserve the harmony of our body, we would advise against the reception of such baptism . . ." Bay's Fork Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1868, p. 4. The Western Recorder under the editorship of J. L. Waller during the 1840's and 1850's argued that alien immersions were valid, but in 1871, when A. C. Caperton became editor, the paper became landmark insisting on rejection of alien immersion and supporting "official preaching," i. e., only an ordained Baptist Minister is qualified to preach, and church succession.

with the word of our Savior, which cannot be false, this Church has always kept a visible existence since it was said to Peter, Matt. 16:18, "And I say also unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. . . ."245

The majority of Kentucky Baptists accepted and defended church succession and rejected the doctrine of the invisible Church. Opinion, however, was not unanimous. J. L. Burrows, Pastor of the Broadway Baptist Church, in Louisville, disagreed with this "new doctrine" and used the pages of the Western Recorder to speak his disapproval.²⁴⁶ But the

²⁴⁵"Circular Letter," Greenup Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1877, p. 8. The doctrine of church succession is clearly set forth in other records: "Essay," Green River Baptist, Mar. 18, 1864; Baptist Minutes, 1870, p. 16. Baptists as early as 1820 traced their principles by historical succession to the New Testament but did not identify them with an organized church. The spiritual principle used was believers immersion. "Circular Letter," Salem Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1820, pp. 1-7. A. D. Sears, editor of the Western Recorder, denied visible church succession and affirmed that it was neither essential for salvation nor church organization. But he accepted a succession of Baptist principles. "Divisions among Baptists," WR, June 3, 1857. By 1876 the Recorder had become a supporter of church succession. This position was aired in an editorial which held that ". . . whatever religious body can establish, in the light of history, an unbroken line . . . up to the first church in Jerusalem, that is the church of Christ. . . . For if the gates of hell have ever prevailed, if the line at any point is broken, then such organization is not the church of which Christ spake. . . ." "Church Succession," WR, Aug. 24, 1876. Time and time again Matt. 16:18 is used by associations and periodicals to support church succession.

²⁴⁶J. L. Burrows, "Old Landmarkism," WR, Oct. 14, 1880. Burrows places the responsibility for church succession and rejection of the invisible Church on J. R. Graves.

extent to which Kentucky had been taken by Landmarkism, its belief in church succession and denial of the invisible Church was focused in the "Whitsitt controversy."²⁴⁷

Whitsitt had written several articles, two in 1880 in the Independent, a New York journal, and another in 1895, in Johnson's New Universal Cyclopaedia, that challenged the doctrine of church succession by dating the origin of organized English Baptist churches around 1611, and the rediscovery of immersion in 1641. When called to the attention of the Western Recorder, its editor, T. T. Eaton, and the general public, reaction was quick. Church succession and immersionist succession was threatened. J. T. Christian, Pastor of East Baptist Church in Louisville, highlighted the issue when he wrote in a reply to A. T. Robertson, a professor at the Seminary, who had defended Whitsitt, that:

One would judge from reading the article from

²⁴⁷W. H. Whitsitt had been professor of Church History for twenty-six years before he was elected president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1895, at the death of John A. Broadus. The controversy began when a correspondent from Catlettsburg, Kentucky wrote the Western Recorder asking whether or not certain statements written by Whitsitt in Johnson's Cyclopaedia were true. Masters, op. cit., pp. 403, 407. The gist of these statements were that English Baptists did not practice immersion until 1641, Roger Williams was sprinkled not immersed and that the earliest organized Baptist church dated from 1611. J. H. Spencer, "Dr. Whitsitt on Baptist History," WR, Apr. 23, 1896; John T. Christian, "Baptist History and Dr. Whitsitt," WR, May 21, 1896.

Dr. Robertson that Dr. Whitsitt did actually believe in Baptist church succession. . . . As a matter of fact Dr. Whitsitt believes no such thing, and is one of the most bitter opponents of that theory to be found in the United States. . . .²⁴⁸

Thus church succession and the related questions of valid baptism, alien immersion, and church authority arose as the center of conflict. Historical investigation was cast aside for personal opinion and tradition. T. T. Eaton, guiding spirit of the Recorder during the controversy, forecast the dominant type of "reasoning" when he wrote:

We are at a loss to understand the opposition of some brethren to "Baptist succession." We cannot understand how any Baptist can fail to believe it a good thing. Yet some brethren seem to regard it with great disfavor.

.
We would be glad if those who oppose Baptist succession would kindly tell us in which centuries they are willing there should have been Baptists, and in which they are unwilling there should have been any. We do not see why any Baptist should be unwilling that some of his brethren should have been alive in any century. It seems to us that the more Baptists could be proved to exist in all the centuries the better he would be pleased. The Baptist who cannot believe in Baptist succession should be sorry that he cannot, as it seems to us.²⁴⁹

In 1897 the controversy heightened and the states of ". . . Kentucky, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas and Texas, where J. R. Graves' soul goes marching on . . ." ²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸John T. Christian, "Dr. Whitsitt and The Early English and American Baptists," WR, May 7, 1896.

²⁴⁹Editorial, WR, Sept. 2, 1897.

²⁵⁰B. H. Carroll, "Back to the Realm of Discussion," WR, June 3, 1897.

demanded Whitsitt's resignation. The furor created presented a serious threat to Southern Baptist denominational life. Therefore, W. H. Whitsitt resigned July 13, 1898.²⁵¹ His final commencement address proved the most accurate description of what had taken place in Baptist theology on the doctrine of the Church. Speaking to students and graduates of the Seminary who had studied with him he said:

. . . I solicit them strongly to maintain and industriously to proclaim the fundamental Baptist doctrine of the universal, spiritual church; that church which Christ established on the rock (Matthew 16:18); the only church that has received and enjoyed the promise of unbroken succession; the only church that is identical with the kingdom of God, and outside of which salvation is impossible.

This is one of our distinctive principles. This is a very citadel of Baptist orthodoxy. By an almost unexampled freak of history this fundamental Baptist doctrine has been called in question among Southern Baptists. In fact it is the issue of the hour among us. If it were not an actual fact I should declare that such an issue was impossible in our denomination.

.
The doctrine of the universal, spiritual church is one of the most important tenets of Baptist orthodoxy; . . . it is enshrined in the foremost confessions of our faith; it lies forever imbedded in the creed of our Theological Seminary . . .²⁵²

²⁵¹"Whitsitt's Resignation," WR, July 21, 1898.

²⁵²"Dr. Whitsitt's Farewell Address," WR, June 8, 1899. Whitsitt had not always held the doctrine of the invisible Church. J. R. Graves, in February, 1862, led his ordination examination questioning him on ecclesiology. At this time Whitsitt was a "high church" Baptist and had said there was no salvation outside the Baptist denomination. Graves rejoiced at this answer and called Whitsitt ". . . a sound Baptist--sound to the core. . ." The Baptist Argus quoted in an editorial, WR, July 6, 1899. The preceding was Whitsitt's own testimony.

Kentucky Baptists from the formation of the first association maintained that the source of authority for ordination was in the hands of the particular congregation.²⁵³ They followed in the historical tradition of previous Baptists holding that churches have the ". . . right . . . to govern themselves by their own voices select their own officers as Bishops and Deacons . . ." ²⁵⁴ Election by the churches of their officers was a New Testament practice continued by Baptists.²⁵⁵ But this principle of congregational suffrage was transformed into one of extreme independency when, beginning in the 1840's, the doctrines of church authority and succession emerged to offset the acceptance of alien immersion and the claims of other denominations to a scriptural form of government. Landmarkism spearheaded by J. R. Graves and J. M. Pendleton led Baptists to exalt their church polity and ascribe to it divine origin. The Elkhorn Association wrote in the "Circular Letter" for 1854:

The Church organization set up by the Savior and his apostles is only adapted to a spiritual membership.

²⁵³ Elkhorn Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1827, p. 5; S. W. Lynd, "The Church and Her Eldership," WR, Jan. 10, 1855.

²⁵⁴ "Minutes of the Rolling Fork Baptist Church," (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), preface to minutes, 1830.

²⁵⁵ John L. Waller, "The Reasons Why I am a Baptist," The Western Baptist Review, 3:21, Sept., 1847.

It is a true Republic where no privileged classes exist--where all have equal privileges, and exercise the right of suffrage in the election of its ministers . . .²⁵⁶

Christ had placed only one form of church government, an "executive democracy," one that invested the congregation with supreme power to execute divine laws, in the hands of his churches.²⁵⁷ The divine source of this delegated authority was Christ.²⁵⁸ The effects of this extreme view of church independency and authority to elect and ordain to the Ministry was demonstrated in the ordination of John R. Sampey as Pastor of the Forks of Elkhorn Church. Sampey had been called as Pastor in May, 1885, but was not to assume his duties until October. The Forks of Elkhorn Church arranged for his ordination on the fourth Sunday in September.²⁵⁹ The council met preceding the service, examined and recommended his ordination. He was

²⁵⁶"Circular Letter," Elkhorn Minutes, 1854, p. 10; "Circular Letter," Tate's Creek Minutes, 1873, p. 7; J. C. Burkholder, "Introductory Sermon," Salem Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1885, p. 10.

²⁵⁷"Circular Letter, on Restricted Communion," Bracken Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1856, p. 17. As noticed above divine sanction and origin of Baptist polity is set forth in context of inter-denominational celebration of the Lord's Supper. To practice open communion would give recognition to pedobaptist churches as scriptural.

²⁵⁸"The Lord's Supper," North Bend Minutes, 1859, pp. 6-7.

²⁵⁹"Minutes of the Forks of Elkhorn Baptist Church," (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), Sept. 5, 1885.

set apart to the Ministry. But Sampey had not moved his letter from the Walnut Street Baptist Church to Forks of Elkhorn.²⁶⁰ Since Sampey was not a member of the electing and ordaining church this procedure drew heated comment from associations²⁶¹ and the Western Recorder which charged that his ordination ignored the authority and responsibility of the Walnut Street Church, that it was a new departure and innovation.²⁶² This reaction demonstrated the remarkable effect which the doctrine of isolationist, independent church authority had on a large part of Kentucky Baptists. That this view of authority was not unanimously held was indicated by the moderator of the examining council, William Pratt, who said that though the council regretted that the candidate had not moved his letter ". . . We regarded it as far preferable to ordain a man by request of the church which had elected him as pastor than by a church who held his membership temporarily . . ." ²⁶³ Election by the church was the ordaining consent. What had really happened was that the concept of supreme, independent

²⁶⁰Wm. M. Pratt, "An Open Letter," WR, Jan. 14, 1886.

²⁶¹"Resolutions," Barren River Minutes, 1886, p. 9; Salem Minutes, 1886, p. 13; West Union Minutes, 1886, p. 13.

²⁶²"A Strange Proceeding," WR, Nov. 19, 1885. The charge that Sampey had failed to move his letter was not made.

²⁶³Wm. M. Pratt, op. cit., Jan. 14, 1886.

church authority had been crossed. The ordination was irregular but the reaction throughout the state highlighted the exaggerated view of congregational authority. J. H. Spencer, an outstanding Baptist historian of Kentucky called this ordination an ". . . unwarrantable usurpation of authority."²⁶⁴

This view of church authority pressed to its logical conclusion demonstrated the strong influence of Graves' isolationism and his repression of a view of ordination as meaning more than the local church's election.²⁶⁵

Though Graves' thought clearly affected Kentucky Baptists, the extant associational minutes and periodical literature of Baptist life in the state did not indicate one occasion on which a man was separated to the Ministry without the help of at least one ordained Minister.²⁶⁶ The reason churches shared authority with presbyteries and considered their aid indispensable, though they held the

²⁶⁴J. H. Spencer, "Dr. Spencer to Dr. Pratt," WR, Jan. 28, 1886. Sampey was received by letter into the Forks of Elkhorn Church on Oct. 17, 1885. "Minutes of the Forks of Elkhorn Baptist Church," Oct. 17, 1885.

²⁶⁵J. L. Burrows wrote that there was no New Testament evidence for ". . . Dr. Graves favorite theory that the ordaining power was ever vested in a 'church alone.'" J. L. Burrows, "Does 'the Church' Preach," WR, Nov. 18, 1880.

²⁶⁶Associational minutes were studied from 1785-1900 and no case appeared in which the church alone separated a candidate to the Ministry.

inherent prerogative to elect their own officers, was that ". . . they [stood] in an important relation to other churches and their ministry . . ." ²⁶⁷ The cooperation of both church and presbytery were necessary for "regular" ordination except in cases where the church's self-preservation was at stake. ²⁶⁸ A candidate set apart to the Ministry without the help of other churches and Ministers implied that his ordination was "independent" and the authority given him would be restricted to the ordaining church. The concept of ministry was not confined to a particular congregation for:

When a man is properly ordained, he claims to be a minister of the Baptist denomination, and Baptist Churches receive him as such.

.
It is essential to ordination, when that ordination is expected to admit the candidate into the BAPTIST MINISTRY, that his own church, and elders and messengers of neighboring churches shall examine and agree on his fitness for the work; and unitedly set him apart. ²⁶⁹

²⁶⁷S. W. Lynd, "The Church and Her Eldership," editorial, WR, Jan. 10, 1855.

²⁶⁸Ibid.

²⁶⁹S. J. Evans, "Bible Customs--Baptist Usage," WR, Dec., 29, 1858.

CHAPTER II

THE MINISTERIAL OFFICE AND ITS
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The Baptist doctrine of the ordained Ministry is now due to be expounded. The subject as here treated requires an examination of Baptist confessions of faith and manuals of discipline, the works of J. R. Graves and R. B. C. Howell and actual practice as seen in the associational minutes and periodicals of Kentucky Baptists from 1785-1900. The preceding material will be used to delineate the types of officers in a church, their duties or functions and their relationship to the church in which they serve.

Thomas Helwys, leader of the Baptist congregation which returned to England, set forth in A Declaration of Faith of English People printed in 1611, the earliest English General Baptist views of an ordained Ministry. As discovered in the previous chapter the individual congregation had all the authority essential for election of its officers. The church had two kinds or types of ministry: Elders who ". . . especially feed the flock concerning their soules . . . and Deacons Men, and Women who by their office releave the necessities off the poore

and impotent brethrē concerning their bodies . . ." ¹ The Elders combined both teaching and ruling functions because ". . . there was but one rule for Elders," as Helwys said, "therefore but one sort off Elders." ² The Eldership seems to have been plural ³ with each "overseer" sharing the responsibilities of feeding the flock; it evidently was restricted to the male members of the congregation. On the other hand, the second phase of ministry, that of the Deaconship, was composed of Deacons (men) and Deaconesses (women) who primarily watched over the physical well-being of the members. ⁴ With the requisite congregational authority any member could administer the Ordinances.

The authority of the Deaconship and Eldership was limited to the particular congregation by which they had been chosen. The only case in which Helwys conceded that authority to perform duties extended beyond the local congregation was in that of a member having an "Apostleship" ⁵

¹W. J. McGlothlin, Baptist Confessions of Faith, pp. 90-91 (art. 20).

²Ibid., (art. 21). Helwys followed John Smyth at this point. Smyth, in opposition to the churches of Johnson, Robinson and Ainsworth who held there were five, distinct offices in a congregation, insisted that the office of Elder was one but divided into several functions. Robert Barclay, The Inner Life of the Commonwealth, p. 102.

³This confession specifies neither the number of Elders nor Deacons required for a church.

⁴McGlothlin, op. cit., (art. 20).

⁵Ibid., (art. 22).

which hinted at the power or function of an officer to evangelize untouched areas later to emerge in the General Baptist office of Messenger.

This twofold ministry which served the spiritual and physical needs of the church was neither essential to the orderly functioning of the congregation nor to its worship. A church:

. . . ought, when they are come together, to Pray, Prophecie, breake bread, and administer in all the holy ordinances, although as yet they have no Officers, or that their Officers should bee in Prison, sick, or by anie other meanes hindered from the Church. . . .⁶

The Ministry developed out of the church and not the church out of the Ministry. Thus the officers were in the fullest sense a service to and servants of the congregation. Christ bestowed gifts on the church for its use in building up the "body of Christ." The Ministry supported and led the body of believers in their witness and worship.

The next General Baptist confession appeared in the Civil War and Commonwealth Period, and was published in 1651 as The Faith and Practise of Thirty Congregations. The Ministry was divided between Elders and Deacons

⁶Ibid., pp. 88-89 (art. 11). Smyth and Helwys parted company over the problem of succession. Helwys denied that it was necessary to receive baptism from an "orderly church," whereas Smyth came to believe that baptism from a true church was required. For Smyth's disagreement with Helwys see Barclay, op. cit., Chap. VI, Appendix V, in which "The Last Book of John Smyth, Called the Retraction of His Errors . . ." is printed.

and generally followed the emphasis of Helwys' confession. "Gifted men" were set apart ". . . to attend upon the preaching of the word, for the further edifying of the Churches . . ." ⁷ These men chosen as Elders were responsible for teaching and exhorting the church. Deacons were appointed ". . . to oversee, or order the affairs concerning the poor distressed members of Christ . . ." ⁸ and to relieve those who ministered the Word and Doctrine.

The duties of Elders were spoken of as spiritual and those of Deacons as temporal, ⁹ but the functions of both offices were looked upon as a ministry to the Saints of the particular congregation. At the same time the language of the article on the Eldership set out a ministry of preaching that extended beyond the local church.

This twofold ministry was not independent of the church. The ". . . gifts of his grace [were given] to the Saints or Church of God . . ." ¹⁰ and the church was to make use of the gifts by separating them to minister. The church, the congregation of believers, the fellowship,

⁷McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 105 (art. 58). This confession does not use the words, Deacon and Elder.

⁸Ibid., p. 106 (art. 64). Women are not mentioned as having a part in this ministry.

⁹Ibid., p. 107 (art. 66).

¹⁰Ibid., p. 105 (art. 58).

entrusted with such gifts of God's grace, was to use the Deacons and Elders in serving God. The Ministry, though coming from God, belonged to the church.

Three years following the publication of the foregoing confession Thomas Lover's work, The True Gospel-faith, was issued by several London congregations. It was prompted by the influx of Quakerism in London. This General Baptist declaration of faith listed clearly for the first time the office of Messenger and compared it with that of the Apostles as scriptural evidence for its existence.¹¹ The office itself seemed to be well accepted. Pastors and Teachers were mentioned next.¹² The office of Deacon was implied in the same article through use of Scripture which referred to the appointment of the Seven in Acts. The True Gospel-faith did not furnish data for the functions and duties of the officers. But the tenor of the work carried recognition of a new development, a threefold ministry: Messengers, Elders and Deacons who were to be assisted by the church ". . . in the work

¹¹William Latane Lumpkin, "The Local Baptist Confessions of Faith of the Civil War--Commonwealth Period . . .," Appendix E, pp. 4-5 (art. 22).

The functions and duties of this officer will be discussed in connection with the Orthodox Creed and Thomas Grantham.

¹²Ibid. The declaration does not make it clear whether teaching is a separate office. I am inclined to believe that it was a function of any church member gifted with teaching ability. I find no other reference to it among General Baptists.

they appoint them to do . . ."¹³ No more was said concerning the relationship of the church and its Ministry.

In 1660 the Standard Confession, representing all General Baptists in England, was drawn up and published. Here the ordained Ministry was explicitly referred to in two phases or functions. The Elders or Ministers having been chosen from among those approved for preaching were to be set aside by the church for the Ministry:

. . . such who first orderly comes into, and are brought up in the School of Christ's Church . . . comes to degrees of Christianity . . . ought to exercise their gifts not only in the Church, but also . . . to preach to the World (they being approved of by the Church) . . . and that among such some are to be chosen . . . for the work of the Ministry . . .¹⁴

Failure to mention the office of Messenger did not indicate its disrepute.¹⁵ The office was an extension and development of the Elder's function of preaching and ruling though at the time it was not recognized as such. In addition, preaching was not confined to the ordained Ministry.¹⁶

¹³Ibid., pp. 4-5 (art. 24). In this same article economic support by the congregation for the Ministry is urged. The first appearance of this new idea occurred in The Faith and Practise of Thirty Congregations, (art. 58).

¹⁴McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 113 (art. 1).

¹⁵The date for origin of the office is not known but it seems to have been well established by 1654 in Lover's confession.

¹⁶Lay preaching became a valuable medium and cause of Baptist growth in the Civil War--Commonwealth Period and broke down among Baptists the priestly-clergy concept of Anglicans and Presbyterians. Barclay, op. cit., pp. 207, 294.

The other aspect of the church's Ministry was that of the Deaconship composed of men only.¹⁷

The functions of Elders and Deacons were carefully divided. Elders or Pastors were appointed by God to oversee, to feed and to rule in love God's church after they had been ordained to office according to Scripture.¹⁸ But Deacons also participated in a ministry of oversight. They were called "Overseers of the poor" and provided for the ". . . poor Saints belonging to the Church of Christ . . ." ¹⁹

The Ministry was amenable to the congregation for its actions and was limited in its authority by the will of the church. An Elder could neither surrender his office nor go to a neighbouring church without his congregation's permission:

. . . no officer what so ever in ye Church being duly Chosen can by no means Lay down his office neither may any Elder go from or leave one Church to go to another to officiate there. except he be send or vpon special occation sent for and spedily to Return to his Charge . . .²⁰

¹⁷McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 117-18 (art. 19).

¹⁸Ibid., p. 116 (art. 15).

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 117-18 (art. 19).

²⁰W. T. Whitley (ed.), Minutes of the General Assembly of the General Baptist Churches in England, with Kindred Records, I, 1656, 6-7. Cited hereafter as MGA.

Consequently the Ministry remained the servant of the church and churches. Officers were thought of as being a regular and orderly part of the congregation's constitution. The question of a proper administrator for the Sacraments did not arise.

Eighteen years following the Standard Confession General Baptists drew up the Orthodox Creed, a confession containing the most definitive article of all their declarations on the Ministry. This statement, coupled with Thomas Grantham's Christianismus Primitivus, provided a clear picture of General Baptists' conception of church officers, their functions and duties, and their relationship to the congregation.

The Orthodox Creed set forth a threefold ministry of ". . . Bishops (overseer or shepherd), or Messengers; and Elders, or Pastors; and Deacons, or Overseers of the poor . . ." ²¹ These officers were of divine institution, appointed by Christ and elected by the church, in the case of Elders and Deacons, and by either a church or churches in the case of Messengers. ²² Each office required its own ordination because ". . . 3 Distinct Officers must have

²¹McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 146-47 (art. 31).

²²Ibid.; Thomas Grantham, Christianismus Primitivus, Part II, Second Treatise, Chap. 9, pp. 119-21, 126. Hereafter cited as Christianismus.

their Distinct Ordinaçõs And the Church has no way to Delegat an office or power Ministeriall but by Ordinaçõn."²³

Messengers were the subordinate or inferior successors of the New Testament Apostles--subordinate and inferior because miracles, signs and wonders had been limited to the New Testament.²⁴ They succeeded the Apostles as ". . . Travelling Ministers, to plant Churches, and to settle those in order who are as Sheep without a Shepherd . . ." ²⁵ Beside evangelizing new areas Messengers were to guide young churches and their officers until settled in the Faith, defend the Gospel and protect Pastors against usurpers.²⁶ Ordinarily they were to ordain other Messengers and generally Elders, but their presence was not required for the latter for:

. . . though we say they only are in a regular capacity to ordain Elders in Congregations newly planted, which have no Officers; yet where the Churches have an Eldership, there they are in a capacity to ordain their own Officers; yea, they

²³ MGA, I, 1689, p. 27. The minutes stated these ordinations as being the commonly accepted practice of past General Baptists.

²⁴ Grantham, op. cit., Bk. IV, Fifth Treatise, pp. 153-54.

²⁵ Ibid., Part II, Second Treatise, Chap. 9, pp. 119-20.

²⁶ Ibid., Bk. IV, Fifth Treatise, pp. 153-54; McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 146-47 (art. 31).

may ordain and send forth Messengers . . .²⁷

An Elder, chosen by the particular congregation and ordained by either a Messenger or another Elder, was restricted to the local church which he served.²⁸ He was to divide God's word accurately, oversee and provide for the congregation's spiritual needs, exhort and rebuke and govern ". . . in conjunction with the Church of God . . ." ²⁹ His ministerial authority was limited to the particular church unless he was sent out by act of the congregation ". . . neither ought his power, or office, any way to infringe the liberty, or due power, or office of his bishop (overseer, or shepherd), God being a God of order . . ." ³⁰ Along with the Messenger he was given authority to baptize and administer the Lord's Supper. The administration of the Sacraments by other than a Messenger or Elder was strongly deprecated because it ". . . will make Ordination an insignificant Trifle; and every man to have the

²⁷Christianismus, Bk. IV, Fifth Treatise, p. 165; McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 146-47 (art. 31).

²⁸Ibid. It was customary for a Messenger or Elder to hold office until death. MGA, I, Introductory Essay, pp. xxxii-xxxiii.

²⁹Christianismus, Part II, Second Treatise, Chap. 9, p. 123. Grantham said presbyteros and episcopos referred to the same office, p. 121; McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 147 (art. 31).

³⁰Ibid.

same power in the dispensation of Ordinances.³¹

Deacons also were to be chosen by the congregation through election and ordination.³² The Orthodox Creed stipulated that they ". . . receive the charity and free benevolence of the people . . ." ³³ but Grantham advised that they should also help in governing the church and preaching.³⁴

By 1678 the ordained Ministry was deemed necessary for a church ". . . completely gathered and organized, according to the mind of Christ . . ." ³⁵ The authority of Messengers beginning with the oversight and evangelization of isolated areas came to include the superintendence of other churches; churches which had been threatened with doctrinal errors and inexperienced Ministers and had elected a Messenger to watch over them.³⁶ The ministry

³¹Christianismus, Part II, Second Treatise, Chap. 7, p. 94; Adam Taylor, The History of the English General Baptists, I, 327-28 gives a typical picture of a General Baptist church. The church included several towns with Elders residing in each town. These Elders held public worship and prayer meeting while business meetings were held in rotation at each station.

³²Christianismus, Part II, Second Treatise, Chap. 9, p. 126; McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 146-47 (art. 31).

³³McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 146-47 (art. 31).

³⁴Christianismus, Part II, Second Treatise, Chap. 9, p. 126.

³⁵McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 146-47 (art. 31).

³⁶Taylor, op. cit., I, 413-14.

of Messenger was extra-local. On the other hand the ministries of the Elder and Deacon were local and confined to the ordaining church. Only upon request of a neighbouring church needing ministerial aid and upon permission of the Elder's church could he perform services. The duties of Deacons were restricted to the care of the local membership and government. Messengers were held necessary to ordain Messengers and generally ordained Elders, but participation in the latter ceremony was not considered to be essential since Elders from sister churches could ordain.

Though the Ministry in the office of Messenger had become extra-local, the Ministry came out of the church and was ultimately accountable to it. The membership of Messengers, Elders and Deacons resided in the congregation which retained power of discipline over its subjects.

In their earliest declaration of faith Particular Baptists, who did not arise until 1633-1638, subscribed to a twofold ministry. The First London Confession, a moderately Calvinistic work, was adopted in 1644 by seven London congregations. This confession with Benjamin Cox's commentary of 1646, An Appendix to a Confession of Faith, set forth a Ministry of two offices. The offices of Elder and Deacon were of divine institution³⁷ and were ". . . for

³⁷McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 184 (art. 36). Listed with the Elders and Deacons were Pastors and Teachers but these were omitted in later editions.

the feeding, governing, serving, and building up of his Church . . ."³⁸ The administration of the Ordinances was in the hands of:

. . . a preaching Disciple, it being no where tyed to a particular Church, Officer /Church-officer substituted in later editions/, or person extraordinarily sent, the Commission injoyning the administration, being given to them under no other consideration, but as considered Disciples.³⁹

A Christian who proved his ministry through converts could advise other churches in selecting and ordaining their officers.⁴⁰

From the above the theory of ministry was clearly lined out. The congregation was a ministry or service. Those unusually gifted were preaching disciples or ". . . men able to preach the Gospel."⁴¹ These men served the

³⁸Ibid. The duties of Deacons were not listed separately but included with the functions of offices. Neither was there an article on Deacons.

³⁹Ibid., p. 185 (art. 41).

⁴⁰Benjamin Cox, "An Appendix to a Confession of Faith," Confessions of Faith, and other Public Documents, Illustrative of the History of the Baptist Churches of England in the 17th Century, ed. Edward Bean Underhill (The Hanserd Knollys Society edition; London: Haddon, Brothers, and Co., 1854), pp. 58-59 (art. 19).

Benjamin Cox, a graduate of Oxford, subscribed to the second edition of the First London Confession in 1646. After ministering in Bedford and Coventry he left for London. The only reason known for Cox's publishing The Appendix is found on the title page of the work. It was occasioned by the inquiry of some Christians in the country. Ibid., Introductory Notice, p. x.

⁴¹McGlothlin, op. cit., footnote "e," p. 185 (art. 41).

congregation in worship and building up the church. Evidently the administration of the Sacraments was not tied to an ordained man.

In 1654. The Right Constitution and True Subjects of the Visible Church of Christ was published by Thomas Collier. This work indicated a new development in the Particular Baptist concept of the ordained Ministry. The ". . . Ministry of the Spirit . . ." ⁴² had been given by God to the whole church as a means of edification but some Christians had received a greater degree of this "spiritual ministering." This ministry was located in two offices, Elders and Deacons, with their appropriate functions and:

. . . this sort of Ministry have several titles given to it, not to distinguish as some think, the Ministry into so many offices, but rather to discover the fulness of the work, Pastor to feed, Elder to rule, Bishop to oversee, Teacher to instruct, and it holds forth the fulness of that work, which may be done all by one, if the gift be in him: but in short, it is specially summ'd up in two particulars, viz. Elders and Deacons . . . ⁴³

The duties of Elders were divided into two categories that of "ruling" and "feeding" and though located in one office were sometimes given to different individuals. ⁴⁴

⁴²Thomas Collier, The Right Constitution and True Subjects of the Visible Church of Christ, pp. 18-19.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 19-20.

⁴⁴The Broadmead Church, Bristol, had Ruling Elders existing certainly as early as 1654 and continuing through

The "preaching Elders" were to bring in the unsaved and feed the flock, a duty which included ". . . consoling, confirming, restoring, reproofing, admonishing . . ."45 the congregation. The "ruling Elders" were charged with the responsibility of maintaining good order and government as well as screening candidates for membership in the church ". . . unless . . . [it] must of necessity grow corrupt . . ."46 Deacons were to serve at Communion, look after the Minister's economic needs and take care of the poor, but were ". . . not to be bound up in and to this work, so as not to edify the Church upon the spiritual account, if . . . [they] have a gift."47

This work gave a lucid description of the relationship between the church and the ordained Ministry. The entire congregation was a company of believers gathered by the Holy Spirit for a "Ministry of the Gospel."48 Members

1687. The church also had Deaconesses. E. B. Underhill (ed.), The Records of a Church of Christ, Meeting in Broadmead, Bristol: 1640-1687 (London: Hanserd Knollys Society, 1847), pp. 51, 494. But E. A. Payne says Particular Baptists generally favored a twofold Ministry. Ernest A. Payne, The Fellowship of Believers (Enlarged edition; London: The Carey Kingsgate Press, Ltd., 1952), p. 43.

⁴⁵ Collier, op. cit., p. 22.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 27-28.

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 30-31.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 8.

with evident talents became Elders and Deacons ordained to the Ministry but servants to the church and the World.

Two works, the Somerset Confession and John Myles' An Antidote Against the Infection of the Times, were published in 1656 by Particular Baptists. These documents, though they did not explicitly define the offices of an ordained Ministry, were important because they reflected among Particular Baptists a strong tendency toward the elevation of the Ministry.⁴⁹ In the Somerset Confession emphasis was placed on submission in the church to ". . . the authority of Christ in an orderly ministry . . ." ⁵⁰ while Myles' work insisted that the Ministry was ". . . most clearly instituted to continue to the end of the world . . ." ⁵¹ He also thought of the Ministry as one of

⁴⁹Several factors led to this elevation of the Ministry. Particular Baptists being of Calvinistic tradition inherited a high doctrine of the Ministry; lack of Ministers resulted in a single Pastor for each church; churches threw up defenses against Quakerism, Fifth Monarchism and Levellerism; the pastoral role in discipline led to greater authority; the distinction grew between those who could and could not administer the Ordinances; generally as the congregation became larger the Minister became more important. By the beginning of the Eighteenth Century the Baptist Ministry was highly elevated. G. Hugh Wamble, "The Concept and Practice of Christian Fellowship: The Connectional and Inter-Denominational Aspects Thereof, Among Seventeenth Century English Baptists" (unpublished Doctor's thesis, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, 1955), pp.140-48.

⁵⁰McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 211 (art. 33).

⁵¹/John Myles/, An Antidote Against the Infection of the Times, p. 23.

the five "Ordinances" including it with Preaching, Baptism, Communion and Church fellowship and censures.⁵²

Thus there were two trends visible in the relationship between the Ministry and the church. The earlier strain dating from the beginning of Particular Baptists stressed congregational authority in election and ordination and the ordained Ministry as servants of the church. The later and more dominant tendency emphasized regularity and order in offices of the Ministry with an increasing limitation on persons qualified to administer the Ordinances. The latter development was highlighted in an ordination sermon preached by Nehemiah Coxe in 1681, and by the Second London Confession of 1677 adopted by Particular Baptists in 1689.

The officers of a particular church were ". . . Bishops or Elders and Deacons."⁵³ They were appointed by Christ and were to be chosen by the church.⁵⁴ Deacons were to care for the temporal necessities of the church and its members.⁵⁵ A Pastor or Elder was to be constantly

⁵²Ibid., pp. 22-23.

⁵³McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 266 (art. 8).

⁵⁴Ibid. Coxe stated that ". . . Elders are ordinary Officers in the Church, of Divine Right and Appointment . . ." Nehemiah Coxe, A Sermon Preached at the Ordination of an Elder and Deacons (Baptist Publications), Reel 26, No. 35, p. 15.

⁵⁵Ibid.

engaged in the ". . . Ministry of the Word, and Prayer, with watching for their Souls . . ." ⁵⁶ In preaching he was ". . . to be the Mouth of God to the People . . ." and in prayer ". . . the Mouth of the People unto God . . ." ⁵⁷ But the duty of preaching was not limited to the Elders. Anyone qualified by the Holy Spirit and approved by the church could preach. ⁵⁸ Though the entire church was concerned with the admission and ejection of members the Elder was particularly responsible for discipline and government. ⁵⁹ Christ had appointed his Ministers to officiate at the Lord's Supper ⁶⁰ and the administration of the Ordinances was to be carried out by ". . . those only, who are qualified and thereunto called . . ." ⁶¹ Coxe's Sermon spoke of this duty as "belonging" to the Bishop or Elder. ⁶²

From the foregoing knowledge of the relationship between the church and the ordained Ministry may be gathered.

⁵⁶ McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 266 (art. 10).

⁵⁷ Coxe, op. cit., p. 23.

⁵⁸ McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 267 (art. 11).

⁵⁹ Neither Coxe's Sermon nor the Second London Confession makes a distinction between a Ruling Elder and a Bishop or Pastor.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 271 (art. 3).

⁶¹ Ibid., Chap. XXVIII, p. 269 (art. 2).

⁶² Coxe, op. cit., p. 26.

By 1677 when the Second London Confession appeared, Particular Baptists considered a church unorganized and incomplete unless it had an ordained Ministry. "A particular Church gathered," the confession stated, "and compleatly Organized, according to the mind of Christ, consists of Officers, and Members . . ." ⁶³ The Ministry was still the servant of the church but it had been elevated. Particularly was this true of the Eldership. It had become more than local in the sense that the authority given an Elder, Pastor or Bishop by ordination was not restricted by and limited to the office he held. The Particular Baptist Assembly ruled on this question when in 1689 it stated:

That an Elder of one church, may administer the ordinance of the Lord's supper to another of the same faith, being called so to do by the said church; tho' not as their Pastor, but as a Minister, necessity only being considered in this case. ⁶⁴

Through growth and consolidation Particular Baptist thought had changed. The ordained Ministry and especially the functions of Eldership located in the local church captured a denominational recognition and validity. This broadened and heightened concept of the Ministry, its offices and relationship to the church during the Seventeenth Century culminated in William Mitchill's Jachin & Boaz, a highly

⁶³McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 266 (art. 8).

⁶⁴"The Narrative . . . of the General Assembly . . . of the Baptized Churches . . . owning the Doctrine of Personal Election and Final Perseverance, 1689, met in London, more than 100 congregations joined in Assembly . . .," John Rippon (ed.), The Baptist Annual Register (London: Dilly, Button, and Thomas, [n.d.]), IV, 55.

Calvinistic confession and discipline published in 1707.

The officers appointed by Christ and chosen by the congregation were ". . . Pastors, Teachers, Elders, and Deacons . . ." ⁶⁵ This article, as in other Particular Baptist confessions, reflected a twofold Ministry of divine institution. ⁶⁶ Pastors or Elders, after being set apart by the church, were to preach the Gospel and nourish the flock, to duly and orderly administer the Ordinances, govern the congregation and ". . . take care of all the spiritual Concernments, of the whole Flock committed to their Watch-Care . . ." ⁶⁷ But preaching, as in the Second London Confession, was not confined to the office of Elder. Anyone blessed with a gift by the Holy Spirit and approved by the church could preach. ⁶⁸

The work of Deacons consisted in assisting at the Lord's Supper and ministering to the poor. ⁶⁹

The ordained Ministry, particularly the Eldership, was to be held by the church in ". . . Reverence and Honour

⁶⁵William Mitchill's 'Jachin & Boaz' 1707," Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society, 3:166 (art. 11). Hereafter cited as Transactions. This confession by Mitchill basically expressed the viewpoint of the Second London Confession.

⁶⁶The words, Pastor, Teacher and Elder, generally connoted different functions of one office rather than separate offices. Mitchill, in the discipline, discusses only the duties of a Teaching-Elder or Pastor. Elder describes the office and Teaching-Elder or Pastor the function.

⁶⁷Mitchill, op. cit., pp. 166-67 (arts. 11, 13, 14).

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 168 (art. 15).

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 169 (art. 18). This article contains the first reference to the number of Deacons provided for each church. Mitchill said that the number should be ". . . proportionable to the State of the Church."

for their Office and Works sake . . ."70 and was to be obeyed when it spoke in the "Name of the Lord."71 A church was complete only when officers and members were gathered together.72 These factors served to indicate the status of the Ministry at the close of the Seventeenth Century. The ordained Ministry had become established, consolidated and cohesive. The completion of this ministerial elevation and its transformation from the local to the denominational level was set in relief by the question of valid administrators for the Ordinances. In his confession Mitchill stated that Baptism and the Lord's Supper were the two Sacraments ". . . neither of which ought to be administered but by a Minister of the Word lawfully called."73 Then in the Discipline he added that ". . . where there are no Teaching-Officers, none may administer the Sacraments, nor can the Church authorize any transiently to do so."74 Certainly this was neither typical nor normative for Particular Baptists throughout England but it does demonstrate in an extreme manner the relationship between the ordained

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 169-70 (art. 21).

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid., p. 166 (art. 10).

⁷³Ibid., p. 160 (art. 30).

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 169 (art. 19).

Ministry and the church. The presence and participation of the Eldership in official acts of the church was considered to be necessary for their performance; it would have been highly irregular and disorderly if a representative of the Eldership had not taken part when either Baptism, the Lord's Supper or ordination occurred.

This Particular Baptist view of the ordained Ministry composed of Deacons and Elders, including in some instances Ruling Elders, was transferred to Baptists in America through emigration from England during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. Early Baptist thought in America on the ordained Ministry can be seen in the Philadelphia and Charlestown confessions and disciplines.⁷⁵

Baptist work had begun in the Philadelphia area around 1684. The confession was in use in 1724 when reference was made to it in the associational minutes.⁷⁶ The first edition of the Discipline adopted in 1742 and printed with the confession in the following year, and the Revised

⁷⁵Neither the Philadelphia Confession nor the Charlestown Confession will be examined closely since both are copies of the Second London Confession with the addition by Philadelphia of two articles, singing psalms in public worship and laying hands on the baptized, and with an addition by Charlestown of one article, singing in public worship. The disciplines of both Associations plus supportive evidence from associational minutes will be studied.

⁷⁶Supra, p. 37.

Discipline published in 1797 set forth a twofold Ministry of Elders and Deacons.⁷⁷ But the Eldership was in actual practice divided into two functions, that of Teaching Elder or Pastor and Ruling Elder:

. . . The works of teaching and ruling belong both to the pastor; but in case he be unable, or the work of ruling too great for him, God hath provided such for his assistance, and they are called ruling elders . . .⁷⁸

Yet, as can be seen from above, neither the function nor the office were of such a permanent nature that the offices and duties of Elders and Deacons would not absorb it.⁷⁹ The duties of Ruling Elders were restricted to ". . . rule and

⁷⁷A Short Treatise of Church Discipline, p. 5. Hereafter referred to as Discipline. A Treatise of Church Discipline, Adopted by the Sansom-Street Baptist Church, p. 8 (art. 15). Hereafter cited as Revised Discipline.

The Revised Discipline also stated that Elders when not in charge of a particular church were called teachers or preachers but when they had been called to a church the titles of Pastor, Overseer or Bishop, Elder, Steward and Minister were used--pp. 14-15 (art. 1).

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 8-9.

⁷⁹The use of Ruling Elders had appeared as early as 1715 in the Lower Dublin or Pennepek Church according to the church minutes but the position evidently died out after 1763 when the last allusion to the office occurred. Vedder, A History of Baptists in the Middle States, footnote #2, pp. 61-62.

The church at Hopewell had Ruling Elders for it addressed a query to the Philadelphia Association in 1728 seeking to find out the best method of choosing them. A. D. Gillette (ed.), Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association From A.D. 1707 to A.D. 1807, 1728, p. 29. Hereafter cited as Philadelphia Minutes.

By early Nineteenth Century the duties of Ruling Elder had been appropriated by Deacons and Pastor as seen from the associational minutes of 1808. The minutes stated that ". . . The deacons' office is to distribute the Church's bounty to the poor, and to assist the pastor in the discharge of his sacred trust." "Circular Letter," Philadelphia Minutes, 1808, pp. 9-10.

order, in the church of God, and doth not include teaching" ⁸⁰ In case a Ruling Elder had gifts fitting him for the office of a Teaching Elder he was to be ordained again since his former office ". . . was only to rule well, and not to labour in word and doctrine." ⁸¹ The Revised Discipline omitted the article on Ruling Elders referring to the office only incidentally in connection with the offices of Elder and Deacon ". . . to which some add, ruling elders." ⁸²

A Teaching Elder or Pastor was responsible for preaching God's word, watching over and visiting his flock, administering the Ordinances, praying for and with his people and setting them a good example. ⁸³ The Revised Discipline added to his responsibilities attending funerals, catechizing the young:

. . . besides the duties of the closet, of the study, and his frequent calls abroad, to visit and supply the destitute, settle differences, attend at ordinations, associations, &c.&c. ⁸⁴

Though preaching was primarily the obligation of the Pastor or Teaching Elder it was not limited to the ordained Ministry.

⁸⁰ Discipline, pp. 8-9.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Revised Discipline, p. 8 (art. 15).

⁸³ Discipline, pp. 7-8.

⁸⁴ Revised Discipline, pp. 15-16 (art. 19).

The Philadelphia Association ruled that lay preaching was both lawful and regular.⁸⁵ This attitude adhered to the Particular Baptist tradition.

Deacons were amenable for ". . . the stock of the church . . ." ⁸⁶ from which they provided for the poor and supplied Bread and Wine for the Lord's Supper. But they also saw that the church members contributed financially to take care of the church's needs including those of the Pastor.⁸⁷

The concept of the ordained Ministry and the church in the Philadelphia Association, confession and disciplines followed that set forth in the Second London Confession by their English kin. A church composed of gathered believers, though a "church essential," was not complete without a Christ-appointed Ministry of Elders and Deacons to officiate.⁸⁸ In case no one was found suitable for office within the congregation a neighbouring church, if possible, was to supply their needs.⁸⁹ The officers of the church including Deacons, Ruling Elders and Pastors or Ministers were to be

⁸⁵Philadelphia Minutes, 1746, p. 51.

⁸⁶Discipline, pp. 9-10.

⁸⁷Ibid.; Revised Discipline, pp. 13-14 (art. 2).

⁸⁸Discipline, p. 5; Revised Discipline, p. 8. (art. 15).

⁸⁹Discipline, p. 5.

respected since appointed by Christ. But the Ministers who were the ". . . stewards of the mysteries of the Gospel," so the Discipline said, were ". . . in an eminent manner to be regarded, as being the ambassadors of peace . . ." ⁹⁰ The fact that the church was dependent upon the ordained Ministry and particularly the Elders or Pastors for administration of the Ordinances indicated simultaneously an extralocal view of the Ministry and a shift of authority from the congregation to the Eldership. A church, for instance, had all the authority necessary to administer the Ordinances ". . . provided they have a sufficiency of officers duly qualified, or that they be supplied by the officers of another sister church or churches . . ." ⁹¹

The Charlestown Discipline, published in 1774, set forth a divinely appointed ministry of two offices that of Deacons and Ministers ⁹² the latter sometimes called ". . . Elders, Bishops, Pastors and Teachers . . ." ⁹³ The

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 20.

⁹¹"Essay," Philadelphia Minutes, 1749, pp. 60-61. In the Philadelphia area churches organized from 1687 on, generally would not administer the Sacraments unless an ordained Minister were present. In reading the histories of the first nineteen churches in the Philadelphia Association no occasion on which a lay member of the church officiated at the Ordinances was discovered.

⁹²A Summary of Church-Discipline, pp. 7-8 (no art.). Hereafter cited as Charlestown Discipline.

⁹³Ibid., p. 8 (art. 1).

office of Ruling Elder was omitted. Only a few churches, including some Separate Baptists, practiced the custom.⁹⁴

A Minister or Pastor had many duties. He was to preach the Gospel for evangelization, watch over the flock by visiting, especially the sick, catechize the youth, administer the Ordinances, preside at business meetings, see that strict discipline was executed and spend much time in prayer.⁹⁵

Deacons were in charge of the ". . . inferior Services of the Church . . ." ⁹⁶ Since their office relieved the Minister from secular concern they were called "Helps." Therefore, they watched over the poor, provided the Bread and Wine for the Lord's Supper ". . . receiving both from the Minister, when blessed, and distributing them to the Members . . ." ⁹⁷

The churches of this area composing the Charleston Association held a high view of the ordained Ministry.

⁹⁴In the Charleston Association the Catfish Church had Ruling Elders in 1772 but the Beauty Spot Church, organized by her, did not. Euhaw, Welsh Neck and Charleston churches had no Ruling Elders. But some of the Separate Baptists who came into the "back country" of South Carolina had Ruling Elders, Elderesses and Deaconesses. Leah Townsend, South Carolina Baptists: 1670-1805, pp. 11, 40, 76, 79-80, 123-24.

⁹⁵Charlestown Discipline, pp. 11-12 (arts. 1-2).

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Ibid., pp. 12-13 (art. 2).

As in the Philadelphia Confession and disciplines the Charlestown Discipline stated that though a church could be gathered "essentially" without officers, it was not complete or regularly organized.⁹⁸ The Ministry was of divine institution with the Bishop or Pastor as ". . . the highest Office r in the Church . . ." ⁹⁹ Church members owed Ministers ". . . distinguishing Honour and Reverence; and are to hold them in Reputation as the Embassadors of Christ . . . and to esteem them highly for their Work's Sake . . ." ¹⁰⁰ Obedience and submission to the Pastor was urged. ¹⁰¹ Their authority, after ordination, was not confined to the local church but included preaching and baptizing anywhere God called. ¹⁰² By 1830 recognition of a denominational Ministry had developed. The authority of Pastors or Elders as a class could be seen in their necessary presence for "regularity and order" at constitution of churches, ordination of Deacons and Ministers and

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 3-4 (art. 3).

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 8 (art. 1).

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 23-24 (art. 1).

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 10 (art. 1). Since the minutes of the Charleston Association before 1775 have been destroyed little corroborative evidence supporting the elevation of the ordained Ministry could be found. The conclusion must be inferred on the basis and type of information studied.

administration of the Ordinances. The extent to which the ordained Ministry had been elevated and consolidated can be seen in a Circular Letter from the Charleston Association in 1830. The author wrote ". . . that this order of men is to be perpetuated to the end of time . . ." ¹⁰³

The Charlestown Confession proved to be the last outstanding declaration with a detailed exposition of the ordained Ministry. The New Hampshire Confession of 1833 stated that the only ". . . proper $\sqrt{\text{Scriptural}}$ in 1853 edition⁷ officers are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus." ¹⁰⁴ But Crowell's The Church Member's Manual, a commentary on the New Hampshire Confession, delineated the officers and duties of the ordained Ministry.

Following the preceding confession Bishops or Pastors and Deacons were the scriptural officers of a church. ¹⁰⁵ The office of Deaconess had ". . . become unnecessary as a permanent office." ¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³"Circular Letter," Minutes of the Charleston Baptist Association, 1830, p. 8.

¹⁰⁴McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 305-6 (art. 13).

¹⁰⁵William Crowell, The Church Member's Manual, p. 95.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 202. Crowell gave no reason for or discussion of his statement.

The duties of the Bishop or Pastor¹⁰⁷ embraced preaching to save souls,¹⁰⁸ visitation, instructing families in the Faith, administering the Ordinances and leading in the exercise of discipline in doctrine and morality. The neglect of his own flock for promotion of other objects was not permissible. Preaching was not confined to the ordained Ministry.¹⁰⁹

Deacons were concerned with a temporal ministry and were responsible for the poor, serving at Communion, helping in Baptism, assisting the Pastor in visitation and conducting prayer and business meetings. The number of Deacons varied according to the size of the church.¹¹⁰

The Minister, as seen in the office of Pastor, was the representative of Christ. He was sent by God to the church as servant of the church and Christ.¹¹¹ But this discipline did not echo as high a doctrine of the Ministry as confessions of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.

¹⁰⁷The word, Elder, is used very sparsely to denote a Pastor. The disuse of the word was probably due to an aversion to Presbyterianism and its Ruling Elders.

¹⁰⁸Crowell said that politics, morality and philanthropy were not the Minister's business and should be left alone. Crowell, op. cit., p. 204.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., pp. 175, 204.

¹¹⁰Ibid., pp. 200-1.

¹¹¹Ibid., pp. 103, 204, 206.

The ordained Ministry was to be used, if possible, in all cases of Baptism but:

. . . if no minister can be obtained, or in places where there is a general departure from the true form, a pious layman, acting with the approbation and in behalf of the church, might, as a matter of necessity, baptize. . . .¹¹²

The proper administrator for the Lord's Supper was an ordained Minister. The problem of lay-administration was omitted.¹¹³ But from the foregoing attitude toward Baptism it must be inferred that in cases of necessity a layman could officiate at Communion. Therefore, a church:

. . . may exist, with full powers, without officers, though a Scriptural organization is necessary to its prosperous existence and usefulness.¹¹⁴

The ordained Ministry was dependent for its authority upon the volition of the church and churches in cases of both local and extra-local jurisdiction.

J. R. Graves combined an extremely high doctrine of the ordained Ministry with a higher doctrine of local congregational authority and premised both on believer's baptism by immersion as the essential qualification. Since Baptist polity was of divine origin and excluded

¹¹²Ibid., p. 162.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 172.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 89.

all others¹¹⁵ and believers' immersion was the sine qua non of a true gospel church, the ordained Ministry, composed of Pastors, Elders or Bishops and Deacons¹¹⁶ was the exclusive New Testament Ministry and the only contemporary one with divine ministerial authority.¹¹⁷

The duties of church officers were divided into two ministries, spiritual and temporal. The former function performed by Pastors or Elders included preaching the word which led to the controversy over "official preaching" referred to in chapter four, administering the Ordinances and ruling ". . . the Church as executors of the laws of Christ . . ." ¹¹⁸ Deacons were ". . . to take charge of the temporalities of the Church and . . . the widows and orphans . . ." ¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵"Dr. Graves Third Reply," The Baptist, Sept. 2, 1876.

¹¹⁶"The Church at Jerusalem not Pedobaptist," Tennessee Baptist, Aug. 16, 1849; "Queries," Tennessee Baptist, Feb. 4, 1854.

¹¹⁷Graves feared the word, authority, especially in reference to church officers since it meant to him "power" independent of the church. He preferred the word, "duties." "What Societies are Republics, or Churches of Christ," Tennessee Baptist, Mar. 7, 1850.

¹¹⁸"Queries," Tennessee Baptist, Feb. 4, 1854; "A Query Answered," Tennessee Baptist, Apr. 25, 1857.

¹¹⁹"Queries," Tennessee Baptist, Feb. 4, 1854. Throughout the literature by Graves no detailed exposition of offices was given. The above material has been picked up from a few scattered sources.

Graves emphatically insisted that the ordained Ministry was the servant of the church and possessed no authority independently of congregational approval.¹²⁰ He developed a high doctrine of church authority when confronted by Methodist, Presbyterian and Episcopal polity which he saw in Assemblies, Synods and Bishops and a high doctrine of the Ministry when faced with the recognition and validity of non-Baptist Orders and Sacraments. As observed before both of these doctrines were based on believer's immersion it being the prerequisite to church and ministerial authority. A valid church and Ministry depended on Baptism:

The organization of a Christian church depends upon baptism, since without baptism there can be no church.

The membership of a Christian church is determined by Christian baptism . . . Baptism also determines who have a right to preach the gospel, since an unbaptized person cannot be scripturally ordained to preach.¹²¹

Baptism, therefore, rather than episcopal consecration made for regular Orders because ". . . Baptist churches had . . . a connection with each other through duly

¹²⁰"The Church at Jerusalem not Pedobaptist," Tennessee Baptist, Nov. 1, 1849; "Practical Queries," Tennessee Baptist, Mar. 17, 1855; "Query," The Baptist, July 8, 1868.

¹²¹"The Irrepressible Conflict," The Baptist, June 22, 1867.

authorized ministers--from the ascension of Christ until now. . . ."122 A qualified Minister, i. e., one who had been baptized in a Baptist church and set apart by the congregation's authority to the Ministry, was the only valid administrator of the Ordinances. This defense was raised when Graves confronted the question of alien immersion. An illegal church government could not appoint legal officers, therefore, all acts of such bodies were unscriptural and illegal.¹²³

The above stress on a regularly authorized gospel Ministry seen in the higher perspective of independent congregational authority was silhouetted in the administration of the Ordinances. Only ordained Ministers or Pastors could officiate at the Lord's Supper and Baptism. Graves maintained this position through his life. When refusing to recognize non-Baptist Orders and ministerial acts Graves said:

. . . Would any Baptist Church in the United States even allow one of her own baptized lay members to administer baptism. Would she call upon him to preach, and acknowledge him as a gospel minister, if unlicensed and unordained?¹²⁴

¹²²"Queries and Difficulties," The Baptist, Dec. 11, 1869.

¹²³Editorial, Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 1, 1852; "Baptist Carolla," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 3, 1857; "What Is Old Landmarkism," The Baptist, Mar. 10, 1876.

¹²⁴Editorial, Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 1, 1852.

The norm of administration was a qualified officer. Evidence of this high view may be seen in his answer to a correspondent who asked him if baptism of a candidate by a lay member, both being approved by a Baptist church, was a valid act. He replied:

We should hesitate and protest against such an act as an irregularity not to be in anywise encouraged. A church has no right to abolish an orderly ministry. Divinely called and regularly ordained ministers of the gospel are the official administrators of the ordinances for the churches. There may be exigencies that will warrant churches to appoint special officers protem; but we cannot conceive of such an exigency in America.¹²⁵

Graves' fanatical, almost obsessional insistence on believer's immersion as the basis for the constitution of any true church and ordained Ministry led him to elevate the latter into an "official order" with prerogatives and rights restricted to the Ministry. However, this doctrine was counterbalanced with a higher doctrine of church authority that made the Ministry dependent for every ministerial service upon the congregation over which they were Pastors. With characteristic vehemence Graves stated that "Lay preaching which involves lay baptisms, etc., should be classed with woman's suffrage, negro equality and open communionism--the prolific spawn of religious

¹²⁵"Questions and Answers," The Baptist, Sept. 24, 1887.

fanaticism."¹²⁶

R. B. C. Howell believing Baptist polity to be of divine origin and consequently excluding other types¹²⁷ supported a twofold ministry of Bishops or Elders and Deacons,¹²⁸ the duties of whom were carefully divided. The Elders, Presbyters or Bishops, terms used interchangeably for the same office,¹²⁹ were overseers of the church's spiritual ministry which embraced teaching, preaching, ruling, visiting, ordaining and administering the Sacraments.¹³⁰ On the other hand the Deacons were responsible

¹²⁶"1871," The Baptist, Jan. 7, 1871.

¹²⁷"No. 46. The Church: Notes of a Sermon, delivered in the First Baptist Church, at Nashville," The Baptist, Oct. 25, 1845. Hereafter cited as "Notes of a Sermon." Howell noted the fact that the majority of contemporary denominations believed that the New Testament did not command one kind of polity but left it up to the discretion of God's people. However, he felt that a divine polity was necessary for unity of the church. Ibid.

¹²⁸"Two Baptist Concord Associations," The Baptist, July, 1835; Howell, "A Memorial of the First Baptist Church Nashville, Tennessee, from 1820-1863," I, 100.

Howell in The Deaconship discusses the place of Deaconesses in the church but since he did not think of them in terms of an office their duties will be considered with those of the Deacons.

¹²⁹"Two Baptist Concord Associations," The Baptist, July, 1835. Howell made a distinction in the application of terms to the office. He said: "A presbyter is a man clothed with the ministerial office; and elder is a presbyter advanced in age; and a bishop is a presbyter invested with the pastorship. . . ." "Ministerial Ordination: A sermon by R. B. C. Howell, D.D., . . . at the ordination of David Breidenthall," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 13, 1848.

¹³⁰"Notes of a Sermon," The Baptist, Oct. 25, 1845; "A True Minister of Christ," The Baptist, Mar. 13, 1847; Howell, The Deaconship, p. 71.

for the temporal ministry over which ". . . they of right, have the full control. . . ." ¹³¹ This service covered supervision of church property and funds, watch-care over the poor, preparations for Baptism and the Lord's Supper, assistance at Communion and visitation. Howell made it clear that the duties of Deacons did not include preaching as this was the function of the ministerial office: ¹³²

. . . Deacons, as well as other men, may be called of God to the ministry. If called, it is their duty to obey. They then, however, as Philip did, drop the office of a deacon and assume that of a minister. . . . ¹³³

Also, the office of Deacon did not carry with it the power of rule and discipline. This authority belonged to the congregation. Consequently, the office of Ruling Elder was omitted because there was ". . . no authority in the word of God [for it], [it] infringes the rights of others, and cannot . . . be exercised without detriment to all concerned. Deacons are not ruling elders. . . ." ¹³⁴ But Howell, in connection with the office of Deacon, suggested another function that stemmed from the New Testament period--

¹³¹ Howell, The Deaconship, p. 18.

¹³² Ibid., pp. 17-18, 79-83, 87.

¹³³ Ibid., pp. 73-74. Howell did not mean that in order to preach it was necessary for Deacons to be reordained. What he meant was that they could not assume preaching as a natural function of their office.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 79.

the work of Deaconesses.

The service of Deaconess, according to Howell, was scripturally warranted and should be continued in the church. In many cases men could not attend to the needs of women. Therefore, Deaconesses were ". . . to attend their neophyte sister at baptism, and . . . be the companions of her toilet, before and after the sacrament . . .,"¹³⁵ visit the sick and helpless and fulfill many other important duties. But due to the lack of scriptural evidence, they were not to be formally ordained as Deacons were ". . . the book of Apostolic Constitutions, as it is improperly called, to the contrary notwithstanding. . . ." ¹³⁶ The church's appointment and the candidate's promise of service were sufficient. He was conscious that Deaconesses, though not in title, were in effect active in all of the well regulated Baptist churches.¹³⁷

Howell in line with the historic tradition of Baptists considered the ordained Ministry to be a necessary part of a "legally or fully organized" church; he specifically included the Deaconship with the Eldership in this organization.¹³⁸ A church regularly organized was

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 133.

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 135.

¹³⁷Ibid., pp. 127, 131-35.

¹³⁸Ibid., p. 31.

constituted out of three basic elements or departments, the communicants or members, the Deacons and the Pastor. ". . . These all form one church, whose unity is essential to its strength and success. . . ." ¹³⁹ Each of the three was bound together by interdependence in both temporal and spiritual matters. The church being entrusted with God's word and Ordinances was both ultimately responsible for its purity and the evangelization of the world. At the same time the church could accomplish nothing ". . . without a pastorship and other ministry . . ." ¹⁴⁰ But the Ministry without the church to uphold it temporally and spiritually was helpless. Thus the church appointed the the Ministry.

Christ had given to the church ". . . a certain class of servants, called by himself, and qualified to preach, which, also, he . . . [had] placed under the direction of the church . . ." ¹⁴¹ The word, minister, as Howell said, meant servant and expressed the relationship

¹³⁹ Ibid., pp. 137-38.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ "To Dr. John M. Watson, Letter IV," The Baptist, Mar. 16, 1837. The preceding is one of a series of letters, some of which were published in The Baptist, to John Watson, leader of the anti-missionary forces among Baptists in Tennessee. Howell is writing against the background of anti-convention elements which do not agree with the convention's mission methods.

between the church and the Ministry. Yet even though he recognized the Ministry's origin in the church, the language he used indicated a concept that made for differentiation between the clergy and the laity. However, he did not hold as high and exalted a view of the Ministry as Graves. Nowhere did Howell insist that the Ordinances must be administered only by an ordained man as in the case of Graves. But he did think that the orderly and regular way of administering the Ordinances was with the Ministry officiating. Neither did he demand, as Graves, that preaching must be confined to an ordained man. This view was expressed in the controversy with J. M. Pendleton and J. R. Graves over "official preaching."¹⁴²

The two concepts of the ordained Ministry held by Graves and Howell were reflected in the life of Kentucky Baptists during the Nineteenth Century. As with Howell and Graves, Baptist polity was considered divinely ordained and instituted to the exclusion of other forms.¹⁴³ The

¹⁴²The difference between Graves and Howell was one of degree and lay in their personalities. Graves was a blind authoritarian and biblical literalist while Howell was an authoritarian tempered by tolerance.

¹⁴³"Circular Letter," Elkhorn Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1854, p. 10; Stockton's Valley Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1874, pp. 11-12; "Circular Letter," Baptist Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1867, pp. 5-6; John L. Waller, "Dr. Wayland on the Ordination of Ministers," The Western Baptist Review, 3:138, Dec., 1847.

The evidence before 1846 when Graves' influence

Ministry of a church was twofold and composed of Bishops, Elders or Pastors and Deacons.¹⁴⁴ Ruling Elders were not used.¹⁴⁵ The Bishop or Pastor was responsible for the spiritual oversight of the congregation, a duty that included preaching, guidance in doctrine and discipline and setting ". . . in order the house of God."¹⁴⁶ He also was to edify the church, assist in evangelization of the world, visit his members and neighbours and counsel with the sick

reached into Kentucky is scarce mainly because the records containing such information have been destroyed. But from a few references the conclusion is irresistible that Baptists thought of their polity as being divinely given. The writer found no reference coupling divine polity with the exclusion of other types. Yet this conclusion seems to come naturally from the evidence and religious and theological spirit existing between denominations on the Frontier. "Circular Letter," Russell's Creek Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1842, p. 7; "Circular Letter," Franklin Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1828, p. 10.

¹⁴⁴Constitution of Government, "Minutes of the Bethlehem Baptist Church (unpublished minutes, Louisville; SBTSL), II, Secs. 1, 2, [n.d.]; Articles of Faith, "Minutes of the Ballardsville Baptist Church (unpublished minutes, Louisville; SBTSL), I, art. 5, [n.d.], no page; Church Covenant, "Minutes of the Floyd's Fork Baptist Church and Fisherville Baptist Church (Floyd's Fork) (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), art. 5, [n.d.], no page--but adopted by 1854; "Articles of Faith of the Sulphur Fork Association," Sulphur Fork Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1889, p. 19.

¹⁴⁵Even in the earliest records from Severn's Valley Church, Fox Run Church (Eminence), Great Crossing, etc. there was no evidence indicating their usage.

¹⁴⁶"Duties of Churches to Pastors," Bracken Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1855, p. 10; Constitution of Government, "Minutes of the Bethlehem Baptist Church," II, Sec. 2.

and administer the Ordinances.¹⁴⁷ Deacons, distinguished from the Pastors by their restriction to a temporal ministry, were amenable for all property and funds belonging to the church. These things they held as a trust for the congregation and with them met the expenses. They were to provide for the poor particularly the widows and to see that the Pastor's salary was subscribed. Their assistance at the Lord's Supper was usual and customary but not of divine authority. Any other church member would do.¹⁴⁸ The duties and functions of the ordained Ministry in Kentucky were then historically aligned with other Baptists.

The relationship between the Ministry and the church and the views of Graves and Howell were spelled out in Kentucky. Primarily the ordained Ministry, especially the Pastor or Bishop, was understood to be divinely called but separated to the Ministry by the congregation and consequently

¹⁴⁷"Circular Letter--Ministerial Education," Bethel Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1877, pp. 22-23; Church Rules of Discipline, "Minutes of the Taylorsville Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), appended to vol. II.

¹⁴⁸"Circular Letter--On the Qualifications and Duties of Deacons," Long Run Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1846, pp. 7-8; "An Essay on the Word CHURCH--Its Scriptural Import," The Christian Repository, 9:97-99, Feb., 1860. Hereafter cited CR.

a servant of the church.¹⁴⁹ Officers were necessary for a properly organized church¹⁵⁰ but were dependent upon the church for their existence.¹⁵¹ The ministry of the Elder or Pastor and his status in the denomination from around the middle of the Nineteenth Century was markedly elevated by several factors: the problems of alien immersion, "official preaching,"¹⁵² and the leadership and influence of J. R. Graves and J. M. Pendleton in rejection of the former and advocacy of the latter. This high doctrine of the Pastor's or Bishop's ministry stood out both in the concept of his office and authority. The Circular Letter of the Elkhorn Association, meeting in 1853, indicated the contemporary view of the Minister's office:

¹⁴⁹"Circular Letter," Long Run Minutes, 1821, p. 5; "Proceedings of a Council Meeting Called by the Stockton's Valley Association," Stockton's Valley Minutes, 1874, pp. 12-15; Articles of Faith, "Minutes of the Ballardsville Baptist Church," I, art. 5, n.d., no page.

John Taylor, an early Kentucky Baptist pioneer preacher, stated in his book, A History of Ten Baptist Churches (Second edition; Bloomfield, Nelson County, Kentucky: printed by Will H. Holmes, 1827), that the Buck Run Baptist Church with which he was associated had never had one Pastor but ". . . all her preachers are on an equality, and are servants of the church . . ." pp. 207-8.

¹⁵⁰"Duties of Churches to Pastors," Bracken Minutes, 1855, p. 10.

¹⁵¹John L. Waller, "Baptism by 'Reformers' and Pedobaptists," The Western Baptist Review, 1:369-70, June, 1846.

¹⁵²The controversy over "official preaching" will be referred to in chapter four.

The office of a Gospel minister is the highest ever held by mortal man; and he who worthily fills that office, has stronger claims upon our respect than has the wisest and most powerful earthly monarch. . . .

. . . Properly furnished for his office, the pastor becomes the greatest of Christ's gifts to an organized Church. . . .¹⁵³

The doctrine of the Ministry was centered in the restriction of the administration of the Ordinances to ordained, Baptist Ministers who were qualified through baptismal succession¹⁵⁴ and by church authority. The roots of this doctrine of course preceded Graves' work¹⁵⁵ but its denouement is the responsibility of Graves and Pendleton. Ten of the twelve references after 1840 to the proper administrator of the Ordinances required that Baptism and the Lord's Supper be performed only by a regularly ordained Bishop or Pastor.¹⁵⁶ Thus the majority of Kentucky Baptists held a high view of the ordained Ministry. On the other

¹⁵³"Circular Letter," Elkhorn Minutes, 1853, p. 6; "Duties of Churches to Pastors," Bracken Minutes, 1855, p. 10.

¹⁵⁴"Abstract of Faith," West Union Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1846, p. 12; Stockton's Valley Minutes, 1876, p. 5; Little River Minutes, 1877, p. 7.

¹⁵⁵There is a reference to this same doctrine of baptismal succession in the minutes of the North Bend Association for 1822. North Bend Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1822, p. 2.

¹⁵⁶Goshen Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1860, p. 8; Union Minutes, p. 8, 1877; Sulphur Fork Minutes, 1889, p. 19; Cumberland River Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1895, p. 11, etc.

hand there was a minority, following the pattern of R. B. C. Howell, who held that the Ordinances could be administered without the presence of a Minister. Writing in The Western Baptist Review, John L. Waller said:

. . . the expediency which dictates that baptism should usually be committed to the preachers of the gospel, does not bind the churches at all times to entrust it to their hands, or to receive it alone from them. . . .¹⁵⁷

Two Baptist churches, Fox Run Church (Eminence) and East Hickman Church (Marble Creek), the former in 1806 and the latter in 1884 authorized celebration of the Lord's Supper in the absence of an ordained Minister.¹⁵⁸ But this practice was comparatively rare and the conclusion must be drawn that the ordained Ministry as seen in the office of Bishop or Pastor was a cohesive class with unusual authority by the end of the Nineteenth Century. This distinction between clergy and laity was pointed up in the proper and only administrator of the Ordinances, a Minister; lay preaching was deprecated and frowned on. Ministerial authority was both local and extra-local.

¹⁵⁷ John L. Waller, "Baptism by 'Reformers' and Pedobaptists," The Western Baptist Review, 1:369-70, June, 1846.

¹⁵⁸ "Minutes of Fox Run Baptist Church (Eminence)" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), I, 1806; "Minutes of the East Hickman Baptist Church (Marble Creek)" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), II, June, 1884.

In summation several conclusions may be stated. Historically Baptists have held a twofold Ministry of Bishops, Elders or Pastors and Deacons the offices of which are divinely ordained. This Ministry called by the congregation is necessary for the completion of a church. The authority of Deacons was generally confined to the local church except in cases of "helps" at ordinations. But the authority of Ministers extended beyond the congregations which they served. The consolidation and elevation of the Ministry, i. e., Pastors, is seen in the restriction of administration of the Ordinances to an ordained man.

CHAPTER III
VOCATION AND LICENSE IN BAPTIST ORDINATION

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VOCATION AND LICENSE IN BAPTIST ORDINATION

The problem of vocation and license in Baptist ordination will be examined in this chapter. The "call," in its subjective and objective aspects, qualifications for the Ministry, the relationship of gifts to the church, probation of the candidate and license, its nature and authority will be investigated in Baptist confessions of faith and manuals of discipline, the thought of J. R. Graves and R. B. C. Howell, and in the practice of Kentucky Baptists as seen in their associational minutes and periodicals from 1785-1900.

The earliest strictly English General Baptist confession, A Declaration of Faith of English People, written by Helwys and published in 1611, was silent as far as direct evidence is concerned on the issue of "calling" and gifts. Since Baptist work was in its initial stages the doctrine of "calling" and the ordained Ministry appeared in a simple pattern and deductions must be made from the nature of the church and its authority. All acts of worship including administration of the Ordinances could be performed by the church without officers.¹ Since

¹W. J. McGlothlin, Baptist Confessions of Faith, p. 89 (art. 11).

congregational authority was considered to be the absolute prerequisite for election of an officer it was understood that the congregation took the initiative in separation of a "gift" to the Ministry for he was possessed by the church. The only requirement or qualification for office mentioned in the confession found its origin in Scripture. Judgement by the church both for the office of Elder and Deacon was based on scriptural injunctions laid out in I Timothy 3:2-7, Titus 1:6-9 and Acts 6:3-4. Officers were ". . . to be chosen when there are persons qualified according to the rules in Christs Testament . . ." ² It is clear from following confessions that the right of calling and approving gifts belonged to the church which, upon recognition of talents, requested a brother or brethren to minister in the congregation.

The concept of vocation and license during the intervening forty-one years developed with a growing denominational consciousness among General Baptists and was amplified in 1651 with the publication of The Faith and Practise of Thirty Congregations. ³ This confession

²Ibid., p. 91 (art. 21). Lack of extant records explains failure to discuss such questions as a valid call, gifts, probation and license.

³The Civil War--Commonwealth Period provided opportunity for rapid growth and expansion of Baptists in general. This newly found freedom in publication and speech left adequate evidence for an accurate picture of both General and Particular Baptist thought on the subject of vocation and license.

clearly placed the ownership of and responsibility for development of gifted brethren in the hands of the congregation, for God ". . . hath given gifts of his grace to the Saints or Church of God . . ." ⁴ Thus Christians with notable talents were to improve their gifts before the church in an orderly manner so that the congregation could judge their fitness. ⁵ Out of these probationers some were chosen to the offices of Elder and Deacon. Again the Scripture was used as a norm for determining qualifications for separation to the spiritual and temporal ministries. The reputation of the candidate had to be beyond reproach not only from a fellow Christian but also from those without the church. Unselfishness, ability to teach and patience and love to all men were other important attributes. ⁶

The period of probation was not predetermined, but the congregation weighing progress in a Christian's improving gifts separated him to office when his maturity and ability warranted. Regardless of where he exercised his gifts in preaching the member had to have the approval and sanction of his church. Clear evidence as to the distinction between license and ordination cannot be

⁴McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 105 (art. 58).

⁵Ibid., pp. 106-8 (arts. 66, 71).

⁶Ibid., pp. 106-7 (arts. 64, 66).

gained from the confession. Yet the confession makes it plain that permission to exercise gifts and the initiative for calling to ordination were primarily the responsibility of the congregation to whom the gifts had been given. There was certainly an interval of testing before the church's call to ordination.

Several years later, in 1654, some General Baptist churches in London drew up and published The True Gospel-faith, a confession which spoke only of exercising gifts. Here again gifts were thought of as belonging to the fellowship or congregation and the confession strongly emphasized that such gifts, though bestowed on individual members by God, were to be used for the benefit of others.⁷ Stewardship of divinely given endowments was for the edification of the congregation and not primarily for personal satisfaction. Also, all exercising of gifts was linked to congregational approval. In November, 1654, at a business meeting of the church in Fenstanton, the question of authority to exercise gifts was broached. The church ruled that gifts could only be improved in the presence of the congregation and that preaching "publicly to the world" was unlawful without its approval. The church stated that no person

⁷William Latane Lumpkin, "The Local Baptist Confessions of Faith of the Civil War--Commonwealth Period," Appendix E, pp. 4-5 (art. 25).

could make ". . . it their sole business to go from place to place to preach, except they be sent by the congregation."⁸ But occasional preaching opportunities by an approved person when "accidentally offered" were permitted.⁹ Thus, the preceding demonstrated the practice of license or commission as distinguished from the period of probation which restricted the improvement and testing of gifts to and before the congregation. License then, gave authority to preach publicly but in most cases only with the church's approval.

In 1660 the Standard Confession placed the management and improvement of gifts in the hands of the congregation but the language used did not stress the church's responsibility for their development as strongly as preceding confessions. Christians who are:

. . . brought up in the School of Christ's Church, and waiting there, come . . . to degrees of Christianity, rightly qualified and considerably gifted by God's Spirit; ought to exercise their gifts . . .¹⁰

⁸E. B. Underhill (ed.), Records of the Churches of Christ, Gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys, and Hexham, p. 98. The above ruling occurred when a member, Thomas Bedford, preached at Stow without a commission from the church. Ibid., p. 124. This reference hereafter cited as Fenstanton, Warboys, and Hexham Records as appropriate.

George Fox, leader of the Quakers, agreed with Baptists on the development of gifts among the laity. Since Christ was Head of the Church, he selected his own Ministers through the Holy Spirit's work in the congregation. Robert Barclay, The Inner Life of the Commonwealth, p. 270.

⁹Fenstanton Records, p. 98.

¹⁰McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 113 (art. 5).

The exercise of gifts though largely carried out in the congregation extended also to preaching in the world provided sanction was given by the church. Out of these gifted brethren who had proclaimed the Gospel in the church and the world some were chosen for ordination to the Ministry.¹¹

Again, as in the past, this confession harked to the Scriptures for the proper qualifications for both the office of Elder and Deacon. For the office of Pastor or Elder divine call was seen in God's appointment.¹² He must be:

. . . vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach, &c. not greedy of filthy lucre (as too many National Ministers are) but patient; not a brawler, not covetuous, &c. . . .¹³

Deacons were to be faithful men approved by the church.¹⁴

¹¹Ibid. Adam Taylor, The History of the English General Baptists, I, 431-32, said that during the Civil War Period gifted Christians exercised their gifts in public discussions where they defended their opinions but this practice gave way to prayer meetings and religious conferences where the candidates expounded Scripture.

After discovery of talented brethren at private meetings they were then requested to appear before the church with their gifts. Then at the end of a probationary period, they were called to the Ministry if approved of by the church. A novice who preached only occasionally was called a "gifted brother" whereas, after he had proved himself and was permitted a more regular ministry, he was thought of as a "brother confirmed in the ministry." Taylor, op. cit., I, 432.

¹²McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 116 (art. 15). The confession does not make it clear as to whether or not the divine call was apprehended personally by the candidate or corporately by the church.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 117-18 (art. 19).

In the Standard Confession probation may be distinguished from license. Probation took place within the congregation's religious and worship activities when a gift was discovered. License occurred when a gifted brother had been proved and had received congregational authority for preaching publicly.¹⁵ Ordination was performed when the church felt the candidate was competent for the work of the Ministry. The initiative in calling to the Ministry remained with the church. It assumed responsibility for the cultivation of gifts and separation to the office of Elder. The church's testing, sanction and ordination of a gifted brother constituted a valid call.

By 1678 when the Orthodox Creed was adopted and circulated, the Ministry was elevated; and, though the exercising of gifts was still an important activity within the fellowship,¹⁶ a divine call to the Ministry took

¹⁵Whitley supports this conclusion. But he also more clearly defines the authority given in license. A congregation appointed a gifted brother a Minister if his abilities warranted but he could not administer the Sacraments. From several of these "preaching brothers" or a tested Deacon one was chosen for the office of Elder. W. T. Whitley (ed.), Minutes of the General Assembly of the General Baptist Churches in England, with Kindred Records, I, xxxii-xxxiii. Cited hereafter as MGA.

¹⁶In the church at Shad Thames young brethren would gather on Sunday morning "to improve their spiritual gifts and graces, to the edification of such as should give them attendance." "Shad Thames Church Book," 1681, as quoted in Taylor, op. cit., I, 432.

precedence and emerged as the stronger emphasis. The Creed did not mention the exercising of gifts. Instead, it insisted that Ministers or Pastors were ". . . of God's appointing . . ." and ". . . to be chosen by his church . . ." ¹⁷ A qualified person was one ". . . fitted and gifted by the holy ghost, . . ." ¹⁸ but the validity of the call though subjectively apprehended was not established until the church had approved and separated the candidate to the ministry of Bishop or Messenger by ordination. ¹⁹

Thomas Grantham in his influential work of 1678, Christianismus Primitivus, also reflected this individualistic emphasis in the call and elevation of the Ministry. ". . . God pointeth out the most Heavenly-minded Men to that work," as Grantham wrote, "and orders his Church to elect such as he hath chosen . . ." ²⁰ Yet, there was still a place for the exercising of gifts within the church. God had provided that a gifted disciple should edify his church

¹⁷ McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 146 (arts. 30, 31).

¹⁸ There were objective qualifications. A candidate must give evidence of his conversion, be in good standing in a General Baptist church, have a good reputation and in some churches be examined by an ordination council of Ministers as to moral character and theology. Taylor, op. cit., I, 416-17.

¹⁹ McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 146 (art. 31).

²⁰ Thomas Grantham, Christianismus Primitivus, Part II, Second Treatise, Chap. 9, pp. 120-21. Hereafter cited as Christianismus.

and also, when providential opportunities arose in remote places, to ". . . lawfully Evangelize or Preach the Gospel . . ." ²¹ The General Assembly supported this restriction of authority when it ruled in 1693 and 1698 that a gifted disciple could neither administer the Lord's Supper without ordination nor preach outside his home church unless he were travelling in another country or had the express consent of his congregation. ²² Scriptural qualifications for both the office of Elder and Deacon were adhered to, ²³ but gifts as witnessed in these requirements were placed alongside a new element, that of authority and office. ". . . Preaching . . . is . . . not by virtue of Gift only, but by Office or Authority also . . ." ²⁴ Consequently several factors entered the constitution of a valid call: the divine appointment of a gifted disciple with a stronger emphasis on its personal apprehension, the exercising of gifts and consequent approval of the church, the congregation's call to the work of the Ministry and ordination

²¹Ibid., Book IV, Fifth Treatise, p. 161.

²²MGA, I, 1693, 1698, pp. 39, 52.

²³In 1693 the General Assembly ordered that a candidate for the Ministry could not be ordained unless his wife were a member of a General Baptist church. Ibid., I, 1693, p. 39.

²⁴Christianismus, Book IV, Fifth Treatise, pp. 155-56.

by God's Ministers.²⁵ The initiative in discovering and improving gifts was passing from the congregation to the gifted brother. The church's surrender of this initiative in vocation and the gifted disciple's assumption of this prerogative to determine his calling was reflected in the General Assembly meeting in 1704. The Assembly answered a query by saying that:

Every Bror. which doth Concluded that he hat a Gift to be Improved for the benefitt of the Church ought to be permitted by the Church to express the Same in personell [private meeting] uniting for Approbacon.

. . . Every Such Bror ought to Submitt to the Judgmt. of the Church when & where to Improve his Gift as they shall think Meet.²⁶

From the beginning Particular Baptists, through the influence of a Calvinistic tradition, had a higher concept of vocation and license than the General Baptists. The First London Confession of 1644 did not mention the exercising of gifts, but Benjamin Cox in An Appendix to a Confession of Faith, a commentary on the confession, did. The emphasis of the Appendix enunciated the gift of preaching as a personal, divine endowment and vocation consisted of the Holy Spirit's bringing conviction to the

²⁵Ibid., Part II, Second Treatise, Chap. 9, pp. 120-21.

²⁶MGA, I, 1704, pp. 92.

gifted disciple that he was commissioned by Christ to preach the Gospel. Such brothers divinely authorized were ". . . to be looked upon as men sent and given of the Lord . . ." ²⁷ The First London Confession also recognized their divine appointment. ²⁸ Yet congregational authority governed the use of these gifts because they were for the church's edification. The church at Broadmead set aside one day of the week for conference at which any brother with the approval of the Elders could speak on a personal scriptural problem. Then others, led by the Holy Spirit, could answer. By this means:

. . . many brethren that seemed to have no gift . . . were discovered to have a very spiritual understanding and a good utterance, to the mutual edification of the church. So that those gifts and graces that lay dormant and hidden were brought forth . . . ²⁹

Qualifications, including a divine calling, were based on the usual scriptural passages i. e., Acts 6:3; I Timothy 3, etc. ³⁰

²⁷ Benjamin Cox, "An Appendix to a Confession of Faith," Confessions of Faith, and other Public Documents, Illustrative of the History of the Baptist Churches of England in the 17th Century, ed. Edward Bean Underhill, pp. 58-59 (art. 19).

²⁸ McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 184 (art. 36).

²⁹ E. B. Underhill (ed.), The Records of a Church of Christ, Meeting in Broadmead, Bristol (1640-1687), 1645, pp. 33-34. Hereafter cited Broadmead Records.

³⁰ McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 184 (art. 36).

The exercising of gifts and their relationship to the church was clarified when in 1654 Collier published The Right Constitution and True Subjects of the Visible Church of Christ. Though gifts were bestowed by the Spirit on brethren they were to use them so as ". . . every one . . . [could] profit withall . . ." ³¹ A divine vocation of the individual was recognized as well as the necessity for a personal apprehension of it, but the church in concert with the Holy Spirit called out a gifted brother. The church realized that God gave the capacity to a man for the Ministry and called him; but it also believed that since it had been ". . . made partaker of the same Spirit, they call where the Lord calls. . . ." ³² Both of these elements, the Spirit's working through the candidate and through the church, were essential for a valid call.

The procedure in calling included the testing of a man's qualifications. ³³ Hence Collier spoke of three customary steps to the Ministry. First, there was election by the church as a candidate for office. Then followed a

³¹ Thomas Collier, The Right Constitution and True Subjects of the Visible Church of Christ, pp. 18-19. Deacons were not to be restricted to their work alone if they had a gift for preaching. Ibid., pp. 30-31.

³² Ibid., pp. 18-19.

³³ Scriptural qualifications for both Deacons and Elders came from Acts 6:3; Titus 1:6-9 and I Tim. 3:8-10. Ibid., pp. 30-31.

period of ". . . Approbation which is tryal . . ." ³⁴ This included proving of gifts and qualifications. After the church was satisfied that the candidate was qualified, gifted and sound in the faith, the third step, that of ordination, occurred. ³⁵ By these measures a valid call was accomplished.

In 1656 the Somerset Confession and An Antidote Against the Infection of the Times were published. These contained little evidence on vocation and license. The former urged that gifts be exercised ". . . decently and in order, one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted . . ." ³⁶ whereas, An Antidote failed to mention gifts. But, as can be gathered from the Somerset Confession, gifts were to be used for the edification of the church. The congregation could thus select, approve and ordain an Elder or Deacon from their membership. ³⁷ Those chosen had to be ". . . fitly gifted and qualified by Christ . . ." ³⁸ on a scriptural basis. A man so equipped was called personally by Christ and the church, then, sent out to preach the

³⁴Ibid., p. 31. Collier's work does not refer to the nature and authority given in license or approbation.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 31-34.

³⁶McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 209-10 (art. 25).

³⁷Ibid., p. 211 (art. 31).

³⁸Ibid.

Gospel to the world.³⁹ The congregation after probation and testing determined the authenticity of vocation among its gifts.⁴⁰

By the latter half of the decade of the 1670's the emphasis on vocation had shifted from that of the congregation's discovering, improving and calling out of gifts to the Ministry to that of a gifted disciple's subjective experience of a divine call and appointment. However, the church still approved and called gifts and remained the source of authority for ordination to the Ministry. The Second London Confession of 1677 stipulated that although Elders were primarily responsible for preaching it was not to be confined to them, for others qualified by the Holy Spirit and approved by the church ". . . may and ought to perform it."⁴¹ Gifts were to be used by the congregation.⁴²

³⁹Ibid., pp. 211-12 (art. 34). [John Myles], An Antidote Against the Infection of the Times, pp. 15-16. The church at Broadmead met at various times during the week at which time while meeting in members' homes gifts were exercised by those of the membership. Broadmead Records, 1657, p. 57.

⁴⁰There is no confessional evidence for discussion of the nature and extent of license during this period.

⁴¹McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 267 (art. 11).

⁴²During the periods of intermittent persecution that came with the return of Charles II churches used their gifts in preaching while their Ministers were in jail. On such an occasion the Broadmead Church commented: ". . . we presently made use of our ministering gifts in the church, as we did in former persecutions, contenting ourselves with mean gifts and coarse fare in the want of better. . . ." Broadmead Records, 1674, p. 225.

A period of trial both for Deacons and Elders preceded final election to office.⁴³ This probation of gifts was confined to the congregation. When a gifted disciple thus proved himself and was called by the church into the Ministry he was given authority to preach and baptize in the world even though he was not called to the office of Pastor. When he was called to the office of Pastor he could administer the Lord's Supper.⁴⁴

As regards a man's qualifications, Particular Baptists considered that a divine calling was essential for the Ministry. This accent became the dominant characteristic or

⁴³The Broadmead Church in 1673 elected John Ford as a Deacon and "sister Murray" as a Deaconess both of whom were set apart but they were ". . . recommended to the work upon trial." Ibid., 1673, p. 195. This was true also of their Pastor, Thomas Hardcastle, who was on trial for three years before elected to the office of Pastor in the church. This procedure continued through 1687 at which time the church "ordained by election to office" Thomas Vauxe who had been their Pastor but on probation. Ibid., 1674, 1687, pp. 196, 499-500. However, the Particular Baptist Assembly of 1689 expressed strong disapproval of such practice and warned that it was ". . . an omission of an ordinance of God? . . ." "The Narrative . . . of the General Assembly . . . of the Baptized Churches . . . owning the Doctrine of Personal Election and Final Perseverance, 1689, met in London, more than 100 congregations joined in Assembly . . .," John Rippon (ed.), The Baptist Annual Register, IV, 51-52.

⁴⁴The Broadmead Church had a brother Jennings who though as the church said was unacceptable to them for the pastorate did baptize and preach for them. Only the Pastor could administer the Lord's Supper. Broadmead Records, 1670, 1679, pp. 106, 414-15. The concept of the Lord's Supper as a symbol of congregational fellowship with that of the Pastor as being an officer directly related to the baptized believers led to this restriction. It was his duty to feed the flock.

norm for entrance. A candidate was appointed by Christ, fitted and gifted by the Holy Spirit:⁴⁵

. . . for both the Gifts, Grace, and Authority of a Gospel-Minister are from him; and no Man or Society of Men under Heaven, can, de jure, make him a Minister that Christ hath not qualified for such a Service . . .⁴⁶

This divine vocation, along with other qualifications set forth in the New Testament, when witnessed and sanctioned by the congregation supplied the basis for separation to the Ministry.⁴⁷ Two factors were necessary for a valid call, divine appointment and approval and ordination by the church.

Jachin & Boaz, issued in 1707, reflected and supported the Second London Confession on vocation and license and amply set forth qualifications for entrance to the Ministry. Gifts among the members were for the edification of the church. Such abilities including preaching were not restricted to the Pastor, an ordained man.⁴⁸ Both the

⁴⁵McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 266 (arts. 8, 9).

⁴⁶Nehemiah Coxe, A Sermon Preached at the Ordination of an Elder and Deacons (Baptist Publications), Reel 26, No. 35, p. 21.

⁴⁷Conflicting evidence exists on the question of whether or not a man must be called to the pastorate of a particular church before he is ordained. There was no agreement among Baptists. Robert C. Walton, The Gathered Community, pp. 96-97.

⁴⁸"William Mitchill's 'Jachin & Boaz' 1707," Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society, 3:168 (art. 15). Hereafter cited "Jachin & Boaz," Transactions.

Pastor and other gifts experiencing a divine call and approved of by the congregation were permitted to preach publicly. A gifted disciple having the approval of the church to preach publicly could baptize but could not administer the Lord's Supper unless he were related to the congregation as Pastor.⁴⁹ Such men had to be called and ". . . fitted by the Holy Ghost . . ." ⁵⁰ Particularly was this true of a man called to the office of Pastor, the qualifications for whom were fully described in Jachin & Boaz. The following constituted a valid call:

. . . (1) That he be well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, and the whole Will and Mind of God therein revealed and contained. (2) That he be furnished with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, for the Edification of the Church, and the Evangelical Discharge of the Work of the Ministry . . . (3) That he be unblameable, holy and exemplary in his Conversation . . . (4) That he have a willing mind freely to give up himself unto the Lord in the Work of the Ministry . . . (5) That he be chosen and called thereto by the Suffrage and Consent of the Church that he is to be over in the Lord . . . (6) That he be solemnly set apart or ordained by the Laying on of the hands of its Eldership, if such there be, (or otherwise by holding up of the Hands of the Church) with Fasting and Prayer, wherein the Presence, and (so far as is needful and regular) the Assistance

⁴⁹Ibid., (art. 16). This article omits reference to baptism but from the Broadmead Records, 1670, 1679, pp. 106, 414-15, a gifted disciple sent out to preach by a church could and did baptize. The records do not give adequate information to judge whether or not this "sending out" was an ordination with Elders participating or simply approval by the church.

⁵⁰"Jachin & Boaz," Transactions, 3:166 (art. 10).

of the Elders or Messengers of other Churches is expedient . . .⁵¹

A personal divine vocation had always been an essential element of calling; but as the Ministry was elevated and denominational consciousness increased; the initiative in discovering gifts and determining the validity of a divine call passed from the congregation to the individual. The church still retained the authority either to deny or recommend ordination.

In America the Philadelphia Association having adopted the Second London Confession and two disciplines, the latter of which was a revision in 1797 of the 1743 edition, adhered to the Particular Baptist tradition in vocation and license.

The church was responsible for the supervision and nourishment of all gifts and if without officers, was to select after prayer and deliberation either one or several persons to exercise their gifts in a period of trial for the work of the Ministry.⁵² This approbation of gifts was

⁵¹Ibid., pp. 166-67 (art. 12).

⁵²A Short Treatise of Church Discipline, pp. 6-7. Hereafter cited as Discipline. A Treatise of Church Discipline, Adopted by the Sansom-Street Baptist Church, p. 11 (art. 4). Hereafter cited as Revised Discipline.

The Philadelphia Confession, since it is a reproduction of the Second London Confession with the addition of two articles, will not be considered. Only the disciplines and associational minutes will be used.

the church's duty.⁵³ Men who were thus called out to exercise their gifts had to have certain qualifications which were derived from the New Testament, i. e., I Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 4:5-10, and as the Discipline stated these abilities ". . . must be found in them, in some good degree . . ."⁵⁴ However, there were two outstanding prerequisites to a call to exercise gifts. First, it was essential that a gifted brother have a divine vocation.⁵⁵ The Revised Discipline defined this vocation as the

. . . inward call, which is a zeal for the glory of God in the salvation of the souls of men, and a strong desire to be made useful in that way with a persuasion of God's designation of the person for the office. This is the voice of God in his conscience. . . .⁵⁶

Second, the congregation must have approved the candidate's exercising his gifts which were discovered either by the

⁵³Revised Discipline, pp. 10-11 (art. 3).

⁵⁴Discipline, p. 5. A "Circular Letter" of the Association outlined the most extensive requirements for the Ministry. The candidate's own persuasion of a divine call was not enough. Godliness, knowledge including acquaintance with the "plan of salvation," the doctrine of grace, polity, ability to teach and a divine call were essential. Secondary qualifications were an education, "gracious affections of the heart," humility, prudence, sympathy and evangelical piety. Gillette (ed.), Philadelphia Minutes, 1807, pp. 443-446.

The qualifications for Deacons and Ruling Elders were also scriptural some for the latter office being ability to rule, judgement, knowledge and prudence. Discipline, pp. 8-9.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 5; Revised Discipline, p. 10 (art. 3).

⁵⁶Revised Discipline, p. 10 (art. 3).

members or by the person offering himself. This latter method came as a new development.⁵⁷ After the proper authorization, the candidate was at liberty to develop his gifts within the church on a period of trial the length of which was determined by the congregation.⁵⁸ When a gifted person had been tested and found acceptable, the church gave him ". . . a letter of license, for the exercise of his gifts abroad . . ." ⁵⁹ This letter gave the candidate authority to preach and exercise his gifts (but not to administer the Ordinances) in neighbouring churches in order that they

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 11 (art. 3). The transfer of initiative had begun as early as the 1740's when the Association passed a resolution urging gifted brethren to wait on the churches for approbation rather than take matters in their own hands. Philadelphia Minutes, 1747, p. 55.

⁵⁸Discipline, p. 5; Revised Discipline, p. 11 (arts. 3, 4); Philadelphia Minutes, 1746, pp. 51-52. The above procedure was also true for the office of Ruling Elder or Deacon. Men on trial for these offices had authority to act as if they had been elected to office. Ibid., 1728, p. 29.

⁵⁹Revised Discipline, p. 11 (art. 4). The practice of giving a written license had been common as early as 1707. Morgan Edwards, clerk of the Philadelphia Association, found a resolution in the associational minutes of July 27, 1707 which he said was the first on record dealing with license. The agreement read: "Agreed, That no man shall be allowed to preach among the Associated churches, except he produce credentials of his being in communion with his church, and of his having been called and licensed to preach," quoted in Philadelphia Minutes, 1771, p. 121.

The granting of written credentials evidently arose to protect Baptist churches from impostors and excommunicated and immoral Ministers whose actions defamed Baptists. Ibid., pp. 121-22.

also could judge his qualifications.⁶⁰ The approval of surrounding churches was considered necessary but not essential for the proper testing of gifts. After a private probation of gifts within the church and further public approval, permission being given through license, the church called for the candidate's ordination to the Ministry. Divine vocation and congregational approval were viewed as absolutely essential for ordination. By the end of the Eighteenth Century the initiative in discovering gifts and calling them to the Ministry had passed from the congregation into the hands of those who were impressed with God's call.

The Charleston Association, having been greatly influenced by the Philadelphia Association and having adopted the Second London Confession in 1767, followed the thought and practice of Philadelphia in vocation and license. This can be seen in the Charlestown Discipline and associational minutes.⁶¹

As in the Philadelphia Association, two things were

⁶⁰Ibid., 1728, 1753, 1771, pp. 29, 70, 121; Revised Discipline, p. 11 (art. 4).

⁶¹The Charlestown Discipline contains very little evidence on the subject of vocation and license. Since the minutes between 1751, when the association was organized, and 1774 are either lost or destroyed material for this section is scarce. Therefore, associational minutes extending to 1838 will be used.

essential and prior to a candidate's ordination to the Ministry: the gifted brother must possess a divine calling and sanction of his church through license. Gifts were to be used by the congregation for their edification.⁶² When the church found a man with promising abilities he was placed ". . . on private Trial for a Season . . ." ⁶³ Then, having proved himself under the judgement of the congregation, he was called to preach publicly, authority for which was given in the granting of a license.⁶⁴ While on private trial within the confines of the church and during the time he was licensed for public preaching, the candidate had to demonstrate on the basis of biblical standards that he had

. . . fervent Desires to glorify God, and save Souls
 Gifts, Graces, Soundness of Principles, and becoming
 Life and Conversation . . .⁶⁵

But primarily he must have given evidence of a divine vocation, appointment or "inward call."⁶⁶

⁶²A Summary of Church-Discipline, p. 9 (art. 1). Hereafter cited Charlestown Discipline.

⁶³Ibid., pp. 8-9 (art. 1).

⁶⁴Minutes of the Charleston Baptist Association, 1801, pp. 1-2. Hereafter cited Charleston Minutes.

⁶⁵Charlestown Discipline, pp. 8, 10 (art. 1).

⁶⁶Ibid. Deacons also were chosen by New Testament qualifications and placed on trial before being set apart to office. Ibid., p. 12 (art. 2).

From evidence in the Charlestown Discipline, the initiative in calling out gifts lay within the congregation. But this situation soon changed and the candidates assumed responsibility for securing the church's approval of their vocation. By the last decade of the Eighteenth Century the Association was having to warn churches against short periods of trial and hasty ordinations.⁶⁷ This trend, prompted by an extreme spirit of individualism, continued to grow and in the Nineteenth Century became the acceptable procedure. The surrender of congregational control in the exercising of gifts was reflected in the Association's Circular Letter of 1830:

Before a person can be fully invested with ministerial powers, he must obtain the approbation of the church. The various gifts which Christ has given to the churches, are to be regarded as their property, and of course it seems but right that they should exercise their judgment in the proper disposition of these gifts. . . . A candidate for the ministry must not sit in judgment upon his own gifts . . .⁶⁸

The divine vocation of the candidate and the church's authority to call and license him for preaching outside of his own church remained the prerequisites to ordination.

The New Hampshire Confession, published in 1833, omitted any reference to the exercising of gifts, vocation and license. However, William Crowell in The Church Member's

⁶⁷Charleston Minutes, 1791, p. 2.

⁶⁸"Circular Letter," Charleston Minutes, 1830, p. 16.

Manual set forth the doctrine of vocation and practice of license and reflected the congregation's loss of initiative in selecting ministerial candidates.

By 1852, when the second edition of Crowell's work was published, the congregation's function as supervisor and nourisher of gifts had largely vanished. This role of the church had been superceded by the candidate's right to initiate action and was simply referred to as an alternative to be used in case no one presented himself. Crowell stated:

When a member of a church thinks it his duty to become a preacher of the Gospel, he makes known his feelings to his pastor, or to such brethren as he deems qualified to give advice in so important a matter.⁶⁹

The preceding change was also witnessed in the doctrine of vocation, it being one and perhaps the primary reason on which the congregation voted to grant a license to preach.

⁶⁹William Crowell, The Church Member's Manual, p. 257. The transfer of initiative had begun as early as 1833 when the New Hampshire Branch of the Northern Baptist Education Society had to urge the churches to test and prove their ministerial candidates. ". . . Our young men," the report of the committee said, "have gone forth to preach without license from their respective churches and in many instances without the approval of the church to which they belong. And such young men have been received as preachers by the churches which they have visited, without being required to present a license of approbation, or even a testimonial of regular standing." "Report of the New Hampshire Branch of the Northern Baptist Education Society," Minutes of the New Hampshire Baptist Convention (belonging to the collection of The American Baptist Historical Society; Rochester: New York), I, 1833, p. 46.

Requirements according to the New Hampshire Confession were based on New Testament passages found in Timothy and Titus.⁷⁰ But the candidate's personal apprehension of divine vocation was the determining factor. His inward call including character and life consistent with the divine vocation was the sine qua non for license and ordination to the Ministry. The church hearing the call then acted as God's medium.

. . . Among such men only, has a church the right of election, in which they are bound to act simply as the organ, or medium of expressing the Lord's will, whose gift pastors and teachers are declared to be.⁷¹

After applying for license the church on several occasions heard the candidate preach. Then if favorably impressed with his abilities, they authorized him by license to preach whenever possible.⁷² License gave the candidate authority to preach only and not to administer the Sacraments. The interval of time between license and ordination varied according to the individual congregation's discretion.

⁷⁰McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 305-6 (art. 13); Crowell, op. cit., pp. 106-7, who also cited biblical qualifications for Deacons.

⁷¹Crowell, op. cit., p. 106.

⁷²Ibid., p. 258. Crowell suggested that if a young person did not demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the Scriptures, the church give him a "testimonial," a letter stating his divine vocation to the Ministry, and recommend that he obtain further education.

The congregation's surrender of close supervision and nourishment of gifts may be attributed to two forces. First, an extreme spirit of individualism characteristic of American culture, particularly in the latter half of the Eighteenth and extending into the Nineteenth Century, which voiced the idea that a person had the inalienable right to choose his work without help or hindrance from anyone. Second, and partially as a result of the foregoing reason, there was a strong accent on a personal, divine vocation of which any testing and proving by the church would have been tantamount to profanity. Still divine vocation and congregational authority in calling out were essential to ordination.

The works of J. R. Graves and R. B. C. Howell during the Nineteenth Century in Tennessee supported the historic Baptist position on vocation and license. Yet the congregation's responsibility to nourish and prove gifts within the privacy of the church before granting a license disappeared. Graves, bolstered by an extremely independent and high doctrine of congregational authority, was of course much more outspoken than Howell on the church's right and obligation to supervise its gifts. In fact, true to his nature, he resisted the "new trend" of the age which placed the initiative for exercising gifts in the hands of

the candidate. "The churches should regard it as a part of their work," Graves stated in an address before the Mississippi Baptist Education Society, "to seek out every truly pious young man who gives promise of usefulness, and encourage him to prepare for greater usefulness. . . ." ⁷³

But even with Graves it seems that the period of private probation within the church before granting license had passed. As was to be expected, he demanded that the church have absolute authority in passing judgement on one of its candidates for the Ministry. ". . . the Church," as he said, "is the sole judge of the qualifications of candidates for her officers [sic] . . ." ⁷⁴ However, the exercising of gifts had become one of the purposes of license and was considered to be a public period of testing rather than an action carried out within the confines of the local congregation first. "It is the usage of Baptist Churches," Graves wrote in answer to a question from a subscriber, "to give a license to exercise the gift whenever and wherever God in his providence may call. . . ." ⁷⁵ Actually

⁷³J. R. Graves, The Watchman's Reply (Nashville: Published for the Tennessee Publication Society by Graves & Shankland, 1853), pp. 80-81.

⁷⁴Tennessee Baptist, July 30, 1859; "To Whom Was the Commission Given," The Baptist, Dec. 17, 1870; "Who Ordains," The Baptist, Aug. 2, 1873; "Dr. Graves's Reply to Dr. Burrow's No. VII," The Baptist, Apr. 23, 1881.

⁷⁵"Queries," Tennessee Baptist, June 14, 1856.

there was little, if any, probation before the church before license was granted. Thus license became the period of probation and exercising of gifts.⁷⁶ But Graves strongly urged that the period of license be a time of thorough, rigid testing by the church for, as he said, ". . . The fact that a brother has been licensed to preach is not proof that he has been called of God, or should be ordained. . . ." ⁷⁷ During this time of license the church should be able to judge the candidate's qualifications. He must have a divine vocation: ". . . 'the call of God,' to preach the gospel--which call is only heard in the heart of the called one . . ." ⁷⁸ In addition he must be orthodox, apt to teach and have a good character and reputation.⁷⁹ However, Graves, believing immersion by a Baptist Minister to be essential to a true church and a valid Ministry, insisted that such baptism was an absolutely necessary qualification for

⁷⁶"Queries," The Baptist, Oct. 8, 1870; "Querist," The Baptist, Apr. 20, 1878; "Questions and Answers," Tennessee Baptist, Aug. 15, 1885.

⁷⁷"Querist," The Baptist, Apr. 20, 1878.

⁷⁸"Dr. Burrows's Rejoinder, or Summing Up," The Baptist, May 7, 1881; "Queries," Tennessee Baptist, June 14, 1856; "The Apostolic Commission," The Baptist, Jan. 23, 1869; "Querist," The Baptist, Apr. 27, 1878; "Questions and Answers," The Baptist, Sept. 24, 1887.

⁷⁹"Queries," The Baptist, Dec. 23, 1871; "Questions and Answers," Tennessee Baptist, Aug. 15, 1885.

ordination. In a review of E. T. Hiscox's book, Baptist Church Directory, he complained that it had some radical defects in listing the qualifications for ordination one of them being that it ". . . does not so much as intimate whether Christian baptism is one of them. . . ." ⁸⁰ His concept of baptismal succession and church authority made it essential that a qualified candidate have Baptist immersion. ⁸¹ Thus those Ministers outside Baptist churches were not recognized as participating in a valid Ministry. Consequently none of their actions as Ministers could be considered valid.

License gave the candidate authority to preach ". . . whenever and wherever God in his providence may call, . . ." ⁸² but it did not grant the right to administer the Ordinances. ⁸³ After trial of gifts through license given by congregational authority the candidate when needed was ordained. The interval of time required for proving a licensed gift was determined by the church's judgement.

⁸⁰Editorial, Tennessee Baptist, July 30, 1859.

⁸¹"Church Authority," The Baptist, Apr. 2, 1870; "Re-Baptism--No. 3," The Baptist, Aug. 24, 1872.

⁸²"Queries," Tennessee Baptist, June 14, 1856.

⁸³"Queries," The Baptist, Oct. 8, 1870; "Querist," The Baptist, May 18, 1878.

Howell along with Graves deprecated the current trend toward hasty ordination and urged that the churches be thorough in trying a gifted man. ". . . A brother," Howell warned, "because he wished to preach, or is zealous, or can pray, or exhort well, must not necessarily, therefore, be ordained. . . ." ⁸⁴ Congregational authority was essential to license and ordination. But before ordination several qualifications were necessary. The candidate must have had a divine vocation made known to himself through ". . . a strong desire for the salvation of sinners, a readiness to make the requisite sacrifices to gain that object, and a sense of duty so to serve Christ. . . ." ⁸⁵ His divine call also had an objective side demonstrated to the congregation. The objective apprehension included the church's awareness of the candidate's religious knowledge, ". . . ability to teach, and general usefulness in the ministry." ⁸⁶ He must also be a member of the true church

⁸⁴"NOTES Not Preached, by the Pastor of the First Church in Nashville, to His People, But Which He Would Preach, If He Could, to all the Churches and Pastors in the South-West," The Baptist, Jan. 11, 1845.

Because of insufficient evidence no conclusion can be formed on Howell's attitude toward the testing of gifts within the congregation before license is granted.

⁸⁵"No. 46. The Church: Notes of a Sermon, delivered in the First Baptist Church, at Nashville," The Baptist, Oct. 25, 1845.

⁸⁶Ibid.

of Christ, i. e., a Baptist church,⁸⁷ be orthodox and have a good reputation.⁸⁸ Such a candidate being granted license by his congregation and having proved his ability and call not only to his own church but to neighbouring churches was ready for ordination. The authority given in license was to preach and assist in other helpful ways but it did not include the administration of the Ordinances.

Both Graves and Howell, conscious of growing laxness in the supervision of ministerial gifts, urged churches carefully to try their candidates even though they had experienced a divine vocation. Both believed that testimony of a divine calling did not automatically insure the gifted brother's ordination. But the individualism of the Frontier and the rapid growth and expansion of Baptist work with the urgent need for Ministers led to a relaxation of congregational authority and supervision in the probation of ministerial candidates. Thus, the primary basis of license came to be the personal testimony of the candidate that he had been called to preach. This change may be seen in Kentucky Baptist life during the Nineteenth Century.

⁸⁷Ibid. "A True Minister of Christ," The Baptist, Mar. 13, 1847; Howell, The Deaconship, pp. 99-100.

Howell's attitude toward acceptance of non-Baptist ministerial acts will be discussed in the following chapter.

⁸⁸Howell, The Deaconship, p. 100.

From the late Eighteenth Century, when the first churches were established in Kentucky, and until the 1840's when the first associational missionary work began, Baptist congregations retained strict control and supervision of gifts within their membership. During these years the church regularly sought out talented brethren by encouraging them to pray, exhort and speak on occasions other than the regular preaching service when the members gathered for edification. The discovery of gifts:

. . . may be done most effectually in the social Prayer Meeting . . . by calling on the members, first to lead in prayer, then to give an expression of their feelings and exercises on the subject of Christianity. . . . Next, invite such as exhibit gifts to conduct the meetings, and to give a word of exhortation, if they feel so disposed . . .⁸⁹

Churches without a Pastor also used the regular preaching service ". . . by which means gifts in the churches would be developed and improved . . ." ⁹⁰ Whenever a person of promising gift was discovered, as in the case of the Burks Branch Church of the Long Run Association, he was asked to speak before the congregation; then, if approved, was granted the privilege of singing, praying and exhorting with the church at "Society Meetings" [prayer meeting]

⁸⁹"Circular Letter," Baptist Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1858, pp. 4-5.

⁹⁰Elkhorn Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1836, p. 4.

within the larger boundaries of the church including sister churches. This liberty continued until the next business meeting when the church either refused or extended the candidate's privilege.⁹¹ When the church felt that a candidate had improved his gifts he was given a license to preach.⁹² Still the church kept its hands on the licensee and oftentimes revoked his credentials if either his character or preaching were questioned.⁹³ A licensed preacher

⁹¹"Minutes of the Burks Branch Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), Aug., Sept., 1816. In the case of Daniel Harris referred to above the church, in Sept., 1817, refused him permission to preach publicly on the basis of some doctrinal irregularities but it did give him the authority ". . . to sing pray and eshort when called on either before or after Preaching and to appoint and attend Society Meetings where ever in providence his lot may be cast . . ." Ibid., Sept. 1817; "Minutes of the Severn's Valley Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes microfilmed, Louisville: SBTSL), Mar., 1815; Apr., 1822. Hereafter cited "Severn's Valley Church Minutes."

⁹²The Little Flock Baptist Church, Long Run Association, had two men, James Dawson and Joshua McCawley, on trial with their gifts. In October, 1819, after having heard both men preach previously the church ordered Dawson to continue in prayer and exhortation while it licensed McCawley to preach. "Minutes of the Little Flock Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), I, Oct., 1819.

The earliest reference to the granting of a written license appears in the minutes of the Great Crossing Baptist Church, Elkhorn Association, for 1801. "Minutes of the Great Crossing Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), I, July, 1801.

⁹³The Mt. Tabor Baptist Church, Green River Association, recalled John Foster's license ". . . his not having the qualifications spoken of by the apostle Paul to Timothy and to Titus . . ." "Minutes of the Mt.

generally could preach at public worship in surrounding churches on invitation and was usually limited to the bounds of the association.⁹⁴ whereas a candidate on "trial of gifts" could preach only at informal church gatherings. When the congregation and neighbouring churches were satisfied with the licenciate's preaching and other qualifications he was ordained. Therefore, throughout this period the church carefully watched and controlled the candidate's activities and on occasion postponed ordination until the candidate was acceptable.⁹⁵ But from the late 1830's and the 1840's a distinct change occurred in the supervision of gifts. Rapid denominational growth resulted in many

Tabor Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), Nov., 1831.

The Middle Creek Church, North Bend Association, turned down the ordination of Moses Scott and Jamison Hawkins because they showed no improvement. "History of the Middle Creek Church," North Bend Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1874, p. 8; "Minutes of the Boone's Creek Church" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), Apr., 1822.

⁹⁴"Severn's Valley Church Minutes," June, 1829.

⁹⁵The Bullittsburg Baptist Church in 1795 discussed the proposed ordination of one of its members, brother Duease, but decided to postpone it because he had not improved his gift of preaching. John Taylor, a pioneer Kentucky Baptist preacher who was a member of this church at the time, objected to his ordination on the basis of an ". . . over backwardness, when he was called on to preach. . . ." The candidate concurred with the church and continued to preach whenever he was asked. A few months later the church again took up his ordination and unanimously agreed to it. John Taylor, A History of Ten Baptist Churches, pp. 129-30.

pastorless churches. The need for Ministers was acute.⁹⁶ Thus, conscious of the shortage, Baptists placed greater emphasis on divine vocation. This stress, undergirded with the individualism characteristic of the period, 1830-1860,⁹⁷ transferred the initiative for entrance to the Ministry into the hands of the candidate. Though there was no evidence of a clean break with the previous close supervision of gifts by the congregation, extant literature demonstrates that a divinely called man had the right to approach either the Pastor, Deacons or church members about being licensed. This action also meant that the strict trial of gifts before a license was granted had passed and that the period of license had become almost the only time in which gifts were exercised.

During the period of license the candidate had to demonstrate certain qualifications prior to ordination. Generally these standards were based on evidence set forth in the New Testament epistles to Timothy and Titus. But throughout the Nineteenth Century Kentucky Baptists, faithful to the Baptist tradition, held that divine vocation

⁹⁶Associational minutes reflected this condition when in their Circular Letters they called time and again for more preachers. Bethel Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1854, pp. 8-9; North Bend Minutes, 1854, p. 7; Concord Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1864, p. 4.

⁹⁷William Warren Sweet, The Story of Religion in America, pp. 373-74.

with its subjective, personal apprehension and its corporate, congregational recognition was the principal test in ordination to the Ministry. The divine call was recognized by the individual through his conviction that he should ". . . spend and be spent . . ."⁹⁸ i. e., the willingness to be expendable for the salvation of others, by a mind ". . . weighted with the worth of souls . . . [and a conviction that he must] warn sinners to flee the wrath to come. . . ." ⁹⁹ This personal perception of being called by Christ into the Ministry also was accompanied by a relentless desire and conviction that it was the candidate's duty to preach the Gospel.¹⁰⁰ These were evidences of a divine vocation but the judgement of the church in calling to the Ministry was absolutely essential. John Taylor, a pioneer preacher of Kentucky, wrote:

. . . none properly understands the gospel or voice of the shepherd, but his sheep, or the true christian. Therefore the voice of the church is very essential; in the call to the ministry . . . The church ought

⁹⁸John Taylor, op. cit., p. 223.

⁹⁹Jacob Lock, "Elder Jacob Lock's Response," The Baptist Chronicle and Literary Register, 2:125, Aug., 1831. Hereafter cited BCLR. Also for the same idea see "Circular Letter," Baptist Minutes, 1858, pp. 4-5; D. R. Campbell, "Suggestions for the Use of the Rising Ministry," Western Recorder, Mar. 1, 1859. Hereafter cited WR.

¹⁰⁰W. W. Gardner, "A Call to the Ministry," WR, De. 4, 1890.

to act under great responsibility, being accountable to the chief shepherd at his return . . .¹⁰¹

Throughout the Nineteenth Century Baptists continued to insist that the congregation had a right to judge the genuineness of a divine call¹⁰² but the thoroughness with which this was done subsided from the 1840's.

The objective aspect of divine vocation was seen in the church's consciousness of certain qualifications present in the candidate. He must be a man of moral integrity, piety and good reputation. His life and conversation should bear witness to a divine call.¹⁰³ In doctrine the candidate must be orthodox, sound and correct in faith and practice and in line with contemporary Baptist tenets.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹John Taylor, op. cit., p. 223.

¹⁰²Lock, op. cit., BCLR, 2:125, Aug., 1831; "The Rising Ministry: its Call, Qualifications, Duties, Encouragements, etc.," WR, Jan. 1, 1870. Hereafter cited "Rising Ministry." Gardner, "A Call to the Ministry," WR, Dec. 4, 1890.

¹⁰³Russell's Creek Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1814, quoted in "History of Russell's Creek Association," Russell's Creek Minutes, 1895, p. 9; "Circular Letter," Long Run Minutes, 1821, p. 5; James M. Pendleton, "An Able Ministry," The Christian Repository, 1:88, Feb., 1852; "Rising Ministry," WR, Jan. 21, 1871.

¹⁰⁴John Taylor, op. cit., p. 179; "Circular Letter," Long Run Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1821, p. 5; "Duties of Churches to Pastors," Bracken Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1855, p. 10; "Rising Ministry," WR, Jan. 28, 1871.

Orthodoxy was an essential qualification for as W. W. Gardner said:

. . . To ordain a man of unsettled and unsound views of faith or practice, not only quiets his conscience and stops investigation but it is an endorsement of his heterodoxy, and clothes him with power to spread his errors under the sanctions of the denomination.¹⁰⁵

Finally, a candidate for the Ministry must be "apt to teach." That is to say that he should possess the ability to communicate and make the Gospel applicable to life.¹⁰⁶

This ability to teach from the late 1830's came to include emphasis upon and need for an educated Ministry the purpose of which was to defend Baptist faith, interpret the Bible and enlighten the churches.¹⁰⁷ By the end of the Nineteenth

¹⁰⁵W. W. Gardner, "Qualifications for the Ministry," WR, Jan. 1, 1891.

¹⁰⁶John Taylor, op. cit., p. 179; Russell's Creek Minutes, 1814, quoted in "History of Russell's Creek Association," Russell's Creek Minutes, 1895, p. 9; "Circular Letter," Baptist Minutes, 1858, pp. 4-5.

¹⁰⁷"Circular Letter," West Union Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1860, pp. 10-11.

The earliest recognition of the need for the education of Ministers in Kentucky appeared in the minutes of the Salem Association, 1816, when a resolution was introduced to provide an associational educational fund to prepare prospective candidates. The Association did not adopt the resolution answering that it was the church's responsibility. Salem Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1816, p. 3. Then in the late 1830's associations and churches realizing the need for an educated Ministry joined in the movement. From 1840 associational minutes, periodicals, etc., constantly stressed education as a qualification for ordination. But a college education was not considered an essential qualification since a "self educated" man could be adequately

Century scholastic preparation though not essential became a prominent qualification for ministerial candidates. The report of the West Union Association's committee on ministerial education reflected a growing Baptist consciousness of such a need:

. . . Your committee would not be understood as minimizing the good old Bible doctrine of a call to the ministry, but recommend that our churches refuse to ordain men who have not the rudiments of an English education. If work is well done, it must be by one who is prepared to do it. . . .

Your committee recognizes the fact of promised help on the part of the Holy Spirit; but if one waits for God to fill his mouth, it [sic] is sure to fill it with chaff. He who will not avail himself of the opportunities afforded in this day of schools is unworthy of the ministry.¹⁰⁸

When a young man proved to have some of these qualifications and a divine vocation he was licensed to preach. Before a denominational consciousness arose among Baptists this authority was commonly limited to the neighbouring churches. But with Baptist development from the 1840's license granted to the candidate the privilege of preaching ". . . wherever, in the providence of God, his lot might be

prepared. Elkhorn Minutes, 1846, p. 5; Bethel Minutes, 1849, pp. 6-7; "Circular Letter," Baptist Minutes, 1858, pp. 4-5; "Report on Education," Bay's Fork Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1887, pp. 8-9.

¹⁰⁸"Report on Ministerial Education," West Union Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1897, pp. 9-10.

cast . . ."¹⁰⁹ However, this authority did not include administration of the Sacraments which was commonly restricted to ordained men.¹¹⁰ Ordination usually occurred when the licentiate was either called as Pastor of a church or employed in evangelistic work. Thus the duration of license depended on the need of churches or the denomination for his services. At the same time it served as a period of testing and proving one's divine call to the Ministry and his accompanying gifts. On all occasions congregational approval was necessary for license. But the initiative for entrance into the Ministry became an individual action rather than a "calling out" by the church.

The following conclusions are supported from the foregoing evidence in this chapter. Before a denominational consciousness developed in Baptist life, strict, private probation of gifts within the congregation was practiced. In this period the church with the help of

¹⁰⁹"History of New Salem Church," Nelson Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1877, p. 11. Time referred to in history is 1842. "Minutes of the Mussel Shoals Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes microfilmed, Louisville: SBTSL), Dec., 1842; "Severn's Valley Church Minutes," Apr., 1870.

¹¹⁰Salem Minutes, 1823, p. 6; "Circular Letter," Long Run Minutes, 1846, p. 7; Cumberland River Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1895, p. II.

the Holy Spirit sought out and called men into the Ministry. But the elevation of the doctrine of divine vocation coupled with a shortage of Ministers and the spirit of individualism transferred the initiative for entrance to the Ministry to the candidate. The private testing of gifts became synonymous with the granting of license which was a public time of trial in which the church in cooperation with other congregations judged a man's abilities. This was done primarily on the basis of his having a divine vocation though other qualifications such as character, piety and education were important. In all cases permission of the congregation was essential for license. License gave the candidate authority to preach publicly, but it did not include the privilege of administering the Sacraments.

CHAPTER IV

BAPTIST PRACTICE AND DOCTRINE IN ORDINATION

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Baptist practice in ordination and doctrine underlying this practice will be unfolded here. Such questions as the occasion for ordination, examination by the council, rites involved in the ordination service, the relationship between election and ordination, the authority given an ordained man, the problem of succession and the significance of ordination will be examined. This study is confined primarily to Baptist confessions of faith and manuals of discipline, the works of J. R. Graves and R. B. C. Howell and actual practice as seen in the associational minutes and periodicals of Kentucky Baptists from 1785-1900.

The earliest English General Baptist confession, A Declaration of Faith of English People promulgated by Helwys in 1611, gives little evidence for the question of Baptist practice in ordination. However, the document does furnish sufficient material to set forth the doctrine underlying ordination. Officers were elected and ordained whenever the congregation was convinced of their usefulness and qualifications.¹ There is no reference to the question of whether or not a man had to be elected to the office of

¹W. J. McGlothlin, Baptist Confessions of Faith, p. 91 (art. 21).

Pastor before he was ordained. But this procedure seems to have been the natural occasion for ordination since the office of Messenger is only hinted at in this confession; officers would not be elected and ordained unless there were a particular need within the congregation.² Also, this being the initial phase of the General Baptist movement with consequent emphasis on the congregation's right to appoint its own officers, extra-local help in examination and ordination of the candidate was considered unnecessary. Examination took the form of approbation within the church. Hence, as far as can be ascertained, there was no ministerial council to interrogate the candidate. Being strong biblicists, Helwys and his congregation adhered to simple rites in separating a man to office. Having been elected by the congregation from the membership he was set aside ". . . with Fasting, Prayer, and Laying on off [sic] hands . . ." ³

²Helwys, a member of Smyth's congregation until the separation, in a letter of September 26, 1608, made it clear that Smyth's church had only two offices, Elders or Pastors and Deacons. He approved of Smyth's position and indicated he himself was one of several Pastors or Elders in the church. Champlin Burrage, The Early English Dissenters in the Light of Recent Research, I, 235-36.

³McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 91 (art. 21); Thomas Helwys, An Advertisement or admonition unto the Congregations, which men call the New Fryelers /Freewillers/, in the lowe Countries. Writen in Dutche. And Published in Englis, printed 1611 (Baptist Publications), Reel 2, No. 2, p. 55. Hereafter cited An Advertisement; Helwys, The Mistry of

Both election by the congregation and ordination or separation to an office were commanded by Scripture and were integral parts of the church's choosing process;⁴ from the drift of the confession any deviation from this procedure would make the action defective. Since any appointed church member could administer the Ordinances or perform any other act of worship for the congregation⁵ extra-local help was unnecessary. The sense of denominational consciousness and community among General Baptists had not appeared. Consequently, the feeling of cooperativeness inherent in denominational life and an extra-local view of the Ministry did not move these early Baptists to look upon ordination from the denominational level and require outside help.

The service of ordination in which a man was set apart to minister was understood to be the work of the entire congregation. Though selected representatives of the church actually led in prayer and laid on hands the whole fellowship through its appointed members ordained the candidate. The congregation actually performed ordination. The election, appointment and ordination or separation

Iniquity (Anno 1612, with an Introduction by H. Wheeler Robinson. London: The Kingsgate Press, Published for the Baptist Historical Society, 1935), p. 89.

⁴Helwys, An Advertisement, p. 55.

⁵McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 89 (art. 11).

of an officer was the responsibility of the church. Helwys in The Mistery of Iniquity sharply defined the congregation's part:

. . . all this [election and ordination] was performed and done by, and in that Congregation whereof they were chosen Officers, the Church or Congregation being in this holy maner assembled together to performe this . . . ordinance all fasting and praing to the lord with one hart and soule to give a blessing unto that his owne Ordinance.⁶

As stated above any member of the church, whether or not he was an officer, if he were appointed by the congregation, could participate in ordination. This privilege included the rite of laying on of hands which Helwys did not restrict to a particular class. The power or authority to ordain did not come through Elders by succession but from Christ's presence in the congregation in His Word and Power.⁷ Even two or three Christians who gathered in the name of Christ were the people of God and church of Christ and thus without officers had a right to Christ and his Ordinances.⁸

⁶Helwys, The Mistery of Iniquity, p. 91.

⁷Helwys, An Advertisement, pp. 54-55.

⁸Ibid., p. 35. In 1610, Helwys along with eight others separated from John Smyth's congregation because of a disagreement on several points, one of which was the problem of succession. Smyth sometime in 1610 had come to believe that God was a God of order and in an effort to restore primitive Christianity had said in his "Propositions and Conclusions . . ." printed in 1611 that ". . . it is not lawfull for every brother to administer the word and sacraments . . ." W. T. Whitley (ed.), The Works of John Smyth (Tercentenary edition for The Baptist Historical Society;

Ordination, including the custom of laying on of hands with fasting and prayer, meant the holy separation of a man to office. It gave him authority granted by the congregation to perform the functions of his office, i. e., preach the Word, administer the Sacraments and exercise general oversight of the flock.⁹ Being ". . . a holy ordinance of God, . . ." ¹⁰ ordination was a dedication by the congregation expressing the will of God through the

Cambridge: at the University Press, 1915), II, 747 (art. 81). Hereafter cited Works. Helwys answered Smyth in A Declaration of Faith of English People Remaining at Amsterdam in Holland by charging that Smyth was unable to prove that Church and Ministry must come through succession and that an Elder's authority extended beyond the local congregation. Thomas Helwys, A Declaration of Faith of English People Remaining at Amsterdam in Holland (Baptist Publications), Reel 32, No. 15, /n.p./. Thus Helwys and Smyth parted. But before Smyth's death in 1612 he published "The Last Booke of Iohn Smith Called the Re-tractation of His Errours, and the Confirmation of the Truth." In this work he agreed with Helwys that where succession had been interrupted and broken the authority to establish a true church resided in two or three persons gathered in the name of Christ. But where a true Ministry and church existed with the orderly administration of the Sacraments a group of Christians did not have the right to constitute themselves into a church but must receive baptism from an orderly Ministry. Smyth had discovered an orderly Ministry and baptism in the Waterland Mennonites. Whitley (ed.), Works, II, 756-57. Helwys rejecting the authority involved in ministerial succession placed the power to elect and ordain in the congregation per se; Smyth located it in the Elders of a true church.

⁹McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 91 (art. 22).

¹⁰Helwys, The Mistery of Iniquity, p. 90.

church that this particular man had been appointed by God and the membership to supervise and lead the flock. It was a petition to God for a divine blessing on the officer.¹¹ The ritual of ordination and especially the laying on of hands carried no hint of divine grace being given through the presence of officiating members.

The next three confessions, The Faith and Practise of Thirty Congregations, The True Gospel-faith and the Standard Confession issued respectively by General Baptists in 1651, 1654 and 1660 during the Civil War--Commonwealth Period contain only passing reference to the practice and doctrine of ordination.¹² Messengers,¹³ Elders and Deacons were elected and ordained to office when a need for their services arose.¹⁴ In 1652 the church at Hexham ordained Edward Hickhorngill a Minister and Messenger to Scotland

¹¹Ibid., p. 91.

¹²Church minutes either lost or destroyed before this period because of persecution became available from 1640-1660; therefore, they supplemented and supported confessional evidence.

¹³These officers were in use by 1654. See William Latane Lumpkin, "The Local Baptist Confessions of Faith of the Civil War--Commonwealth Period . . .," Appendix E, pp. 4-5 (art. 22). Hereafter cited "Local Baptist Confessions."

¹⁴McGlothlin, op. cit., Faith and Practise, p. 105 (art. 58); Standard Confession, p. 113 (art. 5). Since both of the preceding confessions are found in McGlothlin and used jointly here the foregoing abbreviations will be employed to distinguish between them.

for the purpose of spreading the Gospel.¹⁵ One year later the Fenstanton Church ordained Henry Denne ". . . a messenger to divulge the gospel of Jesus Christ."¹⁶ The latter appointment was made after Denne spoke to the congregation and pointed out the need of surrounding villages to be evangelized.¹⁷ Elders and Deacons were ordained under similar circumstances. In 1657. the church at Wisbeach chose both Elders and Deacons as officers and had them ordained by outside help.¹⁸ The church of Easton, Welbey and Westby, in 1654, had written a letter to Fenstanton seeking mediation of a quarrel and signed the correspondence along with five other names "JOHN ALLEIN, Pastor. WILLIAM EVERT, Elder."¹⁹ Though the evidence is scarce it seems that at least one man and sometimes two were elected to the pastoral office and ordained along with other men serving as Elders.²⁰ All of these men

¹⁵E. B. Underhill (ed.), Records of the Churches of Christ, Gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys, and Hexham, p. 291. Hereafter cited Fenstanton Records, Warboys or Hexham as appropriate.

¹⁶Fenstanton Records, p. 72.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 71-72.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 157.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 137.

²⁰Taylor says that Edmund Mayle and John Denne were co-Pastors or joint Elders of the church at Fenstanton. Adam Taylor, The History of the English General Baptists, I, 147.

shared in the responsibility of directing the congregation. Thus, whenever the Pastor was imprisoned the other Elders supervised the church.

None of the three confessions mentioned specifies the officer or persons taking part in the ordination service and the laying on of hands. But it is clear from them that it was the church which ordained and not an individual or individuals.²¹ During this period, practice varied from church to church. The church at Hexham, in 1652, ordained a Messenger and a Deacon with only the church's Minister present and leading the service.²² But, in 1655, when the Warboys Church elected two Elders and two Deacons they requested and received aid in ordination from the Fenstanton Church which sent over two Elders.²³ Then the church at Fenstanton, in 1656, separated one Elder and two Deacons for service in the congregation. These three were ordained

²¹McGlothlin, op. cit., Faith and Practise, pp. 105-6 (arts. 58, 59, 64); Standard Confession, p. 113 (art. 5); Lumpkin, "Local Baptist Confessions," Appendix E, pp. 4-5 (art. 24).

²²Hexham Records, p. 291. In 1653 Henry Denne was appointed and ordained a Messenger by the Fenstanton Church but the minutes do not give any hint as to whether or not an officer was present. Fenstanton Records, p. 72.

²³Warboys Records, p. 272. These same records for 1647, p. 269, show that the church had elected an Elder and a Deacon. Yet no reference is made to their assistance in the ordination referred to above.

by the Elders of their own church.²⁴ In the same year the church at Streatham, though it already had an Elder in the congregation requested the Fenstanton Church to send an Elder to aid in the ordination of officers it had chosen.²⁵ Thus, two aspects of General Baptist practice were set forth. In all cases the churches thought that the presence and help of an Elder was necessary in the ordination service. Yet, if a church had an Elder within its membership it did not consider extra-local aid essential.

The examination of a candidate for ordination by a ministerial council was used by some churches during the Civil War--Commonwealth Period. But the practice was not widespread.²⁶ The approbation or trial of a candidate within the church was generally considered ample time for a congregation to judge his abilities and doctrinal tenets. However, the Fenstanton Church in 1656, after it had elected an Elder, had the Elders of the congregation examine the candidate ". . . touching his judgment in many necessary things; especially those things which are matters of controversy in many congregations. . . ." ²⁷ The interrogation

²⁴Fenstanton Records, pp. 187-88.

²⁵Ibid., p. 195.

²⁶Taylor, op. cit., I, 416-17. The reason for such a council was the extreme care taken by some churches to prevent unqualified persons from entering office.

²⁷Fenstanton Records, p. 188.

in this case included particular emphasis on practices adhered to by the church, i. e., the laying on of hands after baptism, observance of a "love feast" before the Lord's Supper and the rejection of mixed marriage, the marriage of a church member outside the General Baptist faith. If the candidate answered the questions to the satisfaction of the Elders and congregation, as Christopher Marriatt did here, he was ordained.²⁸ The questions referred to demonstrated that current issues in doctrine and practice, particularly where there was controversy or disagreement, were usually the subjects for close examination. But the important and significant element in the above example is that the interrogation of the candidate was carried out in the presence of the congregation and not privately by the Elders. Ordination was by the church and thus, the membership was vitally and intrinsically concerned with and related to the ordinand.

After election by the congregation, and in some instances an examination by the Elders, the candidate for either the office of Deacon or Elder was ordained before the church. The ritual embraced three usages: fasting, prayer and the laying on of hands. The Faith and Practise

²⁸Ibid. This is the only record of an ordination examination found in the extant minutes of five General Baptist churches: Fenstanton, Warboys, Hexham, Ford or Cuddington and Amersham.

of Thirty Congregations, The True Gospel-faith and the Standard Confession specified these steps in separation to office.²⁹ Usually the occasion of an ordination was set aside as a day of fasting and prayer in which the assembled congregation asked of God wisdom and discretion and prayed that He would fit the officers for the work to which He had called them.³⁰ The foregoing was true of the Fenstanton Church which adhered to the following procedure. After a period of fasting and prayer one of the members, probably an Elder, in a scriptural message pointed out the necessity of officers, their qualifications and duties. Then the church reaffirmed its election of the candidate or candidates. Next they were examined by the Elders. If the church found the candidate or candidates acceptable, the Elders first prayed for them and then ordained them by the laying on of hands.³¹ With the exception of the examination this constituted the general course of an ordination service. It was always simple in form and direct in its appeal to God for his blessing and power on the church and officers. General Baptists consistently used

²⁹McGlothlin, op. cit., Faith and Practise, p. 108 (art. 73), Standard Confession, p. 113 (art. 5); Lumpkin, "Local Baptist Confessions," Appendix E, pp. 4-5 (art. 23).

³⁰Fenstanton Records, pp. 72, 157; Hexham Records, p. 291.

³¹Fenstanton Records, pp. 188-89.

fasting, prayer and the laying on of hands in separation of a man to office. However, the use of the examination was confined to a few churches.

During this period General Baptists when thinking in terms of ordination closely connected election with ordination and refused to separate the two. Both practices were rooted in the doctrine of congregational authority and were essential in separation of a man to office. Use of either phase of the separation, election or the ordination service, without the other would have been considered irregular and incomplete. The Faith and Practise of Thirty Congregations, the Standard Confession and The True Gospel-faith spoke of election and ordination as the scriptural and proper method of appointment to office.³² In some cases election was held on the day of ordination and in others it preceded by a month or more the actual service. The Fenstanton Church, in August, 1653, ordained Henry Denne a Messenger but the election preceded the day of ordination.³³ The churches at Warboys and Wisbeach in letters requesting aid from Fenstanton mentioned that they had already chosen officers but desired the help

³²McGlothlin, op. cit., Faith and Practise, pp. 105, 108 (arts. 58, 73), Standard Confession, p. 113 (art. 5); Lumpkin, op. cit., pp. 4-5 (art. 23).

³³Fenstanton Records, p. 72.

of Fenstanton in the ceremony.³⁴ Though the interval of time varied between election and actual ordination General Baptists refused to consider the events as two separate acts. Ordination and election were a unit. The two phases of the process were so fused in the thought of these Baptists that The Faith and Practise of Thirty Congregations and the Standard Confession spoke of ordination as an appointing or setting apart with fasting, prayer and the laying on of hands³⁵ while The True Gospel-faith required that men ". . . be chosen by fasting and prayer, with the laying on of hands . . ."³⁶

Additionally, there was no question of any grace being conferred in the imposition of hands. Episcopal consecration was entirely foreign to the General Baptist mind. All authority necessary for ordination lay within the congregation since it was gathered in His Name. Believers, not "officers," constituted the church.

Ordination was the consummation of the Holy Spirit's activity in and through the congregation which chose, separated and thus publicly declared that a candidate had

³⁴Ibid., pp. 152, 155, 157.

³⁵McGlothlin, op. cit., Faith and Practise, pp. 105, 108 (arts. 58, 73), Standard Confession, p. 113 (art. 5).

³⁶Italics not in the original. Lumpkin, op. cit., pp. 4-5 (art. 23).

been divinely called by God and the church to its service.³⁷ This was a divine commission expressing the will of God in the congregation and the individual. This commission gave the candidate authority to administer the Lord's Supper and Baptism. Yet, this authority was limited by the will of the church.

The practice and doctrine of ordination set forth above were followed by General Baptists from the Restoration of 1660 to the end of the century. In 1678 the Orthodox Creed and Thomas Grantham's Christianismus Primitivus were published. These documents along with records of the General Assembly and various churches amplified General Baptist practice and thought underlying ordination.

Though the Orthodox Creed did not mention the occasion for ordination it was performed whenever a congregation needed an Elder or a Pastor or several churches saw the usefulness of a Messenger. In 1678 the church at Amersham ordained Nicklas Bennet as an Elder to assist the Pastor, David Jemson, in the work.³⁸ Following this ordination, in 1687, Bourne Baptist Church of Lincolnshire

³⁷Fenstanton Records, p. 189.

³⁸W. T. Whitley (ed.), The Church Books of Ford or Cuddington and Amersham in the County of Bucks (London: Baptist Historical Society, 1912), p. 215. Hereafter cited Ford or Amersham as appropriate.

ordained Joseph Hooke as a co-Pastor with Thomas Lawson. Nine years later this same Hooke, at the urgent request of the churches in Lincolnshire, was ordained their Messenger and from that time ". . . stood equally related, as a General Pastor, to all the Churches that own him in his office."³⁹ Thus, ordination as a Deacon, Elder or Messenger occurred only when a definite need arose within the congregation, among several churches or in an unevangelized area. Ordination was not performed simply because a man had exceptional talents. However, whenever local or extra-local need prompted ordination to either the office of Messenger, Elder or Deacon, an ordained Messenger or Elder was necessary. The Orthodox Creed stipulated that ordinarily a Messenger had to be separated to office by another Messenger; that an Elder was to be ordained by the Messenger in charge of the candidate's church.⁴⁰ This requirement implied that the power of ordination lay in the hands of Messengers alone. But this was not true. Thomas Grantham wrote in Christianismus Primitivus that though Messengers:

³⁹F. J. Mason, "The Old Minute Book of Bourne Baptist Church," The Baptist Quarterly incorporating the Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society (New Series; London: Baptist Union Publication Department, and The Carey Kingsgate Press), 15:226-27, 1953-1954. Hereafter cited "Minute Book," BQ. Hereafter referred to as BQ.

⁴⁰McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 147 (art. 31).

. . . are in a regular capacity to ordain Elders in Congregations newly planted, which have no Officers; yet where the Churches have an Eldership, there they are in a capacity to ordain their own Officers; yea, they may send forth Messengers . . .⁴¹

It was customary, however, for churches approaching an ordination service to request a Messenger to be present for the ritual. If he could not attend, an Elder was sufficient and orderly. When Joseph Hooke was ordained Elder of the Baptist church at Bourne in 1687, Thomas Grantham, Messenger of the churches in Lincolnshire, laid hands on him.⁴² Yet, in 1684, when the Warboys Church had an Elder and Deacon ordained the laying on of hands was done by John Denne and Edmund Mayle, Elders from the church at Fenstanton.⁴³ The assistance of either a Messenger or Elder was necessary for ordination. In actual practice this method was the regular and approved way of separation to an office. Theoretically the congregation had the right, as it had in Helwys' time, to ordain without the help of an Elder or Messenger; but such action in the last three decades of the Seventeenth Century would

⁴¹Thomas Grantham, Christianismus Primitivus, Book IV, Fifth Treatise, p. 165. Hereafter cited Christianismus.

⁴²"Minute Book," BQ, 15:226, 1953-1954.

⁴³Warboys Records, p. 280. In 1676 the church at Amersham through its Pastor, David Jemson, ordained without extra-local help two Deacons. Amersham Records, p. 207.

have been considered by General Baptists to be extremely irregular and a violation of proper order. By the early years of the Eighteenth Century the General Assembly shared with churches the power of ordaining Messengers.⁴⁴

The ritual of ordination prescribed by Thomas Helwys was followed by General Baptists during this period. Both the Orthodox Creed and Grantham's Christianismus Primitivus declared that the scriptural method of separation to an office was performed with fasting, prayer and the laying on of hands.⁴⁵ This method was observed in the service of ordination for a Messenger, Elder and Deacon. Usually the day of ordination was set aside as a day of fasting.⁴⁶ In case a Messenger was being ordained the churches which had elected him joined in the fast day. When Joseph Hooke was ordained a Messenger, in 1696, all the churches of the Lincolnshire Association kept a solemn fast ". . . to implore the blessing of God upon the said Ordination. . . ."47 Before the assembled congregation and representative

⁴⁴W. T. Whitley (ed.), Minutes of the General Assembly of the General Baptist Churches in England, with Kindred Records, I, 1711, pp. 116-17. Centralization of authority had taken place. Hereafter cited MGA.

⁴⁵McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 146-47 (art. 31); Christianismus, Part II, Second Treatise, Chap. 9, p. 131.

⁴⁶Amersham Records, p. 215; Ford Records, p. 8.

⁴⁷"Minute Book," BQ, 15:227, 1953-1954.

Messengers or Elders the election was reconfirmed, Scripture read, prayer offered and a sermon preached.⁴⁸ Hands were laid on the candidate by the Messenger or Messengers, Elder or Elders who were present. The service was simple but its tenor was solemn and serious since this event was the expression of the Divine Will.

As noted above election to office was oftentimes reconfirmed if it took place before the day of ordination thus indicating the close tie between the two. The Orthodox Creed considered ordination to be by God's appointment and the church's election. The divine method of appointment to office was election by the congregation and separation by fasting, prayer and the laying on of hands.⁴⁹ Grantham also believed the congregation's right of election to be an essential part of ordination for, as he said, ". . . none are ordained to any Office in the Baptized Churches, till elected by the Consent of the Church, or at least the Major part . . ." ⁵⁰ The doctrine underlying this concept of ordination found its power and justification in the nature of the church. Reception of the Gospel by believers brought with it the bestowal of Gifts, i. e., persons with ability,

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹McGlothlin, op. cit., pp. 146-47 (art. 30).

⁵⁰Christianismus, Part II, Second Treatise, Chap. 9, p. 130.

by the Holy Spirit. Wherever this occurred there was a ". . . sufficiency of power also on the Persons so gifted with the Advice and Consent of the Church, to send forth, or to appoint men to the work of the Ministry . . ." ⁵¹ Thus, Grantham set forth the basis for rejection of episcopal succession and ordination. But he was quick to warn against ". . . the contempt or neglect of that way which is more ordinary and regular. . . ." ⁵² Separation to office by an Elder or Messenger was necessary and regular but not essential to the continued life of the church. Hence, in the laying on of hands no grace or capacity to administer the Sacraments was transferred. Ordination publicly performed by the congregation through Messengers and Elders was the sign of a ". . . Trust and Office . . ." ⁵³ and a delegation of power committed to the ordinand by the church. ⁵⁴ Having been ordained Messengers and Elders could baptize and administer the Lord's

⁵¹Ibid., pp. 130-31.

⁵²Ibid., p. 131. Grantham was attacking episcopal consecration at this point but he was also conscious of the need for order and regularity among the General Baptists. This is why though he rejects episcopal succession and ordination and declares that where the Gospel is received in truth there is the right to ordain, he urges ordination by the hands of ordained men.

⁵³Ibid., p. 124.

⁵⁴Ibid., Chap. 7, p. 93.

Supper. But celebration of the Supper was restricted to the Pastor of the church since he only was scripturally commanded to feed the flock.⁵⁵

General Baptists, at least from the middle of the Seventeenth Century, held that separation of a candidate to office by an ordained man was necessary for proper order and regularity. Ordination occurred whenever the need for a disciple's services arose. The factor which determined ordination was that the ordinand be elected by the congregation, not that he be chosen to the pastoral office. In a few cases preceding the actual ordination examination of the candidate was conducted before the congregation. But always since it was the church that always ordained, the entire ritual was performed in the presence and with the consent of the church. This occasion was a public expression of the Divine Will and concurrence of the congregation both of which were focused in the laying on of hands. Ordination attested that the church had

⁵⁵Ibid. A Messenger could administer the Lord's Supper in unevangelized areas and in churches which had elected him to office. Since he was their General Pastor he was scripturally qualified to feed the flock. Only baptism could be administered by a gifted disciple, an unordained man. Grantham cited the case of the eunuch, Acts 8. To permit an unordained man to administer the Lord's Supper would ". . . make Ordination an insignificant Trifle; and every man to have the same power in the dispensation of Ordinances . . ." Ibid., p. 94. The General Assembly meeting in 1693, 1700 and 1702 supported this conclusion. MGA, I, 1693, 1700, 1702, pp. 39, 67, 70.

entrusted the ordinand with office and authority to jointly govern with it and to administer the Sacraments. The presence and participation of Elders from other congregations symbolized their concurrence in the church's action and fellowship with members who belonged to the Church.

The earliest Particular Baptist declaration of faith, the First London Confession of 1644, furnished little information for understanding the practice and doctrine of ordination among Particular Baptists.⁵⁶ The occasion for ordination during this early period arose whenever a man was elected to office by the congregation. The church, conscious of its need for leadership and edification, chose or elected a candidate to the office of either Elder or Deacon. This right and process was the important element. In fact, the First London Confession did not mention ordination but rather placed emphasis upon the congregation's right to choose its officers.⁵⁷ Neither did it think outside help from Elders necessary since Christ had given every church the authority to select

⁵⁶Because the Particular Baptist movement was in its incipient stage and England was disturbed by civil war few records apart from the First London Confession are available as supportive evidence. Under Cromwell's Protectorate sufficient information appears for accurate judgement. Practice and doctrine were in their formative stages.

⁵⁷McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 184 (art. 36).

its officers.⁵⁸ Examination of the candidate assumed the form of approbation within the congregation. Since ordination was not mentioned prayer, fasting and laying on of hands, ritual accompanying the act, failed to appear in the confession. The silence of the confession on these points may have been due to the fear of episcopal consecration which involved the acceptance of succession and sacramental grace.

The outstanding feature of this confession is that it insisted that election to office by the church was the sine qua non of appointment. However, since it did not speak out against ordination it laid the basis for the development of two Particular Baptist views: one, that ordination is dispensable to holding office and two, that election and ordination are the necessary and regular method of appointment. As will be seen, by the end of the Seventeenth Century this latter view predominated and was accepted as the normal practice.

This view had already appeared in 1646, in Benjamin Cox's An Appendix to a Confession of Faith and can be found as early as 1641. In that year the Hubbard-How-More Church, worshipping in London, ". . . chose out among themselves, & pitched upon Stephen More . . . & did freely Elect, Choose

⁵⁸Ibid.

& Ordain him . . ." ⁵⁹ as Pastor. The church in this case did not call other churches to its assistance but relied on the authority invested by Christ in the congregation to ordain its own officers. The minutes of the church gave no hint as to whether or not fasting, prayer and the laying on of hands were used in the separation. Neither did they disclose whether or not an Elder of the church, if any, was present at the ordination. However, in Cox's Appendix the ritual involved in ordination and the trend toward extra-local assistance from Elders appeared. The Elders of congregations

. . . may call upon the churches, and advise them to choose fit men for officers, and may settle such officers so chosen by a church, in the places or offices to which they are chosen, by imposition of hands and prayer . . . ⁶⁰

Ordination was performed with prayer and the laying on of hands by Elders or, as Cox called them, "gifted disciples."⁶¹ But the congregation elected the candidate to office. This

⁵⁹"The Hubbard-How-More Church," ed. W. T. Whitley, Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society (London: Baptist Union Publication Department), 2:41, 1910-1911. Hereafter cited "Hubbard-How-More," Transactions.

⁶⁰Benjamin Cox, "An Appendix to a Confession of Faith," Confessions of Faith, and other Public Documents, Illustrative of the History of the Baptist Churches of England in the 17th Century, ed. Edward Bean Underhill, pp. 58-59 (art. 19). Hereafter cited "An Appendix," Conf. of Faith.

⁶¹Ibid.

procedure was the salient feature whereas the ordination was a means of "settling" or publicly designating the ordinand as serving God in the congregation. Also, the Appendix by its advice to Elders to call upon churches and assist in ordination reflected a concept of the Ministry overreaching the local church. Underlying this view, though it recognized the right and authority of congregations to choose their own officers, was the belief that the Ministry was Christ's representing both the church and the Church. Therefore, ordination represented the approval, sanction, interest and blessing of fellow churches and ministries.

Thus, several theories of ordination emerged during this period. The first one, found in the First London Confession, held that election was equivalent to ordination and the omission of the latter process did not invalidate the congregation's appointment to office. The second held that ordination with fasting and prayer was the proper method of separation to office. The laying on of hands was omitted as a rejection of the practice of episcopal consecration and the doctrine of apostolical succession. The third held that ordination with fasting, prayer and the imposition of hands was the proper method of separation to office. Here the laying on of hands demonstrated the public approval, blessing and interest of like-minded churches and their ministries. Men thus elected and

ordained by one of the three methods had the authority to administer Baptism and, provided they were Pastors of the church, preside over the Lord's Supper.⁶²

During the Commonwealth three Particular Baptist confessions of faith were published: Thomas Collier's The Right Constitution and True Subjects of the Visible Church of Christ in 1654, the Somerset Confession of 1656 and John Myles' An Antidote Against the Infection of the Times in 1656. These declarations helped interpret Particular Baptist practice and doctrine.

None of the three confessions referred directly to the occasion for an ordination. Particular Baptist practice during this time fluctuated. Still, Collier's Right Constitution implied that election and ordination took place when the congregation needed a Ministry.⁶³ In 1655 the Porton Baptist Church in Wiltshire appointed three men ". . . orderly and by course to administer ye ordinances

⁶²McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 184 (art. 36); "An Appendix," Confes. of Faith, pp. 58-59. Baptism could be administered by an Elder or "preaching Disciple" but the Lord's Supper was reserved only for those holding a pastoral relationship to the church. The Broadmead Church of Bristol had not celebrated Communion for two years since they were ". . . not in a settled way with a pastor over them . . ." E. B. Underhill (ed.), The Records of a Church of Christ Meeting in Broadmead, Bristol (1640-1687), 1642, pp. 29-30. Hereafter cited Broadmead Records.

⁶³Thomas Collier, The Right Constitution and True Subjects of the Visible Church of Christ, pp. 19-20. Hereafter cited as Right Constitution.

as often as called for . . ." ⁶⁴ These men served as co-Pastors of the church. But there was no indication from the records that ordination was used unless it was implied in the words, "orderly and by course." Four years earlier the Broadmead Church of Bristol called Thomas Ewins as its Pastor. He had already been ordained as Pastor over the church of Llanvaches in Wales. But, in 1662 he was ordained again; this time as Pastor of the church at Broadmead. ⁶⁵ Ordination was oftentimes repeated during this period as a means of "settling" a man in office. Yet, in some churches though ordination was common practice it was not believed to be essential to holding office. The Broadmead Church never ordained Thomas Hardcastle though it had intended to. The church considered election to be the essence of ordination. ⁶⁶ Nevertheless, its use as a means and sign of appointment to office was much more common than

⁶⁴"Porton Baptist Church, 1655-1685," ed. Arthur Tucker, Transactions, 1:56.

⁶⁵Broadmead Records, 1645, 1662, pp. 37, 72.

⁶⁶Ibid., 1678, p. 383. Hardcastle was not ordained by the Broadmead Church because it had been involved in a controversy with Jessey's church in London. The London church had accused Broadmead of stealing its Pastor and would not grant a letter of dismissal to Hardcastle. Therefore, the Broadmead Church though it had intended to ordain Hardcastle dispensed with the ceremony saying that election not "order" was the indispensable element in appointment to office. Broadmead Records, 1678, pp. 380-84 gives a partial account of the controversy.

its neglect. The question of whether or not a man had to be called to the office of Pastor before he was ordained cannot be settled from available evidence.

Each of the three confessions advised that Ministers or Elders should be present and participate in the ordination of an Elder.⁶⁷ These treatises spoke of the Elder's presence as a part of the proper method in separating a man to office. Generally this practice was followed. Broadmead, in 1662, when it ordained Thomas Ewins as Pastor and also separated one man to the office of Ruling Elder and another as a Deacon had several Ministers on hand for the occasion.⁶⁸ The church at Hitchin ordained John Wilson as its Pastor in 1667. At this ceremony there were present three Elders from London and one from Bedford.⁶⁹ Whenever convenient, Elders from neighbouring churches participated in the ordination. Their presence demonstrated the concurrence of their congregations and approval of the Ministry in the work and call of the ordinand.

⁶⁷ Collier, Right Constitution, p. 34; McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 211 (art. 31); John Myles, An Antidote Against the Infection of the Times, p. 23. Hereafter cited Antidote.

⁶⁸ Broadmead Records, 1662, pp. 72-73. Two Ministers and the Pastor were present in 1667 when the church separated two men to the office of Ruling Elder. Ibid., 1667, p. 91.

⁶⁹ Joseph Ivimey, A History of the English Baptists, II, 194.

The service of ordination during this period was very simple. Fasting and prayer were regularly used but practice varied on the imposition of hands. Examination of the candidate was not mentioned. Both the Right Constitution and the Somerset Confession provided that ordination should be observed with fasting, prayer and the laying on of hands;⁷⁰ Myles' Antidote remained silent on the method of separation. Yet, Collier was careful to insist that the essence of the ordination ritual centered in the fasting and prayer rather than the laying on of hands. Ordination was:

. . . a giving up to the work by fasting and prayer being the essence of the work, Laying on of hands being 1. a formall resignation by the authority and in the presence of the Church; 2. by the doing of this act with the former (viz.) fasting and prayer, there may be the exercise of faith in the expectation of an increase of the gifts of the Spirit, and fitness to the work of the ministry . . .⁷¹

In some circles Particular Baptists had strong misgivings about using imposition of hands. The Western Baptist Association discussed the question in 1656, and eleven Ministers objected to the rite.⁷² In 1662 at the

⁷⁰Collier, Right Constitution, p. 33; McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 211 (art. 31).

⁷¹Collier, op. cit., p. 33.

⁷²W. Fisher, "The Baptists of Hatch Beauchamp," BQ, 12:34, 1946-1948.

ordination of Thomas Ewins referred to above⁷³ the Broadmead Church had planned to use fasting, prayer and the laying on of hands but it ". . . was not imposed or practised, though intended, through the backwardness of one of the ministers then present, namely, Mr. Blinman . . ." ⁷⁴ Thus, there was no agreement in practice of the rite even though two of the confessions of this period advised its use. Objection to imposition of hands stemmed largely from Baptist Ministers who at one time had been parish Pastors in the Established Church in which imposition of hands by the Bishop meant that authority and power had been delegated through episcopal succession.⁷⁵ Baptists would not tolerate such an idea. To them laying on of hands signified that the church had given a trust and responsibility to the officers ordained; that sister churches shared in the prayer and blessing hoped for by the ordaining church. By the end of the century withholding the rite in ordination was disorderly and irregular.

Through this period election by the church was basic in separation to an office. In some cases the ordination ceremony was not used but election of the candidate to the

⁷³Supra, p. 203.

⁷⁴Broadmead Records, 1662, pp. 72-73.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 73, footnote #6.

office was always employed. The congregation believed that its action in election was the prerequisite for office in the church. Collier said that some churches interpreted Acts 6:3, 5; 14:23 as meaning to ordain ". . . Elders by election or lifting up of hands . . ." ⁷⁶ In 1674, when Thomas Hardcastle was chosen Pastor of the Broadmead Church, the members voted their consent ". . . by their lifting up their right hands to the Lord . . ." ⁷⁷ The ordination ceremony never occurred but Hardcastle served as the church's Pastor and administered the Ordinances. This was an unusual case. Few churches omitted the ordination ritual. Instead they thought of election and ordination as the scriptural and orderly method of appointment to office. The Right Constitution, Somerset Confession and Antidote specified that the method of calling to office was by election and ordination. ⁷⁸

Once appointment to office had been completed Elders were given certain authority centering in administration of the Sacraments. The three confessions of this period

⁷⁶Collier, Right Constitution, p. 32.

⁷⁷Broadmead Records, 1674, p. 197. The church thinking back over Hardcastle's election said that ". . . Ordination, by laying on of hands for order, may be done at convenience." Ibid., 1678, p. 383.

⁷⁸Collier, Right Constitution, pp. 32-33; McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 211 (art. 31); Myles, Antidote, p. 23.

made no reference to the authority given in ordination. But a few church records demonstrated a divergence of practice. Two of the Pastors, Henry Pen and John Rede, appointed by the Porton Baptist Church in 1655 to administer the Ordinances had not been ordained, at least by the laying on of hands.⁷⁹ For approximately twenty-five years they had administered without ordination. The Broadmead Church, though it had a Mr. Jennings who regularly administered Baptism for the church, would not celebrate the Lord's Supper unless its Pastor was presiding.⁸⁰ Jennings was ordained and had been sent out as a Minister by the Baptist church in Gloucester.⁸¹ Only the Pastor or Pastors of the congregation presided over the Lord's Supper. The authority for this action was given in appointment to office usually through ordination but sometimes only through election. Baptism on the other hand could be performed by a member, an ordained man, not elected to the pastoral office. The important factor was that in all

⁷⁹W. T. Whitley, "Early Baptists in Hampshire," BQ, 1:224, 1922-1923. The Particular Baptist Assembly met in Bristol, 1679, and advised that they be ordained by imposition of hands.

⁸⁰Broadmead Records, 1670, 1671, pp. 97, 164. After the Pastor, Thomas Ewins, was released from prison he was often ill. He moved along with the members that Jennings be appointed a "teacher" of the congregation and administrator of Baptism. This was done and Jennings administered Baptism in the church approximately twenty years. Ibid., 1673, pp. 195.

⁸¹Ibid., 1675, p. 396.

cases the administrator of either the Lord's Supper or Baptism have the approval and appointment of the church. Generally, administration was confined to the Elders.

Thus, in the eyes of the church ordination carried marked significance. A man had been called by God and the congregation to assume a sacred trust as leader and servant. Fasting, prayer and imposition of hands by the Elders on behalf of the congregation simultaneously meant a devotion of the ordinand to God and his ministry and a seeking of His blessing on the church and its servants. During the Restoration and Toleration Periods the significance of ordination was clearly highlighted in the ordination service.

These periods saw development of more consistent practice and doctrine among Particular Baptists. From the evidence the actual occasion for ordination cannot be settled. Whether or not a man had to be called to the office of Pastor before he was ordained is not clear. The statements of faith in this period, the Second London or Assembly Confession of 1677 and William Mitchill's Jachin & Boaz of 1707, and church records failed to furnish the answer. However, the general attitude among Particular Baptists was that an ordained man was necessary for the pastoral office. This was true because the administration of the Sacraments was usually restricted to

ordained men.⁸² The church at Kensworth having one of its Pastors die in 1694, elected a Mr. Britaine from the membership and ". . . charge d our brother Britaine to assist brother Hardinge in breaking of bread, and in the administration of ordinances in any part of this congregation."⁸³ The term, charging, referred to the ordination of the candidate into the pastoral office. The church considered ordination necessary for the performance of pastoral duties.

The Second London Confession and Jachin & Boaz strongly recommended that Elders be used in the ordination of an Elder. The Second London Confession stated that the separation should be by ". . . the Eldership of the Church, if there be any before Constituted therein . . ."⁸⁴ Yet, from the language used it did not make separation by Elders essential to ordination. Jachin & Boaz, published thirty years later, reflected a much more advanced position. It stipulated that the Eldership of the church should set apart the candidate by imposition of hands. If the church did not care to use this method and preferred ordination

⁸²McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 266 (art. 8); "William Mitchell's 'Jachin & Boaz' 1707," Transactions, 3:160 (art. 30), 1912-1913. Hereafter cited Jachin & Boaz.

⁸³Ivimey, op. cit., II, 173-74.

⁸⁴McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 266 (art. 9).

by the holding up of their hands, ". . . the Presence, and (so far as is needful and regular) the Assistance of the Elders or Messengers of other Churches is expedient . . ." ⁸⁵

Three churches: the church at Pithay near Bristol in 1677, the church at Porton in 1679 and the church at Southampton in 1691, ordained Elders with the help of Elders from neighbouring congregations. ⁸⁶ By the beginning of the Eighteenth Century the assistance of Elders at an ordination service was the regular and orderly way of separation to office. As Particular Baptists had multiplied and their work consolidated, the spirit of a denominational fellowship combined with a high view of the Ministry to make the presence of Elders necessary for an orderly ordination.

By the Eighteenth Century the ordination service and ritual had become more elaborate. The Second London Confession and Jachin & Boaz prescribed the use of fasting, prayer and imposition of hands as the ritual for separation to the office of Deacon and Elder. ⁸⁷ When Andrew Gifford

⁸⁵"Jachin & Boaz," Transactions, pp. 166-67 (art. 12).

⁸⁶Ivimey, op. cit., II, 546 /see also Broadmead Records, 1677, p. 369/; Tucker, "Porton Baptist Church, 1655-1685," Transactions, 1:59, 1908-1909; "Ordination at Southampton, 1691," Transactions, 2:65-66, 1910-1911.

⁸⁷McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 226 (art. 9); "Jachin & Boaz," Transactions, 3:166-67. The imposition of hands will be treated in a separate paragraph.

became Pastor of the church in Pithay in 1677, Daniel Dyk and Nehemiah Coxe, Elders from London, came down and ordained him with fasting, prayer and the laying on of hands.⁸⁸ This was done in the presence of the church and composed the simplest form of the ordination service. By 1681 the ordination sermon was used. Nehemiah Coxe preached in London at a service separating an Elder and Deacons to office. In the message he charged the ordinand for Eldership with the responsibility of his office:

. . . Consider whom you serve . . . You are a Minister of Christ, not a Creature of humane appointment; It is by the Holy Ghost that you are made an Overseer, therefore take heed to your self, and to the Flock of God.

. . . Consider, That it is the Care and Charge of Souls that is committed to you; not the Temporal Concerns of this Life, but the Affairs of Eternal Life are the Business of your Stewardship. . . .⁸⁹

The sermon became an integral part of the ordination ritual. An example of a typical ordination service is found in the opening years of the Eighteenth Century. Richard Allen, Pastor of the Barbican Church in London,⁹⁰

⁸⁸Ivimey, op. cit., II, 546.

⁸⁹Nehemiah Coxe, A Sermon Preached at the Ordination of an Elder and Deacons (Baptist Publications), Reel 26, No. 35, pp. 29, 31. Hereafter cited Sermon.

⁹⁰This church had remarkable doctrinal fluctuations and was tinted with Arianism. It had close ties with the Particular Baptists yet it refused to join either Particular or General Baptist Associations. At the ordination referred to above, Benjamin Stinton, a Particular Baptist who was the

died in 1717 and Joseph Burroughs was chosen as Pastor. The church notified neighbouring Ministers of the service and asked their assistance. On the day of ordination the church gathered. Scripture was read; then followed a prayer for the church. Afterwards there was a sermon on the office and duty of Elders and Deacons. Next, one of the Ministers defended the method of ordination. Benjamin Stinton, Pastor at Horsley Down, then arose and asked the church members to reconfirm their election publicly. This they did. Burroughs was asked whether or not he accepted the call of the church. He replied in the affirmative and publicly stated his call to the Ministry, his preparation for it and his determination ". . . to make the holy Scriptures his only rule and standard."⁹¹ A short prayer followed. Then the Ministers placed their right hands on Burroughs' head, and Stinton on behalf of the church and Ministers pronounced the words of ordination:

son-in-law of and successor to Benjamin Keach, Pastor of the church at Horsley Down, led the service. Joseph Burroughs who was ordained Pastor of Barbican was considered by London Particular Baptists to be orthodox. MGA, I, liii; Taylor, op. cit., I, 119; A. C. Underwood, A History of the English Baptists, p. 131; Ivimey, op. cit., III, 154-55; W. T. Whitley, The Baptists of London (London: The Kingsgate Press, [n.d.]), p. 112.

⁹¹Thomas Crosby, The History of the English Baptists (London: Printed for and sold by, the Editor: Author, and others, 1738-1740)IV, 186-87.

. . . BROTHER Joseph Burroughs, We do, in the name of our Lord Jesus, and with the consent of this church, ordain thee, to be an elder, bishop, or overseer of this church of Jesus Christ. . . .⁹²

With their hands still on his head Stinton prayed for the new Pastor and congregation. Deacons were then ordained in the same manner.⁹³ The public examination of the candidate before the church appeared as common practice in the ritual. The ordination service was standardized by the early Eighteenth Century. However, the imposition of hands was a mooted question until the end of the Seventeenth Century.

Both the Second London Confession and Jachin & Boaz, viewed imposition of hands as the regular method of ordination.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, Jachin & Boaz reminded its readers that the essence of ordination was not in the imposition of hands but in the free election of the church and separation by fasting and prayer. ". . . those who are so chosen, though not Set apart by Imposition of Hands, have the Essence of Ordination, and are Ministers of Jesus Christ . . ." ⁹⁵ The fear of succession still lingered

⁹²Ibid., p. 187.

⁹³Ibid., pp. 184-87. Crosby said that this was the usual method of ordination.

⁹⁴McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 266 (art. 9); "Jachin & Boaz," Transactions, 3:166-67.

⁹⁵"Jachin & Boaz," Transactions, 3:167.

with some Baptists. Yet, during the Restoration and Toleration Periods the use of laying on of hands grew. The Assembly meeting at Bristol in 1679 advised that Rede, Pen and Long, Pastors of the Porton Baptist Church, be ordained with laying on of hands even though they had been Pastors for over twenty years.⁹⁶ At the first Particular Baptist General Assembly, meeting at London in 1689, the second or 1688 edition of the Second London Confession was approved. The practice of laying on of hands was reaffirmed.⁹⁷ By 1698 usage of the rite was so widespread that Issac Marlow, a Baptist coming out of the Church of England and fearing that the superstition of episcopal succession and sacramental grace would invade Particular Baptist ranks, attacked the practice.⁹⁸ The laying on of hands had never caused much controversy among Particular Baptists since it did not involve the membership of the church. The Broadmead Church did not use the rite in 1680 when it ordained Deacons ". . . because the pastor somewhat scrupled it, though it was the judgment of the church to use that ceremony . . ."⁹⁹ The

⁹⁶Whitley, "Early Baptists in Hampshire," BQ, 1:224, 1922-1923.

⁹⁷McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 218.

⁹⁸"James Jones Coffee-House," BQ, 6:324-25, 1932-1933.

⁹⁹Broadmead Records, 1680, p. 427.

major objections to the rite disappeared by the end of the century and it became the common practice.

A few churches objected to the use of laying on of hands but most of them insisted that some form of ordination be employed in the separation of a man to office. Since congregational authority to choose officers was a basic doctrinal tenet of Particular Baptists they all agreed that election must precede ordination. In the opening years of the Eighteenth Century they had come to believe that ordination was essential to a "regular Ministry." The difference between the Second London Confession of 1677 and Jachin & Boaz of 1707 was not over the question of whether or not ordination should be performed after election but on the imposition of hands. Both declarations united in affirming ordination and election as indispensable elements of a valid call.¹⁰⁰ The Particular Baptist Assembly, meeting at London in 1689, urged that the omission of ordination for Deacons and Elders ". . . rendered them incapable of preaching and administering the ordinances of the Gospel so regularly, and with that authority which otherwise they might do."¹⁰¹ But the

¹⁰⁰McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 266 (art. 9); "Jachin & Boaz," Transactions, 3:166-67.

¹⁰¹A General Epistle to the Churches, "The Narrative . . . of the General Assembly . . . of the Baptized Churches . . . owning the Doctrine of Personal Election

Assembly also stated, in answer to a query, that election without ordination was ". . . an omission of an ordinance of God . . ." ¹⁰² A denominational consciousness and elevation of the Ministry had led Baptists to believe that ordination gave regularity and authority to a church's call and placed a seal on the candidate's entrance into the Ministry. By the close of the Seventeenth Century election and ordination were constitutive parts of a valid call.

Though Baptists insisted on a regularly and validly separated Ministry its validity and authority were not bestowed by the authority vested in the Ministry. The power to separate or ordain came from the congregation of believers. The theory of episcopal consecration and authority delegated from the Bishop as in the Anglican Church was foreign to Particular Baptist thought and a point of great protest. The Second London Confession, Jachin & Boaz and an ordination sermon preached by Nehemiah Coxé emphasized that Christ had given the particular church the power or authority to choose and appoint any and all

and Final Perseverance, 1689, met in London, more than 100 congregations joined in Assembly . . .," John Rippon (ed.), The Baptist Annual Register, IV, 44. Hereafter cited "Narrative," BAR.

¹⁰²Ibid., pp. 51-52.

officers needed for its worship and discipline.¹⁰³ The source of this doctrine lay in the emphasis which Baptists placed on the particular or local church as being the church Christ gathered and to whom he gave his authority.

When a church ordained a man to the Eldership it gave him certain powers. These were focused in the administration of the Sacraments. From the Restoration administration of the Sacraments was largely limited to the ordained Ministry. The Second London Confession decreed that "These holy appointments [Baptism and the Lord's Supper] are to be administered by those only, who are qualified and thereunto called according to the commission of Christ."¹⁰⁴ Nehemiah Coxe, preaching in London at the ordination of an Elder and Deacons in 1681, declared that administration of the Sacraments "belonged" to the Bishop or Elder because ". . . Dispensation of the Mysteries of God [was] . . . committed to him, and to that feeding of the Sheep of Christ which is required of him . . ."¹⁰⁵ The strongly Calvinistic work, Jachin & Boaz, said that the Ordinances should only be administered by an ordained man.¹⁰⁶ But

¹⁰³McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 265 (art. 7); Nehemiah Coxe, Sermon (Baptist Publications), Reel 26, No. 35, pp. 7-8; "Jachin & Boaz," Transactions, 3:165.

¹⁰⁴McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 269 (Chap. 28, art. 2).

¹⁰⁵Nehemiah Coxe, Sermon, Reel 26, No. 35, p. 26.

¹⁰⁶"Jachin & Boaz," Transactions, 3:160.

the work went a step further reflecting a very high doctrine of the Ministry. If a congregation did not have an ordained Elder in its midst the Sacraments could not be administered. Furthermore, she could not authorize a visiting Minister to preside over the Ordinances.¹⁰⁷ However, the attitude of the confession at this point was not widespread. The Particular Baptist Assembly of 1689 had ruled:

That an Elder of one church, may administer the ordinance of the Lord's supper to another of the same faith, being called so to do by the said church; tho' not as their Pastor, but as a Minister, necessity only being considered in this case.¹⁰⁸

The authority, then, given in ordination was to preside over or administer the Ordinances. By the end of the Seventeenth Century officiation at either Sacrament by a layman was highly irregular. But ordination meant more than the grant of power to preside at the Lord's Supper and Baptism.

Ordination by Elders on behalf of the ordaining church's authority and the concurrence of sister churches through the presence of their officers publicly signified that this man had been divinely called by the Holy Spirit and the congregation to be Christ's Minister. It meant that he had been tested as to his character, knowledge,

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 169.

¹⁰⁸"Narrative," BAR, p. 55.

ability and consecration. It proclaimed that he had been elected by the church to office; that he had been bequeathed a sacred charge and trust, the care of Souls, a responsibility without equal. Ordination focused in the laying on of hands. Here the Ministry, representing other churches and the denomination, and the ordaining church sought God's blessing through prayer and fasting and prayed that the Holy Spirit would increase his gifts. Men so ordained were ". . . Ministers of Jesus Christ, in whose Name and Authority they exercise the Ministry to them so committed."¹⁰⁹

Particular Baptist practice and doctrine in ordination were transmitted to America in the 1689 edition of the Second London Confession and adopted by the Philadelphia and Charleston Associations.¹¹⁰ Both in practice and doctrine there was a uniform pattern among early American Baptists.

In the early years of the Philadelphia Association ordination to the Ministry was performed only when a congregation needed a Pastor. The Second London Confession

¹⁰⁹"Jachin & Boaz," Transactions, 3:167.

¹¹⁰A study will not be made of the Second London Confession as it appeared in the Philadelphia Confession and the Charlestown Confession. No alterations were made in either of the two documents that would reflect a change in the practice and doctrine of ordination. Instead the disciplines and minutes of both Associations will be analyzed for their practice and doctrine.

had not made this issue clear; but the Philadelphia Discipline of 1743, when it mentioned the occasion for ordination, referred exclusively to the pastoral office except in case of appointing Deacons and Ruling Elders. The Discipline stated that a church lacking a ministerial officer could choose one of its gifted members for the pastorate and separate him to the office by ordination. In case the church had no candidates among its membership it was to call a gifted member from a sister church, have his membership moved and ordain him to the office of Elder or Pastor.¹¹¹ Even if the church possessed "gifts" in men already ordained for the Ruling Eldership and one of them was chosen for the pastoral office, he had to be ordained to the Eldership since the offices were distinct.¹¹² There is no evidence to prove that the reason ordination was confined to the pastoral office was because of a concept of Ministry which defined and justified ordination only in terms of the local pastorate. The most natural occasion for ordination was election to the pastoral office when a church saw its need. The Philadelphia Association sent ordained men when it instructed "ministering brethren" to

¹¹¹ A Short Treatise of Church Discipline, pp. 4, 6-7. Hereafter cited Discipline.

¹¹² Ibid., pp. 8-9.

visit Virginia and the Carolinas.¹¹³ In the years of growth when ministerial help was scarce the natural and logical door to the Ministry was through the pastoral office, but by the closing years of the Eighteenth Century ordination was performed on occasions other than election to the pastorate. Ordination seems to have been carried out with missionary and evangelistic work in mind. The Revised Discipline stated that a candidate was ordained by a church whenever he became a "teacher or preacher" even though he had not been elected to the pastoral office:

We should now proceed to treat of the duties of the ministerial office. But although a person, in virtue of his ordination, is fully instated in his office, and has a right to discharge every part of it, when called thereto, yet while he remains only a teacher or preacher, and is not connected with any church as their pastor or minister, he can have but little to do besides preaching. . . .¹¹⁴

Thus, ordination had at its root a concept of Ministry which was not confined to the local pastorate though this was the regular and ordinary occasion for it.

At the ordination service the assistance of Elders

¹¹³A. D. Gillette, Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, From A. D. 1707 to A. D. 1807 . . ., 1755, p. 73. Hereafter cited Philadelphia Minutes.

¹¹⁴A Treatise of Church Discipline, Adopted by the Sansom-Street Baptist Church, p. 13 (art. 9). Hereafter cited Revised Discipline. This passage could refer to retired Ministers who had been Pastors of churches and who were ordained when elected to office.

was always required. The Discipline specified that a presbytery composed from the ordaining church or one gathered from the Elders of neighbouring congregations was to be used while the Revised Discipline stated that one or more Ministers were to assist in the service.¹¹⁵ In 1747 Peter Vanhorn was chosen by the Pennepek Church to be their Pastor and was ordained by Elders from the Philadelphia Association.¹¹⁶ Both of the disciplines made it clear that there was no question about the presence and assistance of Elders at the ordination of a man. The council seems to have been confined to Elders. Their participation in the ordination rites was a sign of the concurrence of the Ministry and neighbouring congregations in the church's appointment. At the same time ordination was carried out by and through the authority of the ordaining church.

The service of separation had also become set in the ritual used to ordain a candidate. The Discipline and Revised Discipline uniformly instructed that fasting, prayer and the laying on of hands be employed in appointing a candidate to the Ministry; this also included

¹¹⁵Discipline, pp. 6-7; Revised Discipline, p. 12 (art. 7).

¹¹⁶Philadelphia Minutes, p. 12.

Deacons and Ruling Elders.¹¹⁷ There was no controversy over the imposition of hands in ordination. Other practices brought over from England also appeared. As early as 1723 a thorough examination of the ordinand was recommended by the Association because ". . . we [have] . . . found the evil of neglecting a true and previous scrutiny in those affairs."¹¹⁸ However, the only reference as such in the Discipline was that each church should take ". . . all due care to chuse one for the work of the ministry . . ."¹¹⁹ By 1797 when the Revised Discipline was published the ministerial examination was standard procedure. This work ordered that before the assembled church one of the Ministers

. . . should interrogate him respecting his call of God, his motives, his doctrinal knowledge, his soundness in the faith, and his resolution to persevere with diligence. . . .¹²⁰

The sermon was also part of the service. When Peter Vanhorn was ordained at the Pennepek Church in 1747 Jenkin Jones preached the sermon; in 1772 at the ordination of Issac Skilman, James Manning delivered the message.¹²¹ By 1747

¹¹⁷Discipline, pp. 6-7, 9; Revised Discipline, pp. 9, 14 (arts. 7, 5).

¹¹⁸Philadelphia Minutes, 1723, p. 27. The Association was having trouble with impostors as well as Ministers who were unorthodox and of questionable character.

¹¹⁹Discipline, p. 6.

¹²⁰Revised Discipline, p. 12 (art. 7).

¹²¹Philadelphia Minutes, 1772, pp. 12, 124.

"the right hand of fellowship," a symbol used by the Ministers participating in the ordination to show their acceptance of the candidate into a ministerial fellowship, was employed in the service.¹²² Later in the century, the "charge," a brief message impressing the candidate with his obligations and responsibilities, appeared in the ritual.¹²³ The earliest date of origin of the use of these rites cannot be determined from the evidence. Still, this much can be said. By the end of the Eighteenth Century they were used regularly in ordination. The Revised Discipline incorporated each practice in a typical example of an ordination service.

Having set aside a day of fasting, the church and council composed of visiting Ministers assembled. The ordination sermon or one suitable to the occasion was preached. Then, the council after checking the candidate's license for proper order and obtaining the vote of the church for his ordination, proceeded to question him as to his divine call, his motives, theology and consecration. If his answers were satisfactory, he was requested to kneel at which time the Ministers present laid hands on his head

¹²²Ibid., p. 12.

¹²³Ibid., p. 124. The "charge" probably was already in use long before this date since it was a part of the rites used by English Particular Baptists in the last of the Seventeenth Century.

and with prayer and appropriate words ordained him. Next, the new Minister was given the right hand of fellowship by each Elder present. He was then charged with his responsibilities. Finally, a benediction dismissed the service.¹²⁴

From the time a candidate was licensed to preach to the culmination of his separation to the Ministry in the ordination service the ordaining church or congregation held final authority to confirm or veto appointment. This tenet was basic to Baptist polity. The Discipline stated that a presbytery could not proceed with ordination without the church's election. This ruling applied to either a presbytery composed from the membership of the congregation or to a visiting council.¹²⁵ In theory the essence of ordination was the church's election and consent to appoint officers for its edification. The Revised Discipline made this point very clear when it emphasized that the power of election resided in the congregation:

The essence of ordination consists in the call of the church, in their voting in his favour, and designating him by said vote to the ministerial work . . . this power was lodged in the church.
 . . .¹²⁶

On the other hand, the importance of ordination was not

¹²⁴Revised Discipline, p. 12 (art. 7).

¹²⁵Discipline, pp. 6-7.

¹²⁶Revised Discipline, pp. 11-12 (art. 6).

minimized. It was necessary and expedient as a public and formal demonstration that the candidate had been separated to office.¹²⁷ Thus, the two facets of separation, election and ordination, were closely woven. In the Philadelphia Association election without ordination as a public seal of separation would have been looked upon as very irregular.

The fact that election by the congregation rather than ordination was viewed as the essential qualification for appointment to office reflected Baptist rejection of apostolic succession and the delegation of power or authority from any source outside the particular church or congregation. Believers united under the headship of Christ had all authority necessary to elect and appoint their own officers because the gathered church with Christ as their head possessed His indwelling power to order and govern.¹²⁸ Therefore, Christ dwelling in the congregation by His Word and Power was the source of authority for the ordering of the church. This belief carried within it the denial of the need for any Ministry that depended on ministerial succession for its validity and efficacy. A valid Ministry ensued when a church elected and ordained the candidate.

When a church ordained a man it gave him certain

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 12 (art. 6).

¹²⁸Discipline, p. 4; Philadelphia Minutes, 1746, pp. 51-52; Revised Discipline, p. 8 (arts. 12, 13).

powers he did not previously possess. He was granted the authority to administer the Sacraments.¹²⁹ To officiate at either the Lord's Supper or Baptism, churches viewed ordination as a necessity. The Philadelphia Association, in 1728, stated that Ruling Elders and Deacons could be elected to office "on trial" and exercise their authority as if they had already been ordained but that "teaching elders" or Pastors could not.¹³⁰ This resolution implied that ordination was required for the administration of the Ordinances. Twenty-one years later the Association clarified the issue when it wrote that:

. . . each particular church hath complete power and authority from Jesus Christ, to administer all gospel ordinances, provided they have a sufficiency of officers duly qualified, or that they be supplied by the officers of another sister church or churches
 . . .¹³¹

This could only mean that officiation at the Ordinances was restricted to an ordained Elder. Also, the Sacraments could be administered by an Elder who was neither Pastor nor member of the church though the Pastor was the customary and proper official.¹³² The only prerequisite in the case

¹²⁹Discipline, pp. 7-8; Revised Discipline, pp. 15-16 (art. 19).

¹³⁰Philadelphia Minutes, 1728, p. 29.

¹³¹Ibid., 1749, pp. 60-61.

¹³²Ibid., p. 61.

of a visiting Minister was that he have the call of the church to preside over the Ordinances.¹³³ This attitude toward administration of the Sacraments was witness to a concept of the Ministry that combined both local and extra-local aspects and recognized that Christ's Ministry though founded in the particular church and responsible to it had other obligations because of an inherent fellowship within the Gospel.

In the Philadelphia Association ordination was looked upon as a ". . . solemn setting apart . . . for the sacred function . . ."¹³⁴ of the Ministry. Care of the flock was the work of the Lord and men so trusted with the responsibility of office were amenable to God. An Elder was a steward of the Gospel and was understood to be partaking in a holy ministry. So sacred was his trust that in one instance an ordination certificate referred to the ordained man as being ". . . admitted into holy orders, according to the known and approved rites of the Baptist church . . ."¹³⁵ However, ordination represented more than the church's delegation of a

¹³³Revised Discipline, footnote, p. 16.

¹³⁴Discipline, p. 6.

¹³⁵"Certificate," Philadelphia Minutes, 1762, p. 86. This certificate of ordination was granted by the Association to an Elder leaving on a trip. He had already been ordained by a church. For a copy of this certificate and one granted by a church see Appendix A.

trust to a man. Elders from other churches generally participated in the service. This action signified, as it did with General and Particular Baptists in England, that sister congregations gave their support, prayer and blessing to the work and the man being separated. Also, the presence of visiting Elders demonstrated that the candidate was being accepted and welcomed into a ministerial fellowship.

The Charleston Association adopted the Second London Confession in 1767 and published a discipline with it in 1774. Baptists of this Association generally followed the practice and doctrine witnessed in the Philadelphia Association. Ordination was performed whenever appointment was made to the office of Deacon, Elder or Evangelist. The Charlestown Discipline dealt only with the question of ordaining a man called by a church to the pastorate or diaconate.¹³⁶ It failed to mention any other occasion in which ordination would have occurred. The natural time of ordination presented itself when a church either drew from its own membership or chose an unordained man from a sister church.¹³⁷ But the Charlestown Discipline did not specifically state that the call to the pastorate

¹³⁶A Summary of Church-Discipline, pp. 8, 12 (arts. 1, 2). Hereafter cited Charlestown Discipline.

¹³⁷Ibid., pp. 8-9 (art. 1).

was the only occasion for ordination. In fact Daniel Sheppard in 1831 published the Charlestown Confession and attached to it an appendix containing a certificate of ordination to evangelistic work. This certificate provided that though the Minister had not been called to any particular pastoral charge when ordained he was ". . . fully authorised to minister at large in the Lord's vineyard . . . and to administer the special as well as more common ordinances of the Gospel, on every proper occasion."¹³⁸ Thus, there were two definite occasions on which a man could be ordained, to the pastorate or to evangelistic work. Neither of them required reordination when transfer from one function to the other occurred. In either case when the church ordained a candidate Elders from the membership of the church, if there were any, or Pastors from sister congregations were called in for assistance.¹³⁹ This procedure was required by the Charlestown Discipline. Occasionally, the Association was requested by a church to appoint Elders to assist in the ordination

¹³⁸Daniel Sheppard (ed.), Baptist Confession of Faith: and A Summary of Church Discipline. to which is added, An Appendix (Charleston: printed by W. Riley, 1831), pp. 200-1. Hereafter cited Appendix.

¹³⁹Charlestown Discipline, pp. 9-10 (art. 1); Minutes of the Charleston Baptist Association, 1775, no page, 1791, p. 2. Hereafter cited Charleston Minutes.

service or lead the examination of the candidates.¹⁴⁰ Notwithstanding, requests like these were the exception rather than the rule. The assistance of Elders was believed to be extremely necessary for separation. The Circular Letter of 1830 made this clear when it said that ". . . a church cannot of itself invest any one with full authority as a minister of the gospel, without ministerial concurrence and aid. . . ." ¹⁴¹ These words were written on the supposition that ministerial fellowship was of prime importance to Baptist life and necessary for the continuation of proper order. But they reflected a high doctrine of the Ministry. No reference was made to the assistance of laymen in ordination.

As in the Philadelphia Association, ordination in the Charleston Association was a solemn event to be attended with fasting, prayer and the laying on of hands. These rites were also used in separation of Deacons.¹⁴² On an appointed day the church, ordinand and council of Ministers assembled

¹⁴⁰Jeffers's Creek Church asked the Association in 1823 to appoint a committee to examine its candidate for the Ministry; the Wateree Creek Church requested the Association to appoint Ministers to assist it in ordination of a man. Charleston Minutes, 1823, p. 2.

¹⁴¹"Circular Letter," Charleston Minutes, 1830, pp. 16-17.

¹⁴²Charlestown Discipline, pp. 9-10, 12 (arts. 1, 2); Charleston Minutes, 1775, no page.

for the separation. The candidate was then examined by the council before the church as to his call, doctrine and character. If the council and church were satisfied, the congregation voted for his ordination.¹⁴³ After the sermon and appropriate prayer the ordinand knelt. The Elders then laid their hands on him and one of them offered the ordination prayer. The right hand of fellowship was extended by the Ministers. Sometimes with a brief message by a Minister the candidate was presented a Bible.¹⁴⁴ This was a new practice; it had not become customary since Sheppard referred to it as an occasional rite.¹⁴⁵ By the third decade of the Nineteenth Century presentation of a Bible to the ordinand was being used with the ordination service. In other respects the Philadelphia and Charleston Associations used identical rites.

The necessity for the assistance of Elders in ordination echoes a lofty view of the Ministry but underneath this concept lay the premise that the congregation was the final and initiating authority in separation. It

¹⁴³Charlestown Discipline, pp. 9-10 (art. 1); Appendix, pp. 198-99. Sheppard says that the candidate was also asked whether or not he intended to enforce the Discipline appended to the confession.

¹⁴⁴Charlestown Discipline, pp. 9-10 (art. 1); Appendix, pp. 198-200; Charleston Minutes, 1775, no page.

¹⁴⁵Appendix, p. 200.

was their responsibility and right to elect and call a man to office. Its right was guarded since on every occasion of ordination the church had to give its authorization to the council.¹⁴⁶ Election always preceded ordination and was fundamental to the separation. "A person to be ordained to the work of the Gospel Ministry," so the Association said in 1775, "must be called thereto by the voice of the Church to which he belongs . . ." ¹⁴⁷ But election did not complete separation. The candidate must ". . . be set apart by Ordination; that he may perform every Part of the sacred Function. . . ." ¹⁴⁸ In practice both election by the church and ordination with the assistance of Ministers and in the presence of the church were necessary for the granting of full powers. The presence of Ministers and the imposition of their hands in the ritual did not imply that their action gave validity to the ordinand's ministry. On the contrary, it was the church's appointment that insured a valid ministry. Christ was the Head of the congregation; therefore, the church had the power and privilege to choose its own officers.¹⁴⁹ This belief ruled out any suggestion that a delegation of power or grace to the

¹⁴⁶Charlestown Discipline, p. 9 (art. 1).

¹⁴⁷Charleston Minutes, 1775, no page.

¹⁴⁸Charlestown Discipline, p. 9 (art. 1).

¹⁴⁹Ibid., p. 6 (art. 4).

ordinand came from outside the church membership.

Ordination invested the candidate in the ministerial office and gave him authority to serve as an Evangelist or as a Pastor. Furthermore his authority centered in the Sacraments, administration of which was restricted to the Ministry.¹⁵⁰ An ordained man did not have to be Pastor of a church to administer the Lord's Supper or Baptism. The certificate of ordination for an Evangelist read that his ordination entitled him ". . . to administer the special as well as more common ordinances of the Gospel, on every proper occasion."¹⁵¹ This attitude toward administration of the Ordinances, i. e., restriction to ordained Ministers and administration by a visiting Elder, demonstrated that the Ministry was defined not only in terms of a local

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 12 (art. 1). The Discipline does not state that the Ordinances were restricted to the Ministry. However, the Charleston Association being strongly influenced by the Philadelphia Association would follow their practice. Also, with a Particular Baptist background and a high concept of the Ministry restriction would be logical. The church at Columbia asked the Association if it could ordain a man occasionally to administer the Ordinances since it did not have a Pastor. The Association replied that it would be contrary to the Scriptures. This reply leaves the impression that only ordained men regularly set apart could officiate at the Sacraments. Charleston Minutes, 1825, p. 7.

¹⁵¹ Appendix, p. 202; The Charlestown Discipline, p. 10 (art. 1), stated that "A Minister . . . has Authority from Christ to preach the Gospel, and baptize Believers in any Part of the World where God in his Providence may call him . . ."

pastorate but that it embraced a much larger aspect. Ministers of one faith and order and in one fellowship had extra-local authority. All churches recognized and accepted ordination by one congregation as a valid and authoritative separation and therefore the powers which were given. No reference was made to the validity or invalidity of non-Baptist orders.

In the Eighteenth Century, ordination among the churches of the Charleston Association had great private and public significance. Within the congregation or ordaining church it expressed belief that here was a man capable of being entrusted with the charge of Souls and the responsibility of leadership in the House of God. Ordination to the Ministry was a separation to the highest office in the church and therefore, a sacred function of discipleship. The Minister was looked upon as an undershepherd of Christ and directly responsible to God. The faith of the congregation had been placed in the Elder by separation to a holy work.¹⁵² Furthermore, there was a public aspect of ordination that made this event a sacred occasion. Though separated by the authority of the congregation the assistance of Elders from other churches and the imposition of hands declared publicly that this man was, as a Minister,

¹⁵²Charlestown Discipline, p. 8 (art. 1); "Circular Letter," Charleston Minutes, 1830, p. 8.

a representative of Christ¹⁵³ and hence, qualified to feed the flock whenever called upon by a church. Ordination also meant that, through the concurrence of Elders representing sister churches and a ministerial fellowship among themselves, congregations and Ministers of like faith and order recognized the separation, honored it and prayed that God's blessings would rest upon his ministry. Ordination, though performed in behalf of the church, expressed public separation to a denominational Ministry.

The New Hampshire Confession, published in 1833, did not refer to the practice and doctrine of ordination; William Crowell's The Church Member's Manual, a commentary on the confession, set forth Baptist thought in this area in the Nineteenth Century.

By and large The Church Member's Manual agreed with the practice and doctrine of ordination found in the Philadelphia and Charleston Associations. The occasion of ordination to the Ministry was confined either to election as Pastor of a church, appointment to perform some ministerial service for the congregation or to separation for evangelistic work.¹⁵⁴ In the latter case the candidate was not chosen to

¹⁵³Charlestown Discipline, p. 23 (art. 1).

¹⁵⁴William Crowell, The Church Member's Manual, pp. 106-7. Crowell did not enlarge on what he meant by a "ministerial service" for the church.

an office in the church but was recognized only as an accredited Minister.¹⁵⁵ Evidently, the ordinand did not have to be called to the pastorate to be ordained. Thus, the concept of Ministry extended beyond the local church.

Whenever a man was to be separated to the Ministry, the church of which the ordinand was a member called a council, composed of Ministers and delegates representing other congregations, to examine his qualifications. The assistance of Ministers was necessary but not essential to ordination since in theory the congregation had the right to ordain its own officers.¹⁵⁶ But since churches worked in a social context and were bound in an intimate fellowship they were placed ". . . under sacred moral obligations, growing out of their relations to each other, to treat each other with high deference and respect. . . ." ¹⁵⁷ The absence of visiting Elders at an ordination service meant that the candidate when ordained ". . . would have no right or claim to be received as a minister in any other church. . . ." ¹⁵⁸ Thus, on the basis of ministerial

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 200. The minutes of the New Hampshire Baptist Convention as early as 1826 pointed out the immediate need for "foreign and domestick Missionaries." Minutes of the New Hampshire Baptist Convention, I, 1827, p. 3.

¹⁵⁶Crowell, op. cit., pp. 106-7.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 108-9.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 108.

fellowship and a denominational recognition the presence of Ministers was necessary and regular. Also, for the first time, unordained men participated in the council of examination and ordination. However, they did not lay hands on the candidate in the service. Only the Ministers did this.¹⁵⁹ Laymen participated in the ordination process chiefly as bystanders since the responsibility for judging the candidate was assumed to be in the hands of those best qualified, i. e., Ministers. Nevertheless, the presence of laymen on the council reflected a lower concept of the Ministry than did either the Philadelphia or Charleston Associations. Yet, the loss of congregational control in the examination of the candidate was reflected in a new development of this period. The ordination examination was separated from the service of ordination.

The examination, held any time before the ordination service, was to be a public affair in the presence of a deputation from the ordaining church.¹⁶⁰ This change in the procedure for examination of the candidate from interrogation by the presbytery in the presence of the assembled congregation to a somewhat less public meeting signified that the Ministry felt that ordination was their

¹⁵⁹Ibid., p. 199.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p. 198.

responsibility. They were best qualified to evaluate the candidate's abilities. Even though a lower concept of the Ministry was echoed by the presence of laymen on the council, this semi-public examination, primarily by ordained men, pointed to a growing elevation of the Ministry. When convened by the ordaining church, the presbytery questioned the candidate on his conversion, call to the Ministry, his theology and his view of church polity. If the presbytery was satisfied with the ordinand's answers and his license to preach was in order, it recommended that he be ordained.¹⁶¹ The church then set a date for the ordination.

Ritual used in the service followed that employed by the Philadelphia and Charleston Associations. Fasting was omitted, not because of any religious scruples, but because through the years it had become antiquated. Practices composing the service were: prayer, singing, Scripture, sermon, imposition of hands and ordaining prayer, hand of fellowship, charge, address to the church and benediction. Presentation of the Bible was not mentioned.¹⁶²

The highlights of the service were found in the imposition of hands and the right hand of fellowship since both of these practices symbolized the joint approval and

¹⁶¹Ibid., pp. 109, 198.

¹⁶²Ibid., pp. 109, 199.

blessing of the participating churches, the Ministry and the ordaining church. Furthermore, Crowell was very careful to warn that the laying on of hands was simply a biblical custom and did not in any sense affect the validity of ordination. Ordination was a consecration which could be performed without the imposition of hands.¹⁶³

Ordination was composed of two parts, election by the congregation and the candidate's separation to office as Pastor or to some other ministerial function. The essence of ordination lay in election by the church. Without this process there could be no public service.¹⁶⁴ Still, in actual practice the ordination was not complete without the service of separation. Baptists of the Nineteenth Century would have shunned an election without separation as a very irregular proceeding as this was ordination to a denominational Ministry. Both parts of ordination were welded together through biblical example and Baptist tradition. An election without separation was unheard of. On the other hand, the attendance of Ministers at an ordination service did not mean that Baptists felt their presence essential for the continuation of the Ministry.

The Ministry did not give the ordination validity

¹⁶³Ibid., pp. 106, 110, 199-200.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p. 107.

for it arose out of the congregation. Christ was the Head of the church; he had bestowed his power on the congregation. This authority, derived by the congregation from Christ, was sufficient for the election and appointment of its officers.¹⁶⁵ Separation was performed by the Ministry on behalf of the church. There was no problem of succession for wherever believers gathered in a fellowship there Christ dwelt in Word and Power. Authority delegated by Ministers was unnecessary for preservation of the Ministry. This tenet traced its source to emphasis on the particular church. It was the church that gave the candidate authority to perform the functions of a Minister.

Thus, a church having ordained a man gave him the authority to administer the Sacraments, the Lord's Supper and Baptism. Presidency over the Ordinances was regularly entrusted to an ordained man. But neither of the two were restricted to a Minister holding the pastoral office. An Evangelist could administer the Ordinances in areas where there were no churches. At the same time the validity of the Sacraments did not depend on the regularity or validity of the Minister's ordination. Nor were they affected by his character. The Ordinances had objective value within themselves. Crowell wrote:

¹⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 60-63, 67, 94, 111.

. . . if no minister can be obtained, or in places where there is a general departure from the true form, a pious layman, acting with the approbation and in behalf of the church, might, as a matter of necessity baptize. . . . The character of the administrator cannot invalidate baptism . . .¹⁶⁶

Acceptance of alien immersion, i. e., immersion of a believer by non-Baptist clergyman, by Baptist churches in this area was customary. The Ordinance was not repeated. But the proper and regular administrator of both Sacraments was a Minister.¹⁶⁷ The authority of the Ministry though it originated in the congregation extended beyond the local church throughout the denomination.

Ordination, consisting of election and separation, was a public acknowledgement and witness on behalf of the ordaining church, the Ministry and other churches that this man was qualified to be a servant of the church and Christ; that he was henceforth set apart to a sacred function and was consequently accountable to God for Christians in his care. Ordination was a consecration and recognition of one whom God had called to service. He was a Minister of Christ. Welcome into the fellowship of the Ministry, the prayer and support of sister churches and the ordaining church were epitomized in the imposition of hands and the

¹⁶⁶Ibid., p. 162

¹⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 105, 159, 161-62, 172.

hand of fellowship during the service.¹⁶⁸

J. R. Graves generally followed the practice of Baptists previously studied but differed widely on the occasion for and the authority given in ordination.

Graves limited the occasion for ordination to a church's call of a man to the office of Pastor.¹⁶⁹ "Why should he be ordained," Graves replied in answer to a reader who had written asking him whether or not a call to the pastorate was essential to ordination, "before his services are wanted? If his gifts were very apparent some church would want him."¹⁷⁰ But the basic reason Graves held that a call to the pastorate was essential for ordination was due to his view of the church. He had no doctrine of the invisible Church. Thus, his concept of Ministry was restricted to the visible, particular church and ministry within and to it. This attitude was borne out in his reaction to a denominational Ministry. When Baptist work became institutionalized and ordained men assumed places of responsibility and leadership in colleges and on boards

¹⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 90, 103-4, 107, 109.

¹⁶⁹J. R. Graves, The Watchman's Reply, pp. 74-75; "Self-Reliance--Self-Education," Tennessee Baptist, Mar. 15, 1856; "Querist," Tennessee Baptist, Apr. 5, 1884.

¹⁷⁰"Querist," The Baptist, May 18, 1878.

of the denomination Graves strongly protested against Ministers leaving the pastorate in disregard of their ". . . solemn calling and vows of ordination. . . ." ¹⁷¹ The purpose and place of the Ministry was in the local church and nowhere else; it was in the local church only that the congregation had absolute control over a Minister. Therefore, his extreme view of congregational authority combined with his doctrine of the visible church to limit ordination to the pastoral ministry. This exaggerated concept of congregational autonomy influenced his opinion of ministerial assistance in ordination.

Graves agreed that Elders or Ministers should compose the presbytery in examining and appointing a man to the Ministry; that the council should be made up of Ministers alone. Only men responsible for the spiritual welfare of the church, ". . . None but ordained ministers. . . ," ¹⁷² had a right to examine the candidate. ¹⁷³ Nevertheless, their usefulness at an ordination service was in an advisory capacity since a church called on Elders ". . . not to

¹⁷¹ Editorial, Tennessee Baptist, May 27, 1854.

¹⁷² "Queries," The Baptist, Dec. 1, 1877.

¹⁷³ "An Important Question--'Is it the Presbytery or the Church that Ordains?,'" Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 18, 1862, Hereafter cited "An Important Question"; "Queries," The Baptist, Dec. 23, 1871; "Who Ordains," The Baptist, Mar. 15, 1873.

exercise a joint authority with her in the contemplated act, but to assist her by advise only. . . ." ¹⁷⁴ Repeatedly, Graves insisted that it was the church that ordained and not the Elders. The congregation was competent to call and appoint its own officers. In fact there was no need except as a matter of courtesy for ministerial assistance from sister congregations. "If the apostolic churches," Graves reasoned, "called in elders from sister churches to ordain her officers, we know not where to find the record . . ." ¹⁷⁵ The assistance of a ministerial council ". . . of a thousand ministers would not add one iota of authority to what is possessed by each church. . . ." ¹⁷⁶ Here again, his doctrine of the church and its authority circumscribed his concept of the Ministry. Baptist tradition had looked upon the assistance of Elders representing neighbouring churches as an expression of fellowship and joint approval of the ordaining church's Minister. In this sense ordination with the help of Elders carried the weight of authority and added to the service a denominational significance. Graves, afraid of authority

¹⁷⁴"An Important Question," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 18, 1862.

¹⁷⁵"Dr. Boyce and His Baptistery," Tennessee Baptist, July 21, 1883.

¹⁷⁶"Querist," Tennessee Baptist, Apr. 26, 1884.

not under congregational control, lost sight of the need for fellowship and cooperation among churches of like faith; his was an atomistic concept of the Ministry.

Graves was in agreement with all of the rites used by his Baptist predecessors in separation to the office of Pastor. He accepted practices which had become standardized in the Philadelphia, Charleston and New Hampshire traditions. Hymns, prayer, Scripture, sermon, laying on of hands, ordaining prayer, the charge, the hand of fellowship, presentation of the Bible and an address to the congregation with a concluding prayer constituted the service.¹⁷⁷ Fasting was no longer used. Curiously enough, Graves made no objection to imposition of hands; instead he recommended its use as a scriptural practice.¹⁷⁸ The examination¹⁷⁹ followed the same lines laid down by previous Baptists. The candidate was questioned on ". . . his call to the ministry, his views of doctrine, his aptness to teach, and his character and habits, and report of them without . . ." ¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷Editorial, Tennessee Baptist, June 19, Aug. 14, 1852; "Who Ordains?," The Baptist, Aug. 2, 1873.

¹⁷⁸"Queries," The Baptist, Oct. 16, 1875.

¹⁷⁹There is not sufficient evidence in Graves' writings to determine whether or not examination of the candidate was held separately by the Ministers from the congregation.

¹⁸⁰"Queries," The Baptist, Dec. 23, 1871.

If the ordinand answered the questions to the satisfaction of the presbytery, the foregoing service was used to ordain.

Graves also adhered to Baptist thought in the relationship of election to ordination. He insisted that election was essential for the appointment of officers as it was ". . . the inalienable right of the church . . ." ¹⁸¹ since ". . . the sole power to commission . . . is vested in her, and in her only. . . ." ¹⁸² Even though Graves held a very high doctrine of congregational authority ordination by a presbytery was ". . . Scriptural and always proper . . ." ¹⁸³ But he repeatedly emphasized that the authority of the congregation was the essential factor in appointment. ¹⁸⁴ This meant that election by the church was the ordination since her approval of the candidate was the commissioning act. His view of ordination as being simply election or the granting of authority by the church was seen in answer to a question asked by a subscriber. Graves

¹⁸¹"The Great Iron Wheel, letter no. 25," Tennessee Baptist, Aug. 12, 1854.

¹⁸²"The Seven Dispensations.--The Fourth and Baptist Theory Teaching the Apostolic Commission--The Only Source of Ministerial Authority--The Church," The Baptist, Feb. 4, 1871.

¹⁸³"Queries," The Baptist, Oct. 8, 1870.

¹⁸⁴Editorial, Tennessee Baptist, Nov. 1, 1849; "What Societies are Republics, or Churches of Christ?" Tennessee Baptist, Mar. 7, 1850; "An Important Question," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 18, 1862.

wrote that a church:

. . . may call in as many ministers as she pleases to assist her in the examination of the candidate, and to unite in the services; but it is the act of the church, as such, that is the ordaining act. . . .¹⁸⁵

He understood election and ordination to be the proper method of separation, but by his dogged affirmation of congregational authority in appointment to office he made ordination a second class rite. At this point he differed with Baptist tradition.

Administration of the Sacraments was restricted to ordained Ministers. Ordination conferred this authority on the Minister.¹⁸⁶ Though the Ordinances were given to the church and not primarily her Ministry, ordained men were the only proper and duly qualified officers for presidency over them.¹⁸⁷ Basically Graves considered Pastors or Elders the administering officials. He said that ". . . It is the pastor's business--the business of an officer.--Deacons were not created with reference to

¹⁸⁵"Questions and Answers," Tennessee Baptist, May 9, 1885.

¹⁸⁶"Practical Queries," Tennessee Baptist, Mar. 17, 1855; "A Query Answered," Tennessee Baptist, Apr. 25, 1857; "Queries," The Baptist, Oct. 8, 1870; "Querist," Tennessee Baptist, Aug. 4, 1883.

¹⁸⁷"Queries and Difficulties," The Baptist, May 29, 1869; "Queries," Tennessee Baptist, Aug. 26, 1876.

the Lord's Supper at all. . . ."188 Whenever the Pastor was absent or a visiting Minister could not be obtained the church was to omit the Sacraments for the purpose of preserving "order" in the congregation.

. . . the church, if she desires to preserve order, should not propose to administer either ordinance. We have been unable to find an example in God's word where either ordinance was administered by the church through one of her private members. . . .189

But, as can be seen from above, this was not the only reason for deferring celebration of the Supper or performance of Baptism. ". . . An ordained minister alone has the right, . . ."190 since he is the only scripturally qualified person. Graves' supposition at this point was that a valid Ministry and valid Ordinances depended on church authority transmitted through baptismal succession.

Baptist churches were the only true churches. Graves reached this position through a legalistic and literalistic interpretation of the Scriptures. The criteria of a true church were three: membership--believers only, doctrine--immersion the sole mode, and organization--extremely independent congregationalism the polity. These three were the divine New Testament

188 Editorial, Tennessee Baptist, Nov. 20, 1852.

189 "Queries," The Baptist, June 30, 1877.

190 "Querist," The Baptist, May 18, 1878.

pattern.¹⁹¹ A congregation gathered and governed on any other basis was excluded as a false church. Ordinances and Ministry depended for their validity on the authority invested in this type of congregation. But Graves, confronting alien immersion and denominational and inter-denominational communion, went a step further. The authority for the appointment of valid officers and efficacious Sacraments was transmitted by baptismal succession. Baptism by immersion was the essential qualification for a legal officer.¹⁹² Baptist churches being organized exclusively on a scriptural basis and existing from the time of Christ had the only true baptism thus the only legal government.¹⁹³ and exclusive authority to appoint and ordain Ministers. Therefore, Baptist Ministers were the only scripturally authorized preachers and administrators of the Sacraments for only the true church could ordain and grant presidency over the Ordinances.¹⁹⁴ Ordinations and Sacraments administered outside the Baptist denomination were unscriptural,

¹⁹¹Graves, The Watchman's Reply, pp. 60-61.

¹⁹²Editorial, Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 11, 1849; Editorial, Tennessee Baptist, Feb. 7, 1850; "Baptist Carolla," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 3, 1857.

¹⁹³Editorial, Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 11, 1849.

¹⁹⁴"That Recognition Again," Baptist & Reflector, Feb. 27, 1890.

illegal and invalid.¹⁹⁵ Therefore, Graves reasoned, if their ordinations were invalid, the preacher of a non-Baptist church could not be recognized as a Minister of the Gospel. Neither could he be invited to speak in Baptist pulpits since to do so would mean that the Baptist Minister regarded him ". . . as a truly baptized man, as a member of a gospel church, and as an ordained minister, and officially his equal."¹⁹⁶ This position restricted not only administration of the Sacraments to ordained Baptist Ministers but also proclamation of the Gospel since preaching in Graves' understanding was an "official act." These tenets indicate clearly that Graves' doctrine of the church, Ministry and Sacraments was based on one point, baptism of a believer by immersion at the hands of a valid administrator whose authority was derived from a Minister in baptismal succession from the Apostolic Age. Graves erred in making order rather than faith in Christ the essential prerequisite of

¹⁹⁵"Ink Drops in South Carolina," Tennessee Baptist, Dec. 12, 1857; "Administrators of Baptism," The Baptist, Apr. 30, 1870; "Re-Baptism--No. 4," The Baptist, Aug. 3, 1872.

¹⁹⁶Editorial, Tennessee Baptist, Feb. 24, 1855; Graves, The Watchman's Reply, pp. 60-61; "Baptist Postulates," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 3, 1857. The source of Graves' thought on non-pulpit affiliation came from his close friend and assistant, J. M. Pendleton, Pastor in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Pendleton set forth this view in "An Old Landmark Re-set" first published in 1854.

a true church. At this juncture he joined hands with Rome.¹⁹⁷

Ordination to Graves had little theological significance. It was simply the grant of authority by the ordaining church to perform the duties of the ministerial office. This commission by the church was seen in the formal act of imposition of hands done by the presbytery in behalf of the congregation.¹⁹⁸ The separation, though public and having the sanction of other churches, was not an appointment to the Christian Ministry but a designation to office of a divinely called man.¹⁹⁹ Nevertheless, Graves elevated the Ministry and the significance of ordination. Not only did administration of the Sacraments but also their validity depended on ordination. He even equated preaching with administration of the Ordinances and made ordination a qualification for proclamation of the Gospel. The whole framework of separation to the Ministry was set in a legal

¹⁹⁷The controversy over "official preaching" and non-pulpit-affiliation occasioned by Pendleton and Graves was largely confined to the Frontier. The actual implementation of this thought had little effect on Baptists east of the Appalachians. However, the Religious Herald of Virginia and the Christian Index of Georgia opposed Graves through their editorials.

¹⁹⁸"Who Ordains?," The Baptist, Aug. 2, 1873; "Queries," The Baptist, Oct. 16, 1875.

¹⁹⁹"Who Ordains?," The Baptist, Aug. 2, 1873; "Query," The Baptist, July 10, 1875.

context. No reference was made to ordination as a joint approval of the Ministry of the ordaining church and sister congregations. Graves failed to recognize that the primary importance of separation lay in entrusting the ordinand with the care of Souls and hence making him a Minister of Christ responsible to God. Rather, he was set on rejection of alien immersions and interdenominational communion and was much more concerned over the validity of an ordination than with its meaning and purpose in the congregation and denomination.

R. B. C. Howell, in the tradition of the Philadelphia and Charleston Associations, believed appointment to the office of Elder or Evangelist the proper occasion for ordination.²⁰⁰ Whenever a candidate was called to a church as Pastor or appointed by the congregation to evangelistic work he was separated to the office. A call to the pastoral office was not the only occasion of ordination. Whenever ordination occurred Howell thought it necessary that a presbytery of Ministers be on hand to assist the church. At the separation of Deacons to office, election by the church was essential but ". . . they are still," Howell said, "unless ordained by the ministry, not deacons. There must be a concurrence between the church and the

²⁰⁰Howell, The Deaconship, p. 66. The literature on Howell is scarce.

ministry to create the officer . . ." ²⁰¹ The same requirement applied to appointment for the Ministry. ²⁰² The council or presbytery was composed of ordained Ministers only. Howell commented, ". . . We are not aware that Deacons are competent to officiate in the ordination of ministers." ²⁰³ Thus, the Ministers represented sister churches and acted by the authority of the ordaining church as her "executive officers." Howell realized that the approval and sanction of the Ministry was a highly necessary part of ordination. Separation had a denominational as well as local significance.

In the ordination service Howell adhered to practices and rites which had generally become standardized by the Nineteenth Century. ²⁰⁴ Prayer, Scripture, imposition of hands and a charge to the ordinand reminding him of his

²⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 65-66.

²⁰² "To Dr. John M. Watson, Letter IV," The Baptist, Mar. 16, 1837, hereafter cited "Letter IV;" No. 46. "The Church: Notes of a Sermon, delivered in the First Baptist Church, at Nashville," The Baptist, Oct. 25, 1845. Hereafter cited "Notes of a Sermon"; "A Memorial of the First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee, from 1820-1863," I, 160. Hereafter cited "Memorial."

²⁰³ "To Correspondents," The Baptist, Apr. 3, 1847.

²⁰⁴ There is no literature available to document Howell's procedure in the ordination service or to determine the nature of the ministerial examination and whether or not he thought it should be separated from the service.

responsibility were employed as part of the rites. No special grace or power was granted in the laying on of hands. Instead, the rite expressed a sacred benediction and an official recognition of appointment to office.²⁰⁵ However, this was done in behalf of the church. Election always preceded ordination.

The Ministry could not appoint or ordain a candidate without the congregation's election. On the other hand, ordination by Ministers was necessary for induction to the office. The process of election signified that the church concurred in his Divine call to and qualifications for the Ministry. In order for a man to be a true Minister he not only must have the approval of the church but ". . . regular ordination by a lawfully constituted presbytery. . . ." ²⁰⁶ Underneath election and ordination lay the theory that it was the congregation that called, ordained and sent out the Minister.²⁰⁷ Howell wrote:

. . . Ordinations . . . are the united acts of the church and her bishops. Ministers are employed in setting apart other ministers, not in virtue of their being bishops as a superior order, nor of their being presbyters, all of the same order; but merely as executive officers of the church, with whom

²⁰⁵Howell, The Deaconship, pp. 66-69.

²⁰⁶Ibid., pp. 99-100.

²⁰⁷"Letter IV," The Baptist, Mar. 16, 1837.

the whole right is lodged by . . . Jesus Christ
our Lord.²⁰⁸

Both election and ordination were necessary for the proper and regular separation of a man to office. Howell emphasized the importance of ordination; Graves stressed the importance of election. Howell attached meaning to both acts; Graves made ordination secondary.

Ordination granted authority which the candidate did not previously possess. Chiefly this was seen in the administration of the Sacraments which Howell said should be presided over by the Ministry. The proper and logical official was a ". . . regularly authorized minister of the Gospel . . ."²⁰⁹ Howell viewed this duty as a prerogative of Ministers given in ordination,²¹⁰ but he nowhere stated that administration of the Sacraments should be restricted exclusively to the Ministry. However, he understood that ministerial presidency over the Ordinances was the orderly and regular method. Neither did he believe that the Lord's

²⁰⁸"Ministerial Ordination: A sermon by R. B. C. Howell, D. D., . . . at the ordination of David Breidenthall," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 13, 1848. Hereafter cited "Ministerial Ordination."

²⁰⁹Howell, The Terms of Communion at The Lord's Table, p. 57, hereafter cited Terms; "A True Minister of Christ," The Baptist, Mar. 13, 1847; "Ministerial Ordination," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 13, 1848.

²¹⁰Howell, The Deaconship, p. 74; "Notes of a Sermon," The Baptist, Oct. 25, 1845.

Supper should be administered only by the Pastor of the church. Any ordained man having the authority of the congregation could preside at Communion.²¹¹

Ordination by a Baptist presbytery at the request of a Baptist church gave the separation of the ordinand and the administration of the Sacraments validity. Though Howell denied that Baptist orders were dependent on apostolic succession he affirmed that the basis of their validity rested on a succession of churches which adhered to New Testament doctrine, polity and practice.²¹² A true church had Christ as its Head; practiced believer's immersion; followed true doctrine; adhered to a gospel government holding executive powers only; and created a legitimate Ministry by the authority of the church.²¹³ Therefore, Baptist churches were the only true churches and unless ordained by one of these the officer was not ". . . in all

²¹¹Through 1845 the Tennessee General Association at its conventions celebrated the Lord's Supper with various Ministers presiding. Howell attended these meetings and participated in them. This action evidently indicated a concept of the Ministry that did not confine administration of the Sacraments to a local church. "Proceedings of the General Association," The Baptist, Nov. 8, 1845; Howell, in his Terms, p. 57, refuted the practice of interdenominational communion on the basis of immersion but advocated denominational celebration of the Sacrament. After Graves' doctrine of the church spread, the practice was stopped.

²¹²Howell, Terms, p. 249.

²¹³"Notes of a Sermon," The Baptist, Oct. 25, 1845.

respects, a true minister of Jesus Christ . . ." ²¹⁴ But Howell refused to say that non-Baptist ordinations and Sacraments were invalid. He hedged at this point. Baptist ordinations were superior to all others because others were ". . . destitute of divine sanction. . . . and of necessity vitally defective . . ." ²¹⁵ Yet, he accepted alien immersion. ²¹⁶ At this juncture he differed with Graves who because of his doctrine of baptismal succession denied validity to both non-Baptist orders and Sacraments. Howell's doctrine of the Church made him more tolerant. He also dissented from another opinion of Graves. Howell refused to agree that preaching was the exclusive right and function of an ordained, Baptist Minister. He denied that "pulpit affiliation," the exchange of pulpits between Baptist Ministers and those of other denominations, was a recognition of their churches, ordinations and Sacraments as valid. He rejected this position on grounds

²¹⁴"A True Minister of Christ," The Baptist, Mar. 13, 1847.

²¹⁵"Ministerial Ordination," Tennessee Baptist, Jan. 13, 1848.

²¹⁶When Graves came to Nashville in 1845 he brought his mother, an immersed Pedobaptist, with him. She presented herself for membership in the Second Baptist Church. Graves had very serious doubts about her being accepted without re-baptism but Howell assured him that ". . . such a baptism was valid, and fully accorded with the practice of his own church, and of the denomination in general . . ." "What Is Old Landmarkism?," The Baptist, Mar. 10, 1876.

that the commission to preach given by Christ was not granted to Ministers alone but to all Christians. Preaching was not an "official act" which required ordination like Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Therefore, pulpit affiliation was not a recognition of their ministerial character but an acknowledgement of their duty as Christians to proclaim the Gospel.²¹⁷ Here again, Howell's belief in the invisible Church and the obligation of all Christians to spread the Gospel reflected a spirit of Christian tolerance and brotherly love towards members of other denominations. This attitude was absent in Graves.

For Howell, more than Graves, ordination to the Ministry carried with it a denominational significance. Separation expressed the work of the Holy Spirit through the congregation and the candidate and the sanction and blessings of sister churches. The presbytery composed of Ministers symbolized a denominational fellowship into which the ordinand was accepted. The ordination service and the imposition of hands demonstrated publicly that this man had been elected to an office by the congregation, that he was a servant of the church and that he was amenable to God since he had been recognized as a Minister of Christ. His authority as a Minister extended throughout the Baptist

²¹⁷"Memorial," II, 149-53.

fellowship and was restricted only by a congregation's will.

Kentucky Baptists in the Nineteenth Century followed their predecessors in the practice of ordination but reflected a new emphasis in doctrine. Generally, a candidate for the Ministry was ordained only when a need for his services arose either as Pastor of a church or as an Evangelist. In the latter case he was employed to strengthen weak churches or gather unorganized Christians. In 1801 the East Hickman Church of the Elkhorn Association, at the request of Tate's Creek, ordained Ambrose Bourn as Minister and Pastor of the latter congregation.²¹⁸ The Great Crossing Church in 1810, Severn's Valley in 1843, and Mount Moriah in 1899, ordained their members to the Ministry and pastorate when called upon by other churches.²¹⁹ Thus, the most usual and common time for ordination was a call to the pastorate. Nevertheless, churches separated candidates to the Ministry

²¹⁸"Minutes of the East Hickman Baptist Church (Marble Creek) (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), I, June, 1801. Hereafter cited "East Hickman Minutes."

²¹⁹"Minutes of the Great Crossing Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), I, Aug., 1810, cited hereafter "Great Crossing Minutes"; "Minutes of the Severn's Valley Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes microfilmed, Louisville: SBTSL), July, 1843, cited hereafter "Severn's Valley Minutes"; "Minutes of the Mount Moriah Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), II, Apr., 1899, cited hereafter "Moriah Minutes." This procedure is supported by many other references in church and associational minutes.

for evangelistic work. David Worford, when he moved to Indiana around 1822, was ordained by the Clear Creek Church and ". . . immediately dismissed . . . to a foreign land. . . ." ²²⁰ In 1828 Great Crossing ordained a Choctaw Indian to an evangelistic ministry. ²²¹ But the most appropriate and regular opportunity for ordination was occasioned by a call to the pastorate. ²²² The occasion for ordination was not restricted to a call to the pastorate but involved also an extra-local ministry. Ordination was determined by the special needs of a congregation or unevangelized area. Usually separation was confined to these circumstances. ²²³

Whenever a candidate was ordained, the assistance and help of Elders or Ministers representing other churches was necessary for regular and orderly separation. No case of ordination was found in which ministerial representatives of other congregations did not participate. Usually the ordaining church wrote its neighbours requesting their

²²⁰ John Taylor, A History of Ten Baptist Churches, p. 199.

²²¹ "Great Crossing Minutes," II, Dec., 1828.

²²² "The Rising Ministry: its Call, Qualifications, Duties, Encouragements, etc.," Western Recorder, Jan. 28, 1871, hereafter cited "The Rising Ministry," and WR; "Hasty Ordination," WR, Nov. 1, 1883.

²²³ Bracken Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1859, p. 6; "The Rising Ministry," WR, Jan. 28, 1871; "Hasty Ordination," WR, Nov. 1, 1883.

aid.²²⁴ However, in the early decades of the Nineteenth Century churches often requested the association to appoint a committee of Ministers to examine and ordain the candidate.²²⁵ But ordination was always performed at the appeal of the church. Oftentimes the council was composed of Ministers and laymen. At this point practice in Kentucky varied. Up to the 1840's Elders alone generally constituted the council; yet, the North Bend Association in 1804 ruled that Ministers and laymen could examine and ordain.²²⁶ By the middle of the Century a mixed council was becoming more customary.²²⁷ Nevertheless, the layman was of secondary

²²⁴"Severn's Valley Minutes," July, 1843, Dec., 1860; "Minutes of the Tate's Creek Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), III, Mar., 1874; "Minutes of the Mount Moriah Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), I, Sept., 1884.

²²⁵The Elkhorn Association in 1801 appointed a committee for this purpose; Elkhorn Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1801, p. 489. The Grave Creek Church asked the Red River Association in 1807 for ministerial helps while the Richland Church in 1872 requested aid from the Union Association. "Grave Creek Baptist Church: Church Book" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), III, July, 1807, hereafter cited "Grave Creek Minutes"; Union Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1872, p. 3.

²²⁶North Bend Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1804, p. 2. In 1820 the Mount Tabor Church sent its Pastor and a Deacon to Sinking Creek Church for an ordination. "Minutes of the Mt. Tabor Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), Mar., 1820.

²²⁷Twice as many of the ordaining councils after 1840 contained lay representatives as those composed of Ministers alone. Out of twenty-one cases fourteen had mixed membership.

importance and did not enter into examination of the candidate or into other parts of the service unless only one or two Ministers were present. The presence and participation of the Ministry was understood to be extremely necessary since Elders were best qualified to judge the abilities of the candidate.²²⁸ Additionally, no church in Kentucky during the Nineteenth Century would have thought of ordaining without ministerial representation. Churches recognized their interdependent responsibilities and denominational ties and that, by the presence of Ministers representing sister churches, the authority given in ordination extended beyond the local church. Cooperation of the church and the Eldership or Ministry were necessary for ordination. An ordination without the help of ministerial aid from other congregations would have been a violation of proper order and denominational fellowship.

Ritual followed in the ordination service during the Nineteenth Century grew from a simple service in the early decades to an elaborate and formal procedure by the middle of the century. Fasting was not practiced. Up to 1830 the service generally consisted of an examination, prayer, sermon, imposition of hands and charge to the candidate.²²⁹ By 1850

²²⁸Z. T. Leavell, "What is Essential to the Ordination of a Gospel Minister?," WR, June 22, 1876.

²²⁹"East Hickman Minutes," I, June, 1801, July, 1825; "Great Crossing Minutes," II, Dec., 1828; "Severn's Valley Minutes," Aug., 1831.

the right hand of fellowship, offered by an Elder to the ordinand and signifying acceptance into ministerial fellowship, and a charge to the church warning of its responsibility to the Minister were added.²³⁰ In the 1860's presentation of a Bible to the candidate became a part of the ritual.²³¹ By the 1870's all of these rites had become standard procedure.²³² Imposition of hands on both Ministers and Deacons was consistently used throughout the century.²³³ But Baptists did not attach any sacramental significance to it. A special word must be added about the ministerial examination.

As early as 1791, presbyteries examined the qualifications of candidates for ordination.²³⁴ This practice

²³⁰"Severn's Valley Minutes," July, 1843; "History of Maysville Baptist Church," Bracken Minutes, 1874, p. 36. Hereafter cited "History of Maysville."

²³¹"History of Maysville," Bracken Minutes, 1874, p. 36. This is the earliest reference to the rite but from this time it became regular practice.

²³²"Minutes of the Otter Creek Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), June, 1872; "Severn's Valley Minutes," Jan., 1881; "Ordination," WR, Aug. 31, 1899.

²³³Nineteen out of twenty-two references included imposition of hands in ordination. Those which omitted reference to the rite probably did so by oversight. Being such a natural part of the service laying on of hands could be taken for granted.

²³⁴In 1791 Severn's Valley Church requested the Salem Association to appoint a committee and examine

continued to the end of the Nineteenth Century as an integral part of the ordination service conducted in the presence of the congregation.²³⁵ The examination, led by an Elder, investigated the ordinand's conversion experience, call to the Ministry and his doctrinal beliefs including his view of sin, inspiration of Scripture and church polity.²³⁶ Controversial issues, such as alien immersion and open communion, were subjects of close interrogation. If the ordinand answered the questions satisfactorily, the council recommended ordination. The service followed the foregoing ritual after the congregation voted for the candidate's installation.²³⁷

As seen from above election and ordination were

Josiah Dodge's qualifications. The Association selected a presbytery who questioned the candidate and recommended that he be ordained. The Association voted for his ordination. "The History of the Salem Baptist Association," Salem Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1826, p. 5.

²³⁵"Severn's Valley Minutes," Aug., 1831, July, 1843; "Minutes of the Mussel Shoals Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes microfilmed, Louisville: SBTSL), Sept., 1856; "Minutes of the Ballardville Baptist Church" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), I, Dec., 1866; "Moriah Minutes," I, Sept., 1884; "Minutes of the Tate's Creek Baptist Church," IV, June, 1893.

²³⁶"Tate's Creek Minutes," June, 1893.

²³⁷Oftentimes the church voted for ordination of the candidate before the examination. Following the interrogation the presbytery recommended installation and the service proceeded.

closely aligned. Ordination in every case could not be performed by a presbytery without the consent of the ordaining church.²³⁸ Though Kentucky Baptists considered election by the congregation the essential factor in separation to an office, appointment without ordination was unheard of. The church called the candidate to service through election, but in the mind of Baptists during the Nineteenth Century ordination was ". . . a necessary qualification for the full work of the ministry, and the divinely appointed way of entering the ministerial office. . . ." ²³⁹ Election by the church and ordination by a presbytery were component parts of separation.

In Kentucky ordination to the Ministry by a church and presbytery granted authority to administer the Sacraments.²⁴⁰ Baptists generally viewed separation as an ". . . indispensable condition to the exercise of ministerial functions. . . ." ²⁴¹ and a qualifying act for

²³⁸"East Hickman Minutes," I, June, 1801; "Severn's Valley Minutes," July, 1843; "Ballardsville Minutes," Dec., 1866; "Moriah Minutes," I, Sept., 1884.

²³⁹W. W. Gardner, "Qualifications for the Ministry," WR, Jan. 1, 1891.

²⁴⁰"Great Crossing Minutes," I, Aug., 1810; Long Run Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1846, p. 7; Stockton's Valley Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1874, p. 13; D. Dowden, "What is Ordination?," WR, Feb. 25, 1886.

²⁴¹"Ordination of Ministers. What Powers does it confer?," WR, Feb. 23, 1867. This article was an editorial.

administration of the Ordinances.²⁴² Presidency over the Sacraments was the prerogative of the Ministry. Consequently, their administration was restricted to ordained men.²⁴³

Churches usually would not celebrate the Lord's Supper or perform Baptism unless they had ministerial help.²⁴⁴ Hence, ordination bestowed on a person authority that had not been held previously. This authority extended beyond the local church. An ordained man could administer the Ordinances wherever and whenever he was called on by a Baptist church. This view indicated Baptists had developed a denominational Ministry.

However, from the middle of the Nineteenth Century to its close Kentucky Baptists came to believe that another privilege or right was granted in ordination to the Ministry. This innovation, set forth in 1854 in a tract entitled "An Old Landmark Re-Set" by J. M. Pendleton, Pastor of the Baptist church at Bowling Green, stated that the basis of a true church was believers' baptism by immersion; any church not constituted on this premise

²⁴²W. W. Gardner, "Qualifications for the Ministry," WR, Jan. 1, 1891.

²⁴³Salem Minutes, 1812, p. 2; John Taylor, op. cit., p. 89; Sulphur Fork Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1889, p. 19.

²⁴⁴The Grave Creek Church in 1814 wrote their neighbouring Salem Church asking for ministerial helps to observe Communion. "Graves Creek Minutes," I, Sept., 1814.

was a false church and consequently had no authority to ordain men to the Ministry. Therefore, non-Baptist Ministers did not have the authority to administer the Ordinances or preach the Gospel. Baptist churches could not invite non-Baptist Ministers to preach in their pulpits since to do so would be recognition of their churches, ordinations and Sacraments as valid.²⁴⁵ The authority to preach was an official capacity granted to a Minister through ordination. Without ordination from the true church, i. e., a Baptist, no person had the right to preach.²⁴⁶ Thus, the charge of "high churchism" was rightly levelled at this doctrine by J. L. Waller, S. H. Ford and A. D. Sears, editors of the Western Recorder during the 1850's.²⁴⁷ Men such as these were a minority. By the 1870's the majority of Baptists believed that the right to preach depended on ordination by a Baptist church and presbytery.²⁴⁸ In the

²⁴⁵J. M. Pendleton, "An Old Landmark Re-Set," Landmarkism, Liberalism and The Invisible Church (Third edition; Fulton, Kentucky; and St. Louis: National Baptist Publishing House, 1899), pp. 12-15.

²⁴⁶Ibid., p. 28. Pendleton's conclusions were based on believer's baptism by immersion as the key to the nature of the church. He wrote: ". . . If Jesus did not BEGIN to preach till he was baptized, what authority does the New Testament give any unbaptized man to preach? . . ." Ibid., Appendix I, p. 32.

²⁴⁷J. L. Waller, "Answer to Mr. Bennett's Question," WR, July 30, 1851; S. H. Ford, "J. M. Pendleton and High Churchism," WR, Jan. 10, 1855; A. D. Sears, "Divisions among Baptists," WR, June 3, 1857.

²⁴⁸See: Barren River Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1858, pp. 5-8; J. M. Dawson, "Is Preaching the Gospel an

1870's the Western Recorder accepted Pendleton's position and stated that ". . . because Christ has enjoined ordination of him who would enter the ministry, no one has full divine authority who enters upon this sacred office without ordination. . . ." ²⁴⁹ The insistence upon church authority in ordination and the right to preach given in the separation ceremony and its restriction to Baptist churches limited the Divine call to the Ministry of the Baptist denomination. It also demonstrated the disappearance from Baptist thought of the doctrine of the Church.

Since the Baptist church was the only true church the validity of the Sacraments also depended on the authority given in ordination. Behind this conception lay the Landmark doctrine of the historical succession of Baptist churches preserved in their purity from New Testament days by a baptismal succession at the hands of a qualified administrator whose ordination derived from a Baptist church. ²⁵⁰ From the middle of the Nineteenth Century to its close Kentucky Baptists generally believed that the

Official Act?--No. III," WR, Sept. 25, 1869; Mt. Olivet Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1874, p. 5; "Introductory Sermon," Salem Minutes, 1885, p. 10.

²⁴⁹Editorial, "Remarks upon 'R. M. D.,'" WR, June 1, 1872.

²⁵⁰See Chapter II, pp.121-22 for an exposition of this doctrine.

validity of the Ordinances depended on a qualified or official administrator, baptized by immersion into a Baptist church, regularly ordained by the congregation and presbytery and given "official authority" to perform the functions of the ministerial office. This authority had been transmitted from the Apostolic Age through a succession of immersed congregations.²⁵¹ From 1872 the Western Recorder supported this position. A. C. Caperton, editor of the paper, wrote that a regularly ordained Minister of a Baptist church had "official character" for the administration of Baptism since he had been given church authority. This authority was essential to the validity of the Ordinance.²⁵² However, there was a minority in Kentucky throughout the century who opposed this Landmark tenet. The West Union Association in 1846 recognized that some of its churches accepted "alien immersion" but advised the churches against the practice.²⁵³ Other associations and churches reflected the same diversity of opinion.²⁵⁴

²⁵¹Sulphur Fork Minutes, 1859, pp. 5-6; Goshen Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1860, p. 8; Blood River Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1870, p. 8; Little River Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1877, p. 7.

²⁵²Editorial, "The Administrator of Baptism," WR, Jan. 17, 1878.

²⁵³West Union Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1846, p. 5.

²⁵⁴The Severn's Valley Church in 1846 accepted a member into its membership from a Methodist church on the

Both J. L. Waller, editor of The Western Baptist Review, and J. L. Burrows, Pastor of the Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville, fought for the validity of non-Baptist Sacraments; theirs was a lost cause.²⁵⁵ Consequently, the significance and meaning attached to ordination was immeasurably increased by this absolute insistence on the necessity of separation by a Baptist church and presbytery for valid orders. Aside from the authority which ordination gave, Baptists understood that it possessed a religious and spiritual meaning.

Ordination was viewed as a serious, solemn occasion in which the help, advice and consent of sister churches was sought. The Severn's Valley Church called in aid from surrounding churches ". . . due to the serious nature of ordination . . ." ²⁵⁶ The ordaining congregation was conscious that other churches had a deep interest in the

basis of believer's immersion. "Severn's Valley Minutes," June, 1846. Bay's Fork Association and Union Association in 1868 and 1877 also recognized the difference in practice. Bay's Fork Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1868, p. 4; Union Minutes (Louisville: SBTSL), 1877, p. 8.

²⁵⁵J. L. Waller argued that Scripture specified only the mode and subject of Baptism and consequently a proper administrator was unnecessary for its validity. John L. Waller, "Baptism by 'Reformers' and Pedo-baptists," The Western Baptist Review, 1:370, June, 1846. Burrows said that the right to baptize was not dependent on baptismal succession but stemmed from a Divine call. J. L. Burrows, "Is it the Duty of Unbaptized Ministers to Baptize Converts?," WR, Jan. 3, 1878.

²⁵⁶"Severn's Valley Minutes," June, 1823.

proceeding. Thus, the presence and participation of Elders and delegates representing other congregations and the Ministry pointed to the event as a cooperative effort in which all churches were vitally concerned. Ordination, highlighted in the imposition of hands, was a public declaration that God had called, qualified and equipped the ordinand for the Christian Ministry. Separation meant that the Minister had been installed in office on a permanent basis provided his character and orthodoxy continued. Simultaneously the service testified to the faith of the congregation and the presbytery in the candidate. The church ordained; but the presbytery recognized the ordinand as an Elder, welcomed him into a denominational, ministerial fellowship and witnessed in conjunction with the church: here was a Minister of Christ. Finally, ordination was a separation ". . . to the Sacred office of the ministry . . . by imposition of hands Prayer and other rituals . . ." ²⁵⁷

The weakness of the doctrine of ordination among Kentucky Baptists lay in its elevation of church authority. This tenet carried to its logical conclusion precluded the possibility of a Divine call and consequently valid

²⁵⁷"Minutes of the Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, Shelby County" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), from a "Credential given at Ordination," appended to minutes, Vol. I. For a typical certificate of license and ordination see appendix B of this thesis.

Ministry outside the Baptist faith.

These statements may be made in conclusion. Among Baptists ordination occurred when a person was called to the pastorate, to the Eldership and to service as an Evangelist. J. R. Graves, due to his view of the church limited ordination to the pastoral ministry. Ordination by the Ministry was necessary but not essential for proper qualification since Christ through His Word and Power dwelling in the congregation gave the church the right to create and appoint her officers. Other congregations represented by Elders and messengers at the service witnessed that ordination was not to an independent Ministry; that all congregations were vitally concerned; that the Ministry was deeply interested and that the authority given the candidate extended throughout the denomination. The highlight of the ordination service consisted in imposition of hands, generally carried out by Ministers alone. This act represented concurrence and sanction of the congregation, sister churches and Ministry in the abilities and call of the ordinand. It was a public event dramatically illustrating appointment and consecration to a sacred moral obligation and function. Ordination gave a Minister the right to administer the Ordinances. This privilege was customarily restricted to the Ministry. Baptists generally

recognized the validity of non-Baptist Ordinances as seen in the acceptance of alien immersion. But in the Nineteenth Century through the influence of Landmarkism, spread and initiated by J. R. Graves and J. M. Pendleton, the traditional Baptist doctrine of the Church was swept away. This event, coupled with Graves' and Pendleton's doctrine of visible, Baptist church succession from the New Testament including a divine polity, forced the rejection of non-Baptist Sacraments. Ordination, though performed at the request of and on behalf of the congregation as an appointment to its service, was a separation to a denominational Ministry.

CHAPTER V

A BAPTIST DOCTRINE OF ORDINATION--AN APPRAISAL

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A BAPTIST DOCTRINE OF ORDINATION--AN APPRAISAL

A Baptist doctrine of ordination will be set forth in this chapter. Conclusions reached through historical study in the preceding chapters will be stated. On the basis of this evidence, contemporary Baptist thought, and the author's interpretation and understanding of the subject, a doctrine of ordination will be developed. The focal points of exposition are: the source of authority, the ministerial office and its relation to the church, vocation and the significance of ordination.

Baptist understanding of the nature of the church determined their view of authority. Until the advent of J. R. Graves and Landmarkism, Baptists believed in the doctrine of the invisible Church. However, they emphasized that its visible manifestation was focused in particular congregations gathered by the Holy Spirit through confession of faith and baptism. Christ bestowed through his presence in the congregation in Word and Power all authority necessary to elect and ordain officers. This view of the church did not mean that each congregation was to be completely independent and blind to the burdens and problems of other churches. Because Baptists held a common faith they were under Christ as members of one body.

Thus each congregation realized its responsibilities and obligations to other churches in appointment to the Ministry. Since the ordination of a man was not to an independent, localized Ministry, congregational authority was shared with Elders who represented sister churches and the Ministry. In the southern part of the United States the influence of Graves helped destroy two fundamental tenets of Baptists. First, by defining the nature of the church solely in terms of a local, visible congregation constituted on confession of faith and immersion, he denied the doctrine of the invisible Church. The church was legal and institutional in character. Second, he substituted a view of authority that depended for its validity on a historical succession of organized churches perpetuated from New Testament times by a baptismal succession, the agent of which was the Ministry, for a doctrine of authority which derived its power of ordering from Christ's presence in the congregation. Both of these constituted a radical break with and perversion of Baptist ecclesiology.

In the Seventeenth Century in England and the Eighteenth Century in America Baptists held that their polity was of divine origin but they did not insist that it excluded other types. Their interest and efforts were directed toward a regenerated church and the right of each congregation to elect its officers. They denied that

episcopal authority was necessary for the appointment of a valid Ministry. Yet, they refused to say that the Baptist Ministry was the only true Ministry.

A Ministry consisting of Deacons and Elders was of divine appointment. Ministry in the church was a manifestation of God's grace poured out in the congregation through the Holy Spirit for the edification and instruction of the gathered community. Abilities and capacities were given to particular members some of whom were separated to office. But the individuals so blessed by the Holy Spirit did not own the gifts. Their primary relationship to the church was corporate. Their purpose was service to and for the congregation. The ministry of the Spirit was God's gift to the entire congregation. An orderly and regularly separated Ministry was necessary but not essential to a true church, since a congregation did not depend for its existence on the Ministry. Historically Baptists held that the validity of the Ministry depended on the congregation's election and appointment. But Graves made the validity of the Ministry contingent on believer's immersion since he viewed the nature of the church as institutional and legal in character and immersion the basis of entrance. He denied the validity of episcopal consecration but replaced it with authority transmitted by baptism. In making this substitution he fell into a greater error. He gave baptism

a new significance by using it as the guarantor and channel for the transmission of a legal authority without which no Ministry was valid. This was a complete misunderstanding of New Testament baptism and ministry. The logic of this thought led to an extremely high doctrine of the ministerial office and helped minimize the concept of Minister as servant and his abilities as belonging to the congregation. This influence, combined with a spirit of rugged individualism, characteristic of the Nineteenth Century in America, led the candidate to believe that God's gifts belonged to him personally and that only he could determine where and how they were to be used.

Ministry or service was construed in two phases, one to the particular church and the other to the denomination and the world. The ministry of an Elder was both local and extra-local. He was a representative and servant of Christ in the congregation and a representative and servant of Christ and the church in the world. Preaching was not confined to the ordained Ministry. This fact was indicative of the free expression of gifts in the congregation. Baptists looked upon the ministerial office as a serious, sacred responsibility. In preaching, the Minister was the mouth of God to the people; in prayer, he was the mouth of the people to God. Ministers were stewards of the mysteries of the Gospel, ambassadors of peace and shepherds

and overseers of the flock. Ordination was performed because Baptists understood that the ministry of the Word involved two specific responsibilities, proclamation of the Gospel and Teaching, apart from the duty of all believers to witness to the faith.

In England and America the formative stages of Baptist life witnessed close congregational supervision, testing and judging of a gifted member's qualifications for the Ministry. The initiative in calling to service lay with the church not the individual. A Christian's talents were improved first within the congregation. If the person matured sufficiently, the church commissioned him to preach publicly but did not grant authority to administer the Ordinances. This public trial of gifts was the period of license. Sometimes license was revoked on the basis of poor character or preaching ability. Divine vocation did not insure ordination. Qualifications for the Ministry stemmed from the Scriptures. In early Baptist life a divine vocation was the essential qualification for ordination. But a disciple's feeling that it was his duty to enter the Ministry did not automatically guarantee his summons to office. On the contrary, the congregation felt a strong sense of responsibility and obligation to test and judge the call rather than simply surrender to what the candidate felt about it. However,

after an initial period of establishment in England and America, the congregational initiative in calling out and supervision of ministerial candidates relaxed. The individual assumed the right to present himself to the church as a qualified candidate. Generally the member took this action on the basis of his divine call alone. Several factors contributed to this change. First, with the elevation of the Ministry its authority and respect increased. Ministers were appointed by God and equipped by the Holy Spirit. Consequently the congregation developed the attitude that it was only right and proper to ordain one whom God had appointed. Second, a shortage of Ministers led to increased emphasis on the divine vocation. This in turn made a divine call the sole prerequisite for ordination. Finally, the foregoing factor coupled with a virile spirit of individualism led the candidate to believe that his abilities belonged to himself and that he had the right to determine how and where they were used. This spirit and an extreme emphasis on the subjective aspect of divine call caused the congregation to feel that thorough testing and approbation of one of its members would be a criticism of God and cast suspicion on His action. These factors changed Baptists' understanding of the divine call. Thus, the perception of divine vocation was transferred from a corporate, congregational apprehension to a personal, subjective

consciousness of the call. The congregation and the candidate came to believe that he had a divine right to enter the Ministry. Among other qualifications such as conversion, character, ability to teach and education Baptists strongly insisted that divine vocation and congregational approval were essential to license and ordination.

Graves made believer's immersion at the hands of a Baptist Minister an essential qualification for ordination. To make the mode, the subject of baptism, and congregational authority essential prerequisites for ordination and to equate all three with divine vocation is to limit God's purpose and activity to a specific form of order. This actually implies that we, not God, make Ministers and that God can only have a valid Ministry in our kind of churches.

In both England and America Baptists ordained on the basis of need and service. Though the usual occasion was the church's call to the pastoral office, ordination was not restricted to it. On many occasions men were called to be Elders in the congregation or appointed to an evangelistic ministry. But a man was never ordained until the congregation saw a need for service. In theory the presence of Elders was not essential to ordination; but in actual practice Ministers, representing sister congregations and the Ministry, participated in the service.

The occasion of ordination and the necessity of ministerial aid indicated that Baptists recognized and accepted an extra-local view of the Ministry. Graves did not agree with this view because he limited ordination to the pastoral office. The source of this restriction must be attributed to his doctrine of the church which is indicative of an atomistic and individualistic concept of the Ministry.

The ordination council or presbytery was sometimes composed of Elders alone and sometimes of Elders and laymen; Elders always led. The right to lay on hands was restricted to Ministers. The examination in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries was conducted before the congregation. In the Nineteenth Century practice varied. But there was strong evidence that the examination was passing from a public service before the congregation to a private meeting in which the Ministry assumed the right to judge the candidate's qualifications. This transition pointed to the increasing authority of the Ministry. Interrogation of the candidate included his conversion, call, character and his views of doctrine and polity with particular emphasis being given to controversial issues. In the first half of the Seventeenth Century the ritual used in separation began with a simple service consisting of fasting, prayer and imposition of hands. In the following years it came to include a sermon, charge, the right hand of ministerial fellowship

and presentation of the Bible.

The calling or election of a man to office by the church was the essence of separation. However, Baptists believed that the scriptural and necessary method of appointment was ordination by a presbytery. Election and ordination were so closely woven in Baptist thought that election to office without ministerial ordination was considered defective and incomplete. This view carried within it a rejection of the need for episcopal consecration and apostolic succession. The Ministry was dependent on the church and Christ for its existence not on Christ and the Ministry. It also demonstrated the need for a regularly appointed Ministry.

The authority given in ordination included the right to lead the congregation and administer the Ordinances. This latter privilege was usually restricted to a Minister. In the early life of Baptists only the Pastor or Pastors could administer the Lord's Supper; but with the development of a denominational consciousness and Ministry, any Minister with the permission of the congregation could preside. Graves seriously departed from Baptist tradition when he made the validity of the Ordinances and the right to preach the Gospel depend on Baptist ordination. His doctrine of ordination was "high-church" since he argued that it granted an official capacity to administer the

Ordinances and preach. The influence of his position is seen in Kentucky where the majority of Baptists agreed and accepted it. Until the Campbellite controversy and Graves' doctrinal position penetrated Baptist thought, alien immersion was generally received in Baptist churches.

Ordination, though performed by a council, was done in the name of and on behalf of the ordaining congregation. The church actually ordained. This service of separation was a public seal and testimony to the work and gifts of the Holy Spirit in the candidate and the congregation. It witnessed to the world that the ordained man was a Minister of Christ. It vouched for his character, ability and call. The focal point of the service was seen in the imposition of hands and the right hand of fellowship. The laying on of hands performed by Ministers was a petition of prayer to God that the Holy Spirit would further equip and nourish the Minister's gifts. The Ministers, though ordaining for the congregation, represented sister churches and the Ministry. Their presence at and participation in the service signified the sanction, interest and prayer of sister congregations and the Ministry. The right hand of fellowship offered by an Elder welcomed the newly ordained into a ministerial fellowship and a denominational Ministry. Ordination was the delegation of a trust, a sacred responsibility and a public recognition that a man had become an

overseer and shepherd of souls.

One of the contributions of Baptists to past and current thought on the nature of the Church has been the insistence that it is best understood in terms of the particular congregation. We say this because we believe that the gathered community comes closest in capturing the New Testament view of fellowship as a participation in and sharing of the Holy Spirit with one another.¹ This sharing can only occur in a relationship of community which appears clearest and strongest in congregationalism. God's action in creating community is essential to the being of the congregation. The Holy Spirit by God's grace calls us to be his children through Christ. We do not call ourselves to His Church; the initiative is in God's hands though oftentimes unknown and unrecognized by us. But response is made on our part by confession of faith and baptism. Confession of faith by the believer is essential to church membership. The regenerate church can only be composed of believers and confessors not infants. This position is true to the New Testament and the historic witness of Baptists. From the middle of the Seventeenth Century we have practiced and required baptism by immersion as the

¹L. S. Thornton, The Common Life in the Body of Christ (Third edition; London: Dacre Press, 1950), pp. 77-78.

visible, public sign of entrance to the church because this mode most accurately and truly represents not only Christ's death, burial and resurrection but publicly enacts the entire history of our individual and corporate redemption--the death and burial of sin and the actual, spiritual and moral resurrection of a new life. This rebirth is life in Christ shared with others. Baptism is not essential to this rebirth. Individuals are called by God into communities or congregations of believers not by baptism but on the basis of their confession of faith in Christ. The test of whether or not they are God's people is found in their life and witness to Him as Lord and Saviour and whether or not they show what Paul calls in Galatians "the fruit of the Spirit."² A true fellowship of believers is determined by Christ's presence. Where two or three are gathered in His name there Christ is. His presence among gathered believers is the in-churching principle. To those called out of the world by the Holy Spirit and who have responded by a community relationship, Christ has given all necessary authority and power to govern themselves.

The preceding statement sets forth in essence the

²Galatians 5:22-23. All scripture references in this chapter are to the Revised Standard Version. The New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Revised Standard Version; New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1946).

Baptist view of the source of authority in congregational polity. Christ dwelling in Word and Power among gathered believers supplies all authority requisite for appointment to the Ministry. Our polity has its divine source in the New Testament. This fact has always been insisted on by Baptists from their beginning as a denomination in the Seventeenth Century. The New Testament is the basis of our claim for a divine form of government. However, it is divine because it comes out of the New Testament not because Christ instituted it. There is no record in the Gospel that the Saviour or the Apostles gave any instructions as to the form of organization or polity to be used by His followers.³ The New Testament remains silent on the requirements for church organization. This much and no more may be said about the polity of the New Testament. There is scriptural evidence for congregational, presbyterial and episcopal types of government.⁴ But why was

³Fenton John Anthony Hort, The Christian Ecclesia (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1898), pp. 230-31; Thomas M. Lindsay, The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1903), p. 132.

⁴This conclusion is thoroughly substantiated by B. H. Streeter in The Primitive Church. After definitive study of scriptural evidence he found that, by the end of the First Century, there had been an evolution of church order which contained the prototypes of congregational, presbyterial and episcopal polities. Burnett Hillman Streeter, The Primitive Church, Studied with Special Reference to the Origins of the Christian Ministry (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1930), p. ix.

there such little concern for church order among Christians of the Apostolic Age? There are several reasons. First, they strongly believed and trusted the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit in everything they did. Second, since they expected the Lord to return at any moment they saw no need to worry about organization. Last, membership in the New Israel was far more important to them than any form of polity.⁵ No doubt forms of church government were affected by those of surrounding social and religious institutions, but the principle that determined polity was the suitability of organization for the edification and instruction of the community.

Baptists do not insist, as the Roman Catholic and Anglican communions do, that the source of authority for the Ministry depends on a divine commission transmitted through a historical episcopate in unbroken succession from the Apostles. On the contrary, we are convinced by the evidence of the New Testament and our early Baptist history that the source of authority for ordination lies in the community of gathered believers. This is true because Christ is present in Word and Power. We are at one with other Protestants on this point. Presbyterians,

⁵Hort, *op. cit.*, p. 231; Streeter, *op. cit.*, p. 52; Emil Brunner, The Misunderstanding of the Church, trans. Harold Knight (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953), p. 59.

Methodists and Lutherans--though they differ with the Baptist communion on the nature of the visible Church--agree that the source of authority lies in God's Word and Christ's presence in the visible Church. This succession from the New Testament, rather than episcopal consecration, guarantees and provides the authority to ordain. Methodists and Presbyterians locate the human side of authority in the Ministry. Baptists find it in the congregation. We believe that congregational polity is the best type and most adequately reflects the spirit of the New Testament and that it also most completely preserves and interprets a cardinal doctrine of Protestantism, the universal priesthood of believers. But as P. T. Forsyth said, no polity is ". . . undivine which gives scope to the word of the Gospel and the prophetic freedom of its redemption. . . ." ⁶ Though Baptists believe that each congregation is autonomous they recognize their responsibility to other congregations. Emphasis has always been placed by Baptists on the particular church, but they have also acknowledged their interdependence arising out of a common faith. This faith not only ties us to our Baptist brethren but also to other Christians. Baptists of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries emphasized

⁶P. T. Forsyth, The Church and The Sacraments (Third edition; London: Independent Press Ltd., 1949), p.80.

that the visible church was seen in the particular congregation. Nevertheless they confessed belief in the doctrine of the invisible Church which expressed the unity of all Christians. This Church was composed of the elect of all ages. Their unity consisted not in ecclesiastical polity but in a common confession of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. This agrees with the New Testament view of the Church.

If the New Testament is read carefully, two aspects of the Church will be recognized. First of all, the local congregation is the primary and fundamental visible manifestation of the Church.⁷ The true nature of God's people is revealed most lucidly in the congregation for it is here that our relationship to Christ and one another is sharpest. This must be admitted whether or not one holds to the doctrine of a universal, visible Church or to that of the invisible Church. The local congregation of gathered believers most perfectly realizes union with Christ. Second, Christians of the First Century understood that they were one in Christ. This unity was not based or formed on any one type of church polity. Organizational structure was not the basis of visible unity. The church at Rome was not united with the church of Jerusalem by the same form of

⁷Lesslie Newbigin, The Household of God (New York: Friendship Press, 1954), pp. 117, 119.

government. However, there was a real sense in which visible unity existed among all Christians and churches. No matter where they actually lived, if in Rome or Antioch, Christians understood themselves to be joined by faith in Christ. They were the people of God (I Peter 2:10), the true Remnant of Israel (Romans 11:15, 17; Galatians 4:28) and the New Israel (Romans 9:6-8, 23-29; Galatians 6:16; Hebrews 2:12-13). The basis of oneness was fellowship and love, a common sharing in Christ and the Holy Spirit.⁸

Early Baptist thought is true to the New Testament on this view of the Church. Congregational authority to appoint the Ministry is preserved. Nevertheless, we are not merely independent churches. This is true primarily in our relation to each other within the denomination where we confess faith in one Lord Jesus Christ and have the same form of polity. But we are bound to and are responsible for other Christians as well. They too are joined with us in the same Christ and share the same fellowship and Holy Spirit. God has also called them to be holy.

The Baptist view of authority has been defined. But the question may be asked, where does the Ministry originate? Does it come directly from Christ to the Church, or does it arise out of the congregation? Again, does the

⁸Lindsay, op. cit., pp. 20-21; Brunner, op. cit., p. 10.

New Testament specify one divine type of ministerial office such as the episcopate or presbyterate which automatically excludes other forms? These questions must be answered to determine the Baptist view of the Ministry.

There is no indisputable evidence in the New Testament that Jesus, the Apostles or Paul formally commanded that any one type of office or officers were to be instituted in the Church and made permanent until the return of Christ. The New Testament pictures two kinds of ministry active in the First Century. One is itinerant in nature belonging to the entire Church and tied down to no particular congregation. This missionary ministry was carried out by apostles, prophets and teachers (I Corinthians 12:28) and served to unite and bind together the New Israel. Their authority came from the immediate gift of the Holy Spirit. Though their ministry was prophetic, particular congregations had the duty and right to test the genuineness of their gifts (I John 4:1). The other ministry was local and twofold. It was composed of elders (bishops or pastors) and deacons.⁹ The episcopate arose from the elevation of the presbyterate and was not a localization of the itinerant

⁹Lindsay, op. cit., pp. 152-53. In Gentile churches the terms poimenes and episcopoi describe the functions or work done while presbyteros signifies the title of office. Ibid.

ministry.¹⁰ Thus there is a clear description of two kinds of ministry in the First Century, a local and an itinerant ministry. Elevation of the episcopate was a later development. In the closing years of this century the itinerant ministry was passing away and the local ministry was crystalizing into offices. This statement needs explanation for behind it lies the basis of ministry.

There were no offices or officers as we know them today in the New Testament. Offices grew out of functions or services performed by Christians for the congregation. I Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4 do not contain lists of formal offices but are lists of functions used to describe different kinds of service executed by Christians for the congregation or Church.¹¹ The source of office must be traced to the meaning of function and service. Function and service in turn are rooted in the understanding of charismata in the New Testament and particularly in Pauline usage.

Gifts are either those natural capacities and abilities with which we are born or special advantages received from God during our lifetime which qualify us for service.

¹⁰J. B. Lightfoot, "The Christian Ministry," Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (Fourth edition; London: Macmillan and Co., 1879), p. 200.

¹¹Hort, op. cit., p. 160.

Both the natural and special endowments are free gifts from the Holy Spirit to the individual and the community. These gifts or abilities to serve are not primarily for the individual but for the building up of the body of Christ.¹² God is the source of these divine gifts which equip one for service. The functions of healing, prophesying, teaching, ruling etc. (I Corinthians 12:28-29) are abilities bestowed on individuals for service; their purpose is best seen in I Peter 4:10: "As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: . . ." In the New Testament, gifts, service and leadership are inseparably bound. Jesus himself embodies this idea in precept and example.

Offices arose out of functions or services. The appointment of the Seven in Acts 6:1-6 was for a particular service determined on the basis of need. These men performed a ministry. But, and this is the important thing to notice, every member of the congregation was a potential minister or servant. The fundamental meaning of ministry is service.¹³ The ministry of the Word and the ministry of kindness in Acts 6:1-6 was not the

¹²Ibid., pp. 153-54; Lindsay, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

¹³J. Robert Nelson, The Realm of Redemption (Greenwich, Connecticut: The Seabury Press, 1951), p. 147; H. Richard Niebuhr and Daniel O. Williams (eds.), The Ministry in Historical Perspectives (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), pp. 1-2.

exclusive right of a particular class. The Apostles and the Seven were in a special sense responsible for this work. However, the entire community was charged with both ministries.¹⁴ Gifts differed in individuals but this variety of talents did not create a special, distinct status for those Christians with many abilities. All talents were needed and were gifts of the Holy Spirit for service and edification. This is the significance and meaning of I Corinthians 12:4-8 and Romans 12:14-30 where the metaphor of the body is used.

Ministry in the New Testament was shared by all Christians. This is the heart of the idea of ministry. It embraces the priesthood of all believers. The priests of the New Testament are the saints or members of the Christian fellowship.¹⁵ New Testament sacerdotalism is the priesthood of all believers.

The universal priesthood of believers is fundamental to the Baptist view of ministry. Baptists have always believed that an individual has direct access to God's mercy through Jesus Christ. Rebirth and consequent spiritual

¹⁴T. W. Manson, The Church's Ministry (London: Hodder & Stoughton Limited, 1948), p. 57.

¹⁵Lightfoot, op. cit., pp. 185-86; R. Newton Flew, Jesus and His Church (Second edition; London: The Epworth Press, 1943), p. 147; Brunner, op. cit., pp. 50-51.

nourishment come without the intervention of a priestly caste. This view is certainly true to the New Testament concept of charismata. God has blessed his people by pouring out gifts through the Holy Spirit on the gathered community. These gifts, though given to the Christian, are given for service and ministry on behalf of the congregation. Possession of abilities always involves a corporate responsibility. Every ministry is a holy service or function whether it be teaching, proclaiming the Word, ruling or caring for the poor. Each service is equal in importance. Early Baptists believed this but it needs to be reemphasized today. Every believer in a particular congregation shares in Christ's ministry. This participation and its obligations sweep away any basis for the distinction between clergy and laity. Since all of us are priests for others, any Christian with the permission of the congregation may preach, baptize or administer the Lord's Supper.

Nevertheless, there is a special sense in which Baptists speak of the Ministry. This use of the term refers to a twofold ministry or function seen in the offices of Bishop, Elder or Presbyter and Deacon. Baptists of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries thought of this ordained Ministry as divinely appointed and originating in the New Testament. Yet, they did not deny the claims of other denominations to scriptural

precedents for their offices.

In Baptist ecclesiology the Ministry is the gift of God to the Church but it comes through the particular congregation. This view differs from that of the Presbyterians, Methodists, Anglicans and Roman Catholics who hold that the Ministry is the gift of God to the universal, visible Church. Baptists believe that God's graces are granted to the gathered community whose duty it is to test and prove the gifts. If the congregation is convinced of a Christian's abilities, he is ordained either to the ministry of a Deacon or to that of an Elder.

The Ministry, as seen particularly in the office of Bishop, Elder or Minister, has a twofold function which is primarily the task of the entire congregation. The ministry is conceived in terms of kerygma, proclamation of the Gospel's good news to the world, and didache, instruction or teaching within the gathered community. The former service is apostolic while the latter is pastoral. Both are the task of all Christians.¹⁶ However, in a special sense they become the responsibility of those holding the ministerial office. Ministers thus have a dual role as does the church. They are Shepherds, Overseers and Rulers of the flock in their pastoral office and Heralds and Ministers of reconciliation

¹⁶Manson, op. cit., pp. 32-33.

in their apostolic function. In both they are servants and Ministers of Christ to the congregation and through the gathered community are Ministers of Christ and the church to the world.

A Christian does not become a Minister of the congregation and Christ by simply saying "I want to be a Minister." There are qualities without some of which no man can be a Minister of the Word.

The New Testament makes it very plain that the essential prerequisite for ministry is a divine vocation. This calling must be apprehended subjectively and personally by the individual; it must be consciously understood and tested for authenticity by the community. A divine call to minister has two sides, subjective within the believer and objective within the Church.

The personal, subjective side of divine vocation is seen in Acts 13:2 where the church is directed to separate Paul and Barnabas for the work to which the Holy Spirit has called them; it is also witnessed in Acts 20:27-28 where Paul, in his farewell address to the Ephesian elders, distinctly points out that it was the Holy Spirit who made them overseers. Paul himself in Acts 22:10, 21; 26:16-18 and Galatians 1:1 ascribes his ministry to the call of God. In the New Testament, appointment to minister is always attributed to God.¹⁷ Vocation was an inward experience

¹⁷Flew, op. cit., p. 142.

and conviction coming from a necessity to proclaim the good news of the risen Lord. As Paul said in I Corinthians 9:16: "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" The believer was convinced through his experience that God had called him.

The objective aspect of the Holy Spirit's call to the individual was witnessed by the Church in the charismata and qualifications given to the believer.¹⁸ These free gifts were to be used in building up the body of Christ. At Pentecost the Spirit was given to the community, not isolated individuals. It was never a private possession.¹⁹ Implicit in the purpose of these gifts is test and judgment by the congregation. The New Testament recognizes a strong corporate responsibility not only for employment of a person's abilities but also for the community's obligation to discern their genuineness (I John 4:2). Prophets in the church at Antioch pointed to Paul and Barnabas as being equipped by the Holy Spirit for service. Congregations such as these did not have the Bible by which to test the charismata in a believer. Neither were the Apostles always present.²⁰ But they had been given the Holy Spirit. They

¹⁸See Rom. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12:8-10, 28; Eph. 4:11-12; I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

¹⁹Nelson, op. cit., p. 44; Flew, op. cit., p. 109.

²⁰Forsyth, op. cit., p. 135.

were so convinced of His guidance that they knew He would give them the power to discern between a true and a false prophet. God was the source of divine vocation. The Church with the Holy Spirit, not the individual, judged the genuineness of the call.

These two aspects, a personal apprehension and congregational consciousness of divine vocation witnessed in the individual's charismata, were characteristic of Baptist thought in England and America during the initial phase of growth. The gathered community, because it possessed the same Spirit given to the gifted believers, felt a strong obligation to test and supervise its members in the exercise of their gifts. A divine vocation from the congregational viewpoint made itself clear in the individual's conversion, character and ability to interpret the Word of God. The congregation judged and tested the Christian's qualifications for ministry. In fact it was the church oftentimes that made the individual conscious of the personal, subjective side of divine vocation.

As mentioned previously, the objective aspect of vocation disappeared from Baptist life in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries.²¹ The personal apprehension of divine calling was elevated and the church surrendered

²¹Supra, pp. 282-83.

its right to judge and supervise gifts. If Baptists are true to the New Testament, there must be a radical reorientation at this point. The Scriptures recognize and demand congregational responsibility in the testing of qualifications and divine vocation. When we permit a Christian to enter the Ministry on the basis of his subjective experience alone, we deny our early Baptist tradition and reject an explicit principle grounded in the New Testament Church.

A divine vocation in its personal, inward manifestation is essential for entrance into the Ministry. All Protestant communions agree on this. In one sense of the word the Minister's authority comes directly from this inward call which is the conviction of an abiding necessity to preach the Gospel. When looking at the Ministry from this angle neither the Church nor the church creates it. In Baptist thought the gathered community appoints and selects the Ministry. The church neither gives the message nor the gifts. Christ does this. He chooses Ministers through his community.²² This idea can be stated in another way. The Minister's authority rests on the divine call to him personally, but it is authenticated and made valid by the congregation. Self approval is insufficient. Proof of divine call must be demonstrated.

²²Forsyth, op. cit., p. 139.

However, within recent years the scope of divine vocation has been changing. No longer is it limited to the Pastor, Elder or Minister and interpreted as a secret, inward, spiritually mystical experience occurring in solitary confinement. As Richard Niebuhr notes: ". . . it is rather a call extended to social man, the member of a community, through the mediation of community. . . ." ²³ This call is seen in the emerging multiple ministries of churches which are now stressing God's invitation to church related vocations and service. This emphasis is a rediscovery of the New Testament significance and meaning of ministry as service. It does not deny the necessity of inward vocation. It only reinterprets the nature of calling.

A final question must be asked. What significance and meaning does ordination have for Baptists in light of the New Testament, their past history and the contemporary understanding of ministry?

Evidence for understanding the meaning of ordination in the New Testament is scarce. No clearly defined doctrine is presented in the Scriptures. The word group, cheirotonein and cheirotomia, which later came to mean ordination in an ecclesiastical sense, can only be understood as elect or

²³H. Richard Niebuhr, The Purpose of The Church and Its Ministry (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), p. 85.

appoint in the New Testament.²⁴ This is all that can be said about the meaning of these words. Passages which may refer to ordination are found only in Acts and the Pastorals. Here there is evidence for the idea that ordination with the laying on of hands was the act of the congregation by which a person was separated to a special ministry or service. There is no evidence that ordination grants spiritual power or gifts unobtainable by other methods.²⁵

I Timothy 4:14 and II Timothy 1:6 may refer to baptism but the context makes ordination more likely. I Timothy 5:22 can refer to either ordination or restoration of a penitent. There is also the possibility that Acts 13:3 means ordination. If it does, it is not a bestowal of new gifts or a different ministry because both Paul and Barnabas have already been serving (Acts 13:1; Galatians 1:21; cf. Acts 11:24ff.). Therefore, the significance of the act here is separation to a new phase of ministry for the congregation. The Seven are set apart in Acts 6:6 but there is no indication that either new spiritual gifts are given or an office is established. The men are

²⁴Heber F. Peacock, "Ordination in the New Testament," Review and Expositor, 55:262, July, 1958. I am deeply indebted to Dr. Heber F. Peacock of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for the majority of the material on the New Testament meaning of ordination.

²⁵Ibid.

separated for a special function or service.²⁶ This conclusion agrees with the meaning and purpose of charismata in the New Testament and the fact that in the early community of the Apostolic Period ministry was understood and defined in terms of function not office.

Study thus far leads to the inevitable conclusion that some form of ordination was practiced in the First Century but it was not universal since it is confined to Acts and the Pastorals which appear late in early Christianity.²⁷

The use of laying on of hands in ordination must also be noted. This practice comes out of the same background as its employment in the act of blessing, gift of the Spirit and healing. Studied with these practices in mind imposition of hands in ordination ". . . is a part of the prayer for the continued presence and blessing of the Spirit. . . ." ²⁸

Combining the significance of imposition of hands with the process of separation, ordination in the New Testament is an act of the entire congregation which demonstrates its consciousness of a missionary responsibility,

²⁶Ibid., pp. 264-65.

²⁷Ibid., p. 265.

²⁸Ibid., p. 271.

the guidance of the Holy Spirit and a prayer of intercession for the Spirit's continued blessing in its ministry.²⁹ This is the ministry of a church represented in an individual and not his personal ministry.

Several other important observations also may be made. From New Testament evidence we cannot determine whether ordination was essential for holding office in the later meaning of that word. Neither can we determine who performed ordination. Definitely the Apostles, Paul and Timothy did but we cannot say this procedure was always followed.

Baptists follow what they believe to be the New Testament meaning of ordination. Usually a man is ordained when he is called by a church to the pastorate. However, the occasion for ordination is not determined by the pastoral call but on the basis of need or service. The fact that Baptists of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries ordained men for the evangelistic ministry indicates that ministry has an extra-local significance. This means that ordination must be understood in a local and extra-local context. Baptists recognize the denominational significance of ordination by the participation of Pastors and lay leaders in the service of separation.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 273-74.

We feel that a man who is ordained to the Ministry must be well qualified. Therefore, an examination of the candidate's qualifications is required before his ordination. A council composed of Ministers and oftentimes laymen from sister churches question the individual concerning his conversion, call to the Ministry and his doctrinal views. His character and piety are also judged. Increasingly we are emphasizing the need for college level training and seminary work. Nevertheless, the degree and standard of judgement for necessary qualifications vary greatly within the denomination. Baptists insist, however, that the essential prerequisites for ordination from the standpoint of the individual and the church are evidence of a divine vocation and a call to service by the church. The ordinand does not necessarily have to be called to the pastoral office.

The service of ordination usually includes a sermon, charge to the candidate concerning his responsibility, imposition of hands by the Ministry, ordaining prayer and presentation of a Bible to denote the commission to minister the Word.

Ordination gives the Minister authority to administer Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Generally these rites are restricted to the Ministry but there is no power given in ordination that inherently excludes any Christian, with

permission of the congregation, from officiating over the Ordinances.

The Baptist doctrine of ordination closely approximates the meaning of ordination in the New Testament. The imposition of hands is an intercessory prayer made to God by the ordaining church, sister congregations and the Ministry in which His blessing and the continued presence of the Holy Spirit are sought for the ministry of this consecrated individual. It is a recognition of God's call to service and the Spirit's activity in the individual and the congregation. Ordination is in essence performed on behalf of the electing church but there is a spiritual sense in which the whole denomination ordains. Ministers and other congregations participate and add their approval and authority to the separation.

This newly separated person is in a special sense a Minister and servant of Christ. Within the congregation he is intimately related to the people as Pastor. He is also a Minister of Christ first in the larger fellowship of the denomination and second among other communions. His authority is limited only by the congregation before which he appears. Ordination has given him a commission to minister in the gathered community's name but also in the name of Christ.

One additional question must be asked in regard to

the meaning of ordination. Shall we recognize non-Baptist Ministers and churches as participating in a true ministry of Christ? The author, after careful study of the New Testament doctrine of the Church and early Baptist thought on the subject, has concluded that to be true to the Scriptures and Baptist tradition we must acknowledge other Protestant communions as true churches and their Ministry as representatives of Christ. The true Church is not built on any one form of church polity but on confession of faith in Christ as Lord. I John 1:1-3 reveals the basis and test of the true Church:

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life--the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us--that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. . . .

Wherever witness is borne through testimony, life and proclamation of the Word there the true Church is.

Other Protestant denominations believe that conversion, divine vocation and the need for a candidate's services are essential to ordination. The only point of disagreement between these denominations and Baptists is over the source of authority for ordination. Since evidence for congregational, presbyterial and episcopal forms of

polity can be found in the New Testament, we cannot say that any one type is exclusively divine and essential to a true Ministry.

The refusal to recognize other Protestant communions and their Ministry as true representatives of Christ reflects a dangerous attitude. Such rejection intellectualizes faith and the Gospel. It expresses the belief that correct doctrine and polity are the clues to the nature of the Church and are essential to its existence. It denies a need for the Holy Spirit. The true Church ceases to be born from confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The vital New Testament reality of fellowship in Christ through the Holy Spirit fades into orthodoxy. Assent to what tradition teaches rather than the Word of God becomes the key to the nature of the Church.

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APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

Associational Certificate

To all Christian people, to whom these presents may come, send greeting.

This certifies that the bearer hereof, Rev. David Thomas, late of Chester county, in the province of Pennsylvania, but now residing and dwelling in Farquair county, in the province of Virginia, was, (after due examination, whereby he appeared to have a competent share of learning and other prerequisites to the sacred office,) admitted into holy orders, according to the known and approved rites of the Baptist church, whereby he is authorized to preach the gospel, and administer the ordinances. And also certifies, that at all times, before and after his ordination, (for any thing known, heard, or believed to the contrary,) he lived a holy and unblemished life. And we do hereby recommend him as such to the notice, esteem, and regard of all Christians where he now does, or hereafter may reside.¹

Certificate of Ordination

To all people, to whom these presents shall come; the subscribers send greeting--Being convened at _____ on the ___ day of _____ 1818, at the instance of the Baptist church of _____ aforesaid, for the purpose of setting apart, by solemn ordination, the bearer hereof, to the sacred office of the ministry; and being, by sufficient testimonials, fully certified of his moral character, real piety, and sound knowledge in divine things, as well as ministerial gifts and abilities, whereof we had otherwise due knowledge: WE DID THEREFORE, on the said ___ day of _____, in the presence of said church, and a full assembly met, solemnly ordain and set apart, to the said sacred office of the ministry, by imposition of hands, prayer and other rituals among us in that case in use, the said bearer, our worthy and reverend brother _____, whom we therefore recommend, as such, to favour and respect.²

¹"Certificate," Philadelphia Minutes, 1762, p. 86.

²Revised Discipline, footnote, pp. 12-13.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

Certificate of License

To all People to whom these Preasants [sic] shall come the Baptist Church at _____ sendeth Greeting the Bearer hereof our Beloved Brother _____ Being a man of good moral character real Piety and sound knowledge of divine things and having Been called to the exercise of his ministerial gifts whereof we have now had commendable Trial Both in Private and Public

We have Judge him worthy: and do hereby licence and authorise him to Preach the Gospel whenever he may have a call not doubting Butt [sic] that in due time circumstances will lead into a more full investiture of him in the ministerial office By ordination, in mean time we recommend him to favor and Respect Praying the lord may Be with and abundantly Bless him

Done at our meeting at _____¹

Certificate of Ordination

To all People to whome these Presants [sic] shall come the Church send Greeting--Being Conveined [sic] at _____ and _____ of _____ 1849 at the instance of the Baptist Church of _____ aforesaid for the Purpose of setting a Part By solemn ordination the bearer hereof to the Sacred office of the ministry and Being by sufficient testimonials full certif'yd of his moral character and Piety and sound knowledge in divine things as well as ministerial Gifts and abilities whereof we had other due knowledge did therefore on the said _____ day of _____ in the _____ presances [sic] said church and full assembly met solemnly ordain and set apart to the said office of the ministry by imposition of hands Prayre [sic] and other rituals among us are in use the said Bearer our worthy and Reverend Brother _____ who we therefore Recommend as such to favor and Respect.²

¹"Minutes of the Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, Shelby County" (unpublished minutes, Louisville: SBTSL), appended to Vol. I.

²Ibid.