



International  
Ministers  
Fellowship

A network of ministers of the gospel of Jesus

# Ministerial Ordination

(A New Testament Perspective: A Teaching & Training Manual)

## 1. Introduction:

The Church of Jesus Christ is not a happy go lucky institution where people do what they like, when they like and how they like. Paul the Apostle describes the Church as “the ground and Pillar of truth for which he enjoined his protégé and Bishop of Ephesus, Timothy, to “know how thou oughtest to behave thyself” (1 Timothy 3:15). As 1 Peter 2:9 states, all believers are called to the priesthood of saints.

One of the issues which marred the glory of the Charismatic movement and its predecessors was the tendency to sweep away every ordinance under the assumption, borne out of ignorance, that order is antithetical to Spirit led worship. On the contrary, the total evidence of scripture affirms that the Holy Spirit is essentially a Spirit of order and harmony. The Old Testament exudes divine order and harmony from beginning to end. The gospels also testify to the necessity of due order and harmony as even our Lord Himself modelled with His baptism under John, to fulfil all righteousness, right to His atonement at Calvary.

The early Church observed order and due process even as it was hallmarked with the evident presence and power of God. When the Corinthian Church went out of control and order in exercising spiritual gifts, Paul the Apostle was used of the Holy Spirit to explain the gifts in detail (Chapter 12), the thread of Love/Charity that holds every gift together (Chapter 13) and the right order and pattern for ministering spiritual gifts to glorify God and reap maximum benefits in the Church (Chapter 14). In verse 26 of 1 Corinthians Chapter 14, the great apostle enjoins “let all things be done unto edifying”. In verse 33, he



**International  
Ministers  
Fellowship**

A network of ministers of the gospel of Jesus

added *“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints”*. In verse 40, that most critical but oft neglected chapter of the bible enjoins: Us *“Let all things be done decently and in order”*.

If the present day, Church of Jesus Christ must fulfil her Great Commission mandate, it is imperative we begin to put in place a definite programme of action and training which will see people progress from being BELIEVERS to being DISCIPLES and finally, ORDAINED MINISTERS who will do the work of the ministry in all areas of church work, within and outside the four walls of the sanctuary. We must restore the holistic concept of ministry which is anchored on ministering spiritual gifts. As people are fully equipped, we should proceed to release them into ministry so that they will have the necessary confidence to function. The priesthood of all believers is one core hallmark of the Church. Therefore, ordination programmes ought to be regular features of annual church life!

It is important that we state clearly that in the economy of God concerning the New Covenant, all barriers to access the Throne of God and serve as labourers in the vineyard was broken at the Cross when the veil in the Temple was rent in two as the first fruit of the death of Jesus! For this reason, ministry in the Kingdom shifted from the exclusive male and family dominated Aaronic priesthood to the Order of Melchisedeck. Hebrews 7:15-28. Jesus Himself became our supreme model. His first disciples who later became Apostles were all unqualified for priesthood. As we all know, Jesus was of the Tribe of Judah which produced Kings, not Priests. Because of this, the Kingdom of God is no longer known by gender, age, family pedigree, education or social class. Galatians 3:26-29.

The Lord chooses who He wills, fills them with the Holy Spirit and calls them into ministry. The callings of God and gifts of the Holy Spirit are received and warehoused in the realm of the spirit man. Here, there is neither male nor



female, black, white or Asian. Level of intellectual development and such other considerations have no place! Any one limiting women or excluding them from ministry or certain levels of ministry is still held by the Aaronic concept of ministry! A study of GSoM Course 122: Women in Ministry and GSoM Course 112: The Ascension Office Gifts (Fivefold Leadership Gifts) is recommended for their exhaustive exposition of the whole counsel of God including hitherto difficult passages in the Bible dealing with women in ministry.

God does not consult your past to determine your future! God also does not call the qualified; He rather qualifies those He calls!

## **2. Ordination – What is it?**

Ordination can rightly be defined as the act of confirming the eligibility of a Christian for service in the Church of Jesus Christ through the laying on of hands by senior ministers functioning as authorities in the Church.

This presupposes there will be the following parties for a valid ordination to take place:

- i) An ordination candidate whose eligibility is anchored on having the requisite character, grace and manifestation of divine presence and power spelt out in scriptures relevant to the office into which the ordination is taking place. Such a candidate usually undergoes training/preparation for the exercise. It should be noted that mere completion of a bible school or seminary programme is insufficient to justify an ordination. This is because most bible schools concentrate on ministering to the mind, rather than the heart or spirit man. A bible school graduate should be humble enough to submit to mentoring and spiritual formation in order to fulfil ministry.



**International  
Ministers  
Fellowship**

A network of ministers of the gospel of Jesus

- ii) A confirming authority who is either the vision holder of a local expression of the Body of Christ (Ministry or local congregation) or a duly recognized senior minister in the Body of Christ who is accepted as such by the Church in the City/nation Or the authority of a Ministerial Fellowship to which the ordination candidate wishes to belong. In this case, the International Ministers Fellowship is the Confirming Authority.
- iii) Witnesses to the ordination (Christians and others) add value to the exercise.

### **3. New Testament Examples**

- i) In a sense, the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ by John was also an ordination, if the entire event is contextualized with relevant scriptures. Isaiah 61:13 explains the events at John's baptism recorded in Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22 and John 1:29-34.
- ii) Jesus ordained the 12 disciples who he chose after earnest, all night prayers Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16.
- iii) The early church practiced ordination. Acts 6: 17 speaks of ordination of the first deacons. Subsequently, we see ordination exercises in various forms, some close while others were open. For instance, the great Apostle Paul was basically ordained into ministry by an obscure but faithful servant of the Lord, Ananias Acts 9:10 – 18. Paul and Barnabas were consecrated Apostles, released by Prophets and teachers Acts 13:1-3.

### **4. Biblical qualifications for ordination of ministers:**

The Lord has provided clear qualifications required of ministers He will use:



**A. Exodus 18: 21-22** The Holy Spirit used Jethro, Moses father in law to outline these qualities for leadership or ordination

- i) **“Provide out of the people”**. From within, that is must have sat under the teaching ministry and or leadership of the instrument God will use to ordain or recommend for ordination (the Overseer/Senior Pastor). If it is a network, the candidate for ordination or licensing must have fully subscribed to the objects and purposes of the body. This principle is further amplified in Acts 1:21, 22 when a replacement was sought for Judas Iscariot as well as Acts 6: 3 when there was need to ordain people into the diaconate.
- ii) **“Able men”**. These are people who do not give room for failure or fear and have no excuses for not doing their work. They get things done out of a humble service heart.
- iii) **“Such as fear God”** A minister must fear God. The fear of God is one of the greatest motivations to live right and serve sincerely. God sees the secrets of the heart! Jeremiah 17:9, 10; Psalm 119:11.
- iv) **“Men of Truth.”** A minister should be a person of his or her words, no matter how inconvenient things may be. The Lord enjoins us to let our eye be real and that once we have made commitments, we should stand by them. This is what integrity is all about. This affects commitments we make to our spouses, children, employers/employees, in the Church of Jesus Christ, the home and the society. See Psalm 15; Psalm 24:16; Matthew 5:33- 37.
- v) **“Hating Covetousness”** We live in an age where covetousness is disguised as faith. The bible is clear that those who serve God should not be slaves to mammon and must be liberated from his deadly grip. 1 Timothy 6: 31-2 tells us that the LOVE of money is the root of all evil and urges ministers to focus on heavenly goals. The uniform testimony of scripture is that God provides for and prosper His own servants as an act of His graciousness. Wealth, when it is a gift from



God or procured by laying hold of the fullness of His counsel, is a sweet sight to behold as it is decorated with humility and character! There is no room in the Kingdom for those with the spirit of Judas Iscariot, the treasurer of Jesus Christ who stole regularly from the bag John 12:16.

- vi) **“Place such over them** to be rulers of thousands...hundreds...or fifties or tens”. This speaks of spiritual capacity. It must be noted that ordination is generally into ministry. Thereafter, the leaders should utilize revelation and information they have on those ordained to assign them responsibilities appropriate to their known capacities. People should not be posted to responsibilities based on parochial considerations such as proximity to the leader, ethnic or racial considerations or size of gifts they bring but on capacity to discharge responsibilities assigned. Romans 12:3 says ministry should be in proportion of faith.

**B. Acts 6:17** offers a range of qualities expected of deacons:

- i) **“Look ye out among you”** – This is the same principle enunciated through the lips of Jethro in Exodus 18:21. Candidates should be groomed for a period of time by one who can account for their character and suitability.
- ii) **“Of honest Report”** This bears out the need for people of integrity who hate covetousness and will not see the ministry as an avenue to get rich quick.
- iii) **“Full of the Holy Ghost”** – The work of the Lord is intensely spiritual and can only be successfully executed with spiritual resources. The fullness of the Holy Spirit with accompanying power represented by specific, identifiable gifts, rather than the hollow speaking in tongues that pervade the church world today is a need that can not be overstated. O! That children of God will seek after and obtain on the altar of intense prayer, consecration and by faith the real power from



on high and we will see an empowered church that will shake the world around us to believe in Christ!

- iv) **“Full of wisdom”** – Divine rather than humanistic wisdom is required to co-labour with God in His vineyard. Human wisdom tends to craftiness and strife. Wisdom from above is pure and gentle. James 3: 13-18 contrasts the two kinds of wisdom.

**C. 1 Tim 3:1-7** lists qualities for the bishopric while verses 8-13 are qualifications for the diaconate. They include:

- i) **“Blameless”** – this is a function of a high level of integrity which gives no room for doubt as to the character of the minister to be even amongst unbelievers.
- ii) **“The husband of one wife”** – this speaks of faithfulness to ones spouse and high moral standing. In these days when immorality is at an all time high, it is essential that those to be put in leadership must have their sexuality under the absolute control of the Holy Spirit!
- iii) **“Vigilant”** – the grace to be watchful, over self and the flock Proverbs 27:13
- iv) **“Sober”** – In the face of all things and events, the grace to keep head above water.
- v) **“Of good behaviour”** – A minister cannot but be well behaved.
- vi) **“Given to hospitality”** – Interestingly, the Lord cares for welfare of the flock in the city as well as brethren in transit. Ministers of God should have the caring heart of God!
- vii) **“Apt to teach”** – feeding the sheep with the sincere milk of the Word is the primary focus of the bishopric. Ability and willingness to teach is therefore imperative.





- viii) **“Not given to wine”** – the Lord expects those who will represent Him to abstain from all potentially intoxicating substances so that the Holy Spirit alone will have sway of their lives. See also Ephesians 5:18.
- ix) **“No striker”** ministers must be above the fray and not given to pugilism.
- x) **“Not greedy of filthy lucre”** – like in Exodus 18, the Word decries covetousness.
- xi) **“Patient”** – the ability to wait out storms and tempests attests to faith and maturity.
- xii) **“Not a brawler”** – this speaks of abhorrence of strife, quarrel and riotous life.
- xiii) **“One that ruleth well his own house...having children in subjection with all gravity”** – this speaks of a diligent quest to put his or domestic front in order and not allowing the family to suffer as a result of ministry. Ultimately, every individual soul must stand to give account before God for how life was lived. However ministerial parents must do all in their power to exercise discipline, in love, so that children grow up with godly fear and respect for authority.
- xiv) **“Not a novice”** – a minister needs to be seasoned and weaned off babyhood. Novices tend to attribute to themselves, the workings of the Holy Spirit, hence proud.
- xv) **“Must have a good report of them that are without.”** – This quality adds flavor to a minister’s witness amongst those of his mission field.

**Concerning Deacons (including all supportive ministers and those called to the Market Place, 1 Timothy 3:8-13 requires they be:**

- i) **“Be grave”** – ministry requires gravity of spirit to receive bountifully from heaven.
- ii) **“Not double tongued”** – the Lord requires His servants to be truthful and dependable.





- iii) **“Not given to much wine”** – this has been explained before.
- iv) **“Not greedy of filthy lucre”** – not covetous of money or material things.
- v) **“Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience”** – here the essential issue is to challenge those getting into the ministry to understand, internalize and be able to defend the basic doctrines of the Christian faith.
- vi) **“Let these also be first proved”** – those to be ordained into ministry need to be first proved in the things they do and the spirit with which they do them. The need to attain to the status of faithful disciples before they move into the ministry.
- vii) **“Being found blameless”** – ministers of the sanctuary must be above reproach.
- viii) **“Even so must their wives be...let the deacons be the husband of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well”** – scripture makes it clear that ministry starts with the home. Ability to get it right at home will prepare one for ministry in the church. 1 Timothy 3:13 sums up the need to go into ministry well equipped and prepared.

**D. Titus 1:4-9** is the last of the portions of scripture specifically outlining requirements for leadership in God’s house. Here are its provisions:

- i) **“Blameless”**
- ii) **“Husband of one wife”**
- iii) **“Having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly”**
- iv) **“Not self willed”**
- v) **“Not soon angry”**
- vi) **“Not given to wine”**
- vii) **“No striker”**
- viii) **“Not given to filthy lucre”**
- ix) **“Lover of hospitality”**
- x) **“Lover of good men”**



- xi) **“Sober”**
- xii) **“Just”** – this speaks of a life that evidently displays faith in Christ.
- xiii) **“Holy”** – Leaders are called to live holy lives without reproach so that they can have the moral standing to preach and demand same from the flock. 1 Peter 1:15-17; Romans 2:21-23
- xiv) **“Temperate”** Leaders must live in moderation knowing the Lord will soon return. Consequently, they should shun love of the world and its allurements. It does not mean that leaders cannot live well. It simply means the heart of ministers should be so tuned to heaven that they are not carried away by distractions. Phil 4:5,6; 1 John 2:15-17
- xv) **“Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught”** Paul ends this list of qualities required of elders by explaining in Titus 1:10, 11: “for there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision. Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre sake”

## **5. Spiritual Transactions during Ordination**

In a proper ordination exercise, the following spiritual transactions take place:

- i) **Confirmation of the calling of God upon the ordained, publicly.**
- ii) **Activation of spiritual gifts that are dormant or in minimal manifestation**
- iii) **Public Affirmation of suitability to minister in a formal sense**
- iv) **Impartation of grace to function in the fullness of the calling**
- v) **Release into formal ministry**
- vi) **Public demonstration of private/personal acceptance of the yoke of Christ** Matthew 11:28-32; Matthew 16:24-26; Romans 12:1
- vii) **Sealing of a Covenant Relationship with God** in which the one being ordained commits to active pursuit of the Kings priorities and



**International  
Ministers  
Fellowship**

A network of ministers of the gospel of Jesus

expansion of His Kingdom as the new primary pursuit in life and ministry trusting God to wholly supply all needs. Matthew 6: 33, 34; Psalm 50:5, Psalm 37:17; Proverbs 3: 5 - 12.

## **6. Conditions for Ordination**

Just like other core ordinances of the Church such as Baptism and Marriage, Ordination is a serious matter which should not be entered into hurriedly, without preparation, or out of strife to be one of the Joneses in church. It is supposed to be a life transforming experience if the ordination candidate is one truly called by God, who accepts the call, is under authority and submits to the preparation process which includes a discipleship component in the local assembly as well as a specific preparation exercise like this training programme.

The conditions for ordination are not barriers meant to prevent people from attaining the impossible. They are rather God's appointed way of processing His saints into co-labourers with Him in His own vineyard! In effect, the saying is true that "God does not call the qualified but qualifies the called". This was true of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, the Judges, David and Elijah as well as the 12 Apostles, Paul, Timothy, Titus and indeed all the hosts of servants who ran the race before us. God's benchmark are props meant to challenge us to put childish things and carnal mindsets away and lay hold of the fullness of His grace to be transformed unto the fullness of His stature.

After all, spiritual growth and maturity in Christ, to which we are called in ordination, cannot be achieved by human effort or annual resolutions. As Philippians 1:13 affirm, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" to which agrees Philippians 1:6 "...that he which hath began a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ".



**The keys to spiritual growth for leadership are:**

- i) **Genuine Conversion Experience.** In Acts 3:19, Peter demanded that those who desire the Kingdom should repent and be converted. The need for genuine conversion can never be over stated. A converted being is one who has understood the end of sin and the absolute need of mortal man for our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ. He or she does not just repent of any particular sin that comes to mind but goes further to lay hold of the glorious future to reject the past way of life. Transformation of perspectives of life is thus called for. The convert is thus baby like and able to receive the sincere milk of the Word that makes spiritual growth possible. O! That we may have more converts than mere members in the Church of Jesus Christ! The uniform testimony of scripture is that God wants us to walk with Him before and while working with Him. God has no need of spiritual touts who will make the right external religious motions but whose hearts are far from Him. In calling His first disciples therefore, Mark 3:13-19 says Jesus called them to “be with him, and that He might send them forth to preach”. May we pursue intimacy with the Lord as a precedent to working with Him! Paul clearly stated this principle in 1 Corinthians 9:24-29.
- ii) **Right Motives.** It is necessary that ordination candidates have the right motives for seeking the experience. It is not for acquisition of another religious title. It is not to graduate from the service corner to the bosses’ seats. It is not to be seen of people as a leader. It is not a reward for been a long standing member of the church or for been a generous giver, rather it is to formally equip and empower you to SERVE the Lord and His people! See Luke 22:24-27.
- iii) **The Clear Conditions of Scripture.** These have been exhaustively outlined in section 4 above. Whoever sets his or her heart on them,



**International  
Ministers  
Fellowship**

A network of ministers of the gospel of Jesus

yields wholly to the Holy Spirit and receive the Word of God sincerely will find the grace imparted upon the spirit man supernaturally. The conditions are not met by carnal struggles or observance of religious processes. John 15:1 7 gives us the hidden key to true spirituality in verses: just ABIDE in Him so that from Him will proceed the divine life flowing through us to touch lost humanity! So do not despair and look at ordination as an impossible mountain to climb. God has set the bar high so that we can look up to Him for enablement to be what and who He wants us to be.

## **7. When You Feel Inadequate...**

What happens when you feel highly inadequate, in the light of the requirements stated above? The answer is to humbly go to God in deep prayers of extreme brokenness, seeking His face for mercy and to release grace for you to be who He wants you to be. As you submit yourself to the authority God planted over you, the Lord will use the Word and His Spirit to effect a transformation you never thought possible. God's gifts and calling, says Romans 11: 29, are without repentance.

The whole purpose of showing you your inadequacy is to humble you to acknowledge same so that He can raise you up and in so doing, you will by no means ever boast of your righteousness nor your service. James 4:10 You will thus be able to acknowledge, like Paul that all you are is by grace 1 Timothy 1:1216.

## **8. Caveat Emptor!**

Please for God's sake, never proceed with an ordination programme if, by the due time,



1. **You are still living in presumptuous sins or certain besetting sins like immorality, lying, deceit, cheating, instability of character/inconsistency, insincerity, lingering anger, malice, evil speaking, deep envy, jealousy are having the mastery over you.** Hebrews 12: 14; Ephesians 4:17-31, Colossians 3: 1-10. Be truly converted.
2. **You are not subject and submitted to the spiritual authority God set over you.** Romans 13:1 - 7 enjoins you to be subject to the higher powers and that resisting them is resisting God who set them in place. Hebrews 13: 7 & 17 enjoin us to Remember positively, our leaders; Follow their lifestyles; Obey and Submit ourselves because they watch over our souls and must give account.
3. You are not fully persuaded that you are willing to pay the price required. Ultimately only you and God know the real state of your heart. If your heart is not in it, do not proceed with an ordination. Romans 14:23 says whatever is not of faith is sin. Never go into an ordination without faith in the God you are going to serve nor just to be reckoned as a leader. A price must be paid to qualify. If you are not ready to pay the price of a yielding to the Holy Spirit to transform your mind and heart, defer the proposed ordination to a future date.

The same anointing that empowers and blesses is also a double-edged sword that can kill. After all, the law says the anointing oil must not touch flesh even at the pain of death would it touch a stranger! See **Exodus 30:25 – 33**.

## **Conclusion**

Much as God wants to open up the space in the Church for more people to be called into ministry and be empowered to fulfil their callings, He is not about to change or lower His standards. He is the unchanging God whose children are not consumed when they prove their love of Him by obedience.



**International  
Ministers  
Fellowship**

A network of ministers of the gospel of Jesus

Other Papers in this training programme are:

**GSoM Course 119:** Discover and Fulfil your Ministry;

**GSoM Course 113:** Spiritual Gifts

**GSoM Course 112:** The Ascension Office Gifts (Fivefold)

**GSoM Course 114:** Leadership in the Household of Faith

**GSoM Course 115:** Spiritual Authority

**GSoM Course 122:** Women in Ministry

**GSoM Course 121:** Market Place Ministry

**GSoM Course 123:** Rewards of The Faithful

It will do all saints well to take advantage of the excellent free training, equipping, activation and release program of the Global School of Ministry. There are opportunities to do the program in live training centres, on face book, long distance through the list server [arisechurch@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:arisechurch@yahoo.co.uk) or through the websites: [www.globalschoolofministry.com](http://www.globalschoolofministry.com) and [www.globalschoolofministry.org](http://www.globalschoolofministry.org). The course notes are all part of a whole which should be studied, prayed in and applied for heart transformation and proper equipment for the work of the ministry.

+++++

Apostle George Akalonu is International Coordinator of International Ministers Fellowship, a network of five-fold leaders, supportive leaders and Market Place ministers across Africa, Europe, North & South America, the Caribbean and Australia. [www.ministersfellowship.org](http://www.ministersfellowship.org) This Teaching note and manual has been prepared as part of standard training materials for members of the network to use in equipping the saints for the work of the ministry.

Accordingly, these materials are released from copyright restrictions so that the larger interests of the Kingdom and our great King shall be served. Please do not use substantial portions this material however to publish a book as one





is already in progress. Apostle George can be reached for clarification and general inquiries at +447595022870, 01708438295 or via email at [arisechurch@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:arisechurch@yahoo.co.uk)

+++++