**Southern Baptist Ordination Council Overview and Questions**

In Southern Baptist churches, according to the Baptist Faith and Message by Hershel H. Hobbs,

“The officers in a local New Testament church are pastors and deacons (Philippians 1:1). The

same office is variously called bishop, elder, or pastor.”1. These two officers are generally

placed in their respected offices by the local congregation through a service of ordination. The

model for this service is found in Acts 6:1-7. The term ordination is the setting aside of an

individual for a particular purpose. In Acts 6, the Greek word for appoint in verse 3, is

kathistemi, pronounced kat-is’-tay-mee. It comes from the combination of the Greek word “kata”

which means down, or over against. This is combined with the word, “histemi” meaning to cause

to stand, to set. Combined it is translated “to ordain” or in the case of Acts 6:3, to Appoint.

The purpose then of ordination for the individual is the signifying of the sense of calling by God

and their committing of their life to a particular ministry. For the local congregation it is the

acknowledgement, approval and authorization for the individual to serve the church in ministry.

In the New Testament there is no prescribed procedure for the service of ordination other than

what is depicted in Acts 6. It was something the congregation was called upon to do, rather than

an appointment by an individual or group. The church was charged with selecting men whose

walk with the Lord was respected, wise and demonstrated by lifestyle that they were full of the

Holy Spirit. The one particular thing that stands out ceremonially is the laying on of hands. This

was frequently used in the New Testament as a public and formal act of setting aside for ministry

individuals (Acts 6:6, 13:3, 1 Timothy 4:14 and 5:22, and 2 Timothy 1:6).

Ordination is (1) a function of the local church, (2) It is an open and public service, (3) Consists

of the laying on of hands, and (4) It is for deacons and ministers of the gospel. Beyond these

four things, we must develop our own services of ordination. Traditionally, the ordination service

consists of two parts, the coming together of the ordaining council and the Ordination service.

This is true for the ordination of deacons and ministers. The difference between the two services

is whether the local congregation chooses to make the deacon ordination service local or inviting

others to participate. Another difference is that there may be multiple individuals ordained in a

deacon ordination, as opposed to only one in a ministry ordination.

**ORDINATION OF MINISTERS**

The Minister’s Ordaining Council:

The ordaining council should be composed of ministers and deacons from various churches

that convene for the explicit purpose of ordaining a person to the gospel ministry. This council

shall convene before the actual ordination service. During the organization of the Ordaining

Council the first order of business should be the election of officers. Officers for the Ordaining

council shall be the moderator, who will preside of the council and the service. An interrogator

or questioner to examine the candidate. And a secretary/clerk to record the actions of the

Council.

**Questioning the Candidate:**

The candidate will be asked by the moderator to present himself before the council either by

sitting in front of the council or by standing behind the pulpit before the congregation. This will

be determined by either a public or private examination. The candidate should be able to use biblical texts to support his position on any theological question as requested.

1. Tell of your conversion experience and your call to the ministry
2. What do you believe about the Bible?
3. What is unique about Jesus Christ?
4. Who is the Holy Spirit and how does He operate in the life of a believer?
5. What is a New Testament Church and what is its mission?
6. What are the ordinances of the church? And what is their significance?
7. Share how and when you personally shared Christ with someone.
8. What do you believe about sin and it effects upon humanity?
9. Tell of your involvement in Christian ministry through the local church?
10. What is your belief about and the practice of Christian Stewardship?
11. What do you believe about Heaven?
12. What do you believe about Hell?
13. What do you believe about the second coming of Christ?
14. How do you personally practice the spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting and bible study?
15. How would you handle criticism and conflict in your ministry?
16. How is a Southern Baptist church different than the Catholic or a non-denominational church?
17. How does your wife and family feel about your calling to the ministry?

The floor is then open for questions from members of the Ordaining council. The candidate is then dismissed while the council formulates their recommendation. The action is recorded by the secretary/clerk and the certificate signed by each member of the ordaining council.