

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN

June 1, 1980

Ordination of Allen Mawhinney

Southern Presbytery

Reformed Presbyterian Church
Evangelical Synod

Evening Worship Service

June 1, 1980 6:00 p.m.

The service this evening is being conducted by the Southern Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod for the purpose of ordaining Mr. Allen Mawhinney to the office of teaching elder. Mr. Mawhinney has been called by Westminster Theological Seminary to serve on its faculty at Escondido, California.

Dr. Gordon H. Clark is Professor of Philosophy at Covenant College.

Dr. Paul R. Gilchrist is Professor of Biblical Studies at Covenant College and formerly was Mr. Mawhinney's pastor in Levittown, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Raymond W. Clark is Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at Covenant College.

Mr. Robert A. Milliken is Pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Lookout Mountain.

Presiding Minister - Rev. Robert A. Milliken

Prelude

*Praise Hymn No. 50

*Invocation

Praise Hymn No. 148

Offering

Declaration of the Actions of Presbytery

Sermon Rev. Gordon H. Clark

*Praise Hymn No. 631

Ordination of Mr. Mawhinney

The Vows

The Laying on of Hands and Prayer
Rev. Raymond W. Clark

Charge to the newly ordained minister
Rev. Paul R. Gilchrist

*Praise Hymn No. 12

*Benediction Rev. Allen Mawhinney

*Postlude

Accepted for
elders ordination
in 5/31/80

Allen Mawhinney's Ordination.

6/1/80

1/a.

This evening

Today we assemble to ordain

Allen Mawhinney to the gospel ministry.

For many of us, indeed for all of us,

This is a joyful occasion. Yet for some
of us it is ~~an~~ ^{a time} ~~occasion~~ for sadness also.

We know that in a few days ~~he~~ ^{our brother} will be
leaving us. Covenant College and this

congregation will no longer profit by his
services. Nor shall we any longer

have the constant pleasure of his presence.

We deeply feel our loss ~~on this~~ ^{however} joyful
we may be. ~~occasion~~.

As a parting act of undeserved
grace Allen Mawhinney has asked me

to preach the ordination sermon. ~~I~~

~~have several points to mention.~~

Now, every good Trinitarian sermon,
like all Sermons, is divided ^{ed} into ~~three~~ ^{three} parts.

However, ~~for the pleasure of the congregation~~
in order not to delay too greatly the
climax of ~~the~~ ^{the} occasion, this sermon
will have only two. Part One aims to
state with some precision what the
act of ordination is. Part Two will
briefly indicate its intended ~~effects~~
consequences.

Ordination, as everybody knows,
makes a man a minister. The

~~Christ~~

The ministry is a regular and perpetual ordinance of Christ for the Church. This may seem too obvious to notice, for although we do not ordain men every Lord's Day, ordinations occur with sufficient frequency that all of us are ^{well} acquainted with the procedure. However it was not always so. In Reformation times the Erastians considered ministers as government or civil servants, rather than as ministers of Christ, while the Quakers and others abolished the ministry altogether. Since none of these groups are influential today, three passages of Scripture are enough to remind us that the office is of divine origin.

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Matt. 28:19, 20 is Christ's well-known command to his apostles to make disciples of all nations, with the particular promise, "Lo, I am with you always, ~~and~~ even to the end of the world." This indicates a perpetual ministry, a ministry that continues to the end of the world.

Eph. 4:11-13 states explicitly that Christ appointed apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Christ's purpose was to build up the Church in the unity of ~~the~~ faith and knowledge. Though the apostles have died and though prophets are no more, evangelists and pastors must perpetually obey Christ's instructions.

The Third reference is I Tim 6:14. Its previous context concerns several church officers. The epistle as a whole lays down the principles of church government.

Then here near the end of the epistle Paul in summation orders Timothy and his successors to obey these instructions until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the present century and especially in the present place the three verses quoted are sufficient to remind us that the ministry is not ~~an~~ optional or temporary, but an obligatory and permanent ordinance of Christ for his church.

Then here near the ~~end of the~~ ~~Trinity~~ they
 to obey ~~these~~ instructions until the appearing
 of our Lord Jesus Christ. These offices ~~which~~ are
 not things ~~of~~, but permanent.
 In the present century ~~of~~ ^{the} three
~~references~~ ^{Scriptural} convince us that the ministry is
~~of~~ ~~Christ~~ for his Church.

~~Correct~~ Not only is the ministry a
 divine ordinance; ordination is essential to
 induction into this ministry. The Salvation Army
 and the Anabaptists regard ordination as a
 useless or even a superstitious rite. Others
 consider it pragmatically appropriate, but not
 essential. To show that ordination is
 essential, it is necessary to point out a
 distinction. Although we ordain by
 laying our hands on the candidate, ~~the~~ for
 this is what the apostles did, the laying
 on of hands is not ordination. The substance,
 essence, or formal act of ordination is

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The act by which presbytery invests a man with the power and authority to go forth and preach the gospel. Mark 3:14 tells how Jesus appointed, made, or ordained the twelve to preach the gospel, including in this case authority to cast out demons. Ordination is the bestowal of authority to preach the gospel and to administer the sacraments.

Parenthetically one may note that the necessity of ordaining ministers does not preclude private Christian fellowship. There are four interesting verses in I Thess 4: 11-14. Verses 12 and 13 request the brethren to pay proper respect to their ministers; but verses 11 and 14, ~~and~~ require the brethren to edify and comfort one another, to admonish the unruly, and to encourage the faint hearted.

which bracket these two,

But for the preaching of the gospel pastors must be given authority by an act of presbytery.

~~Another~~ ~~analogy~~ ^{An} analogy may be drawn between the church and the civil government. The latter appoints ambassadors and gives them authority. If the church then is to do all things decently and in order, should it not also give authority to its ambassadors? This is more than a chance analogy. Paul himself in ~~1 Cor.~~

II Cor. 5:20 says, "we are ambassadors for Christ." There is also another analogy. In the Gospels, particularly in Luke 16, Jesus uses the analogy of a steward. A steward is an officer, ~~who manages the~~ ~~finances of a household for the owner.~~

~~Paul in Titus 1:7 pictures the minister as a steward of God. He said the same thing in I Cor. 4:1. And like the Old Testament priests, "no man taketh this honor unto himself" (Tit. 5:4).~~

employed by the head of a household, to manage its finances. The steward is an employee. He has been chosen and established in his office by the owner. Now, Paul in Titus 1:7 pictures the minister as a steward of God. In I Cor. 4:1 Paul calls himself a steward of the mysteries of God. And like the Old Testament priests, "No man taketh this honor unto himself" (Heb. 5:4). It is ordination that makes a man a steward of God.

There are other verses showing the necessity of ordination. Romans 10:14, 15 reads, "How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?" Preachers

~~do not do justice~~
 These questions from the New Testament

do not send themselves out to preach. They must be sent. No matter how gifted a ~~man~~ man may be, he may not preach except he be sent. The sending is the ordination. It is not election by the people. A people may elect a candidate, but it is the presbytery that sends the candidate to the congregation. In Jerusalem the people chose the deacons, but the apostles ordained them to their office. The ordination is essential.

It should be noted that ordination is not the recognition of a candidate's gifts. The opinion may be a common one, but it is erroneous. Ordination is not a recognition of the candidate's gifts: it is a gift which presbytery confers. Listen

These passages and this discussion do not exhaust the New Testament material. Indeed very little can be said in one sermon. But rather than continue with other positive passages, I shall note two ^{or three} places which might seem to say that ordination is unnecessary.

~~The passages and this discussion naturally fail to exhaust the New Testament material. Very little can be said in one sermon. But to remedy the deficiency somewhat, I shall state that answer ~~one or two~~ objections.~~

Acts 8:4 ^{informs us} ~~that~~ that with the increasing persecution in Jerusalem the Christians were scattered abroad and went everywhere preaching the gospel. No ordination seems to have been required. Acts 6:5, 6 recounts the election and ordination of Stephen and Philip as deacons, not as ministers; yet they both preached the gospel. But note that Philip was not only a deacon; Acts ~~21~~ 21:8 expressly calls Philip an evangelist; and if deacons must be ordained, surely evangelists must. As for the people who were scattered abroad, ~~two~~ two circumstances must be noted. First, since those who fled from Jerusalem were numerous, one would expect that some of them were ordained ministers. Then, second,

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in times of war, persecution, or anarchy,
the church organization is likely to be destroyed.
This was certainly true in France, and
possibly in parts of Scotland. In such
extraordinary cases preaching must somehow
continue; hence until order can be restored,
some untainted men must preach. But such
exceptional circumstances cannot be normative
for regular, organized, and reformed church
government.

I Cor. 16:15 has given rise to another
objection. It can be translated, The house of
Stephanus appointed themselves deacons for
the saints. This is supposed to mean that the
men of this household ordained themselves,
and that therefore no one needs to be
ordained by the presbytery. The argument,
however, is so weak, one wonders how
anyone could have used it. ~~As equally~~
~~good translation and is refers to neither to~~
~~the doctrine nor to an ordination. We~~
~~may say that the household devoted~~

Itself

The translation given above is questionable. One might equally well say, the households of Stephanus devoted themselves to serving the saints. With this translation there is no reference either to the diaconate or to ordination.

~~8. It should refer to the diaconate, it does not say they were ordained. One might as well say that since Acts 8:5 does not mention Philip's praying in Samaria, he could only have preached and ~~could not have prayed also.~~~~

To use this verse against ordination by the church, one would have to show that this better translation is impossible. This cannot be done, and therefore this verse does not overturn the passages ~~which~~ ~~require~~ ~~personal~~ ordination requiring personal ordination.

~~These~~

This brief exposition with the answers to some objections is, I am convinced, enough to show that the ordained ministry is a regular and perpetual ~~off~~ ordinance of Christ for his church. The second part of this sermon ^{must now} considers its purpose and ~~as~~ intended consequences.

The New Testament in several places provides some instructions relative to the work of an elder. But the more lengthy and concentrated instruction is found in the pastoral epistles. These ~~letters to Timothy and Titus explain the functions, duties, and obligations~~ letters, addressed specifically to ordained officials, explain in greater detail how ministers,

ruling elders, and deacons are to discharge
 Their obligations. Their obligations differ
 somewhat both in substance and in degree,
 but there is one obligation that is imposed on
 all of them. This basic principle is
 stated in a short phrase that Paul uses
 three times ~~here~~; namely, "apt to teach." The teaching
 elder is eminent in this domain; the
~~ruling~~ ruling elder is less so; but even
 the deacon must "hold the mystery of the
 faith ... and [have] great confidence in
 the faith" (I, 3:13).

~~This duty of maintaining and~~
~~teaching the faith~~

The emphasis on teaching the
 faith permeates these epistles. There is
 little time in one sermon to give lengthy
 explanations; but permit me, if you please,
 to list briefly most of the verses that
 explicitly refer to teaching. These are
 hardly sufficient, for the contexts

of these verses expand the meaning in less explicit words.

The first verse is I Tim 1:3, 4 with its explanation continuing to verse eleven. Here Paul ~~states~~ ^{tells} Timothy to "instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines." This is the Theme on which the epistle opens; and while Paul states it negatively, no one can miss the importance Paul ^{attaches to} ~~of~~ true doctrines.

I Tim. 3:2 is the first case of the phrase "apt to teach." Paul states other qualifications also; but these ^{others} are qualities every good christian should have. The one most applicable to the office is ability to teach.

14.

I Tim. 4:1 is a warning against
deceitful doctrines. The phrase is "deceitful
spirits and doctrines of demons." As then,
so now, it is the duty of the officers of the
church to identify clearly the false doctrines
that are abroad in our land.

If verse 1 puts it negatively, verse 6
~~states it positively.~~ "I do fear
states it both ways, ~~both~~ negatively and
positively: "In pointing out these things
to the brethren you will be ... nourished on
the words of faith and of sound doctrine."
Then verse 11 adds, "Proclaim and teach
these things." After which, verse 16 concludes
the chapter with "Pay attention ... to the
teaching."

I Tim 5:17 is the well known verse,
 "Let the elders who rule well be considered
 worthy of double honor, especially those who
 work hard in word and doctrine."

The last chapter of I Tim. with
 its 21 verses insists, in at least six
 of them, on teaching and doctrine.

Verse 2: "Teach and preach
 these things." Verses 3, 4, and 5:

"If anyone advocates a different doctrine
 and does not agree with sound words
 ... he is conceited and understands
 nothing ... man of depraved mind
 and deprived of the truth."

The command to "instruct"
 dominates verses 17 and 18. And

Paul concludes the epistle with
 an impassioned exhortation:

O Timothy, guard what has been

entrusted to you . . . [against] the opposing arguments of what is falsely called 'Knowledge.' "

A congregation, even in a service of ordination, might find this recital of verses somewhat tedious. Yet these elementary duties require emphasis at the present time because they are so widely ignored and disobeyed. Doctrine, truth, and Knowledge are currently held in low repute, both by those who hold to heretical or non-christian theories and as well by those who reduce religion to emotion and mysticism. It would be salutary if all the elders, whether they have served for years or are

17/20
just entering upon their office, would
compare themselves with Paul's idea
of a faithful disciple of the Lord. Each
should ask himself, Am I obeying, or
to what extent am I obeying Paul's
commands?

This service tonight is most
encouraging because it would be
almost impossible to find anyone
more apt to teach than the present

~~outstanding member of the church~~
in such aptitude, but we have
seen him exercise this aptitude in
a remarkable manner. We are therefore
confident of his future usefulness.

order and. He excels in intellectual
ability, without which no substantial
contribution to the defence of the faith ^{can be made.}

This is exceptionally important in this
irrationistic, existential, anti-doctrinal
age. On a solid intellectual base alone
can be exercised the sagacity and wisdom
already delightfully exhibited ~~to~~ by this
candidate. We are therefore confident
of his future usefulness in Christ's
Kingdom.

just entering upon the office, ~~should~~
compare themselves with Paul's idea of a
faithful disciple of the Lord. Each should
ask himself, Am I obeying, or to what
~~extent am I obeying Paul's ^{spiritual} commands?~~

Although I do not want to bore
anyone here in the congregation, yet if I
myself am to obey Paul's commands, it
seems necessary at least to run over briefly
the eighteen or twenty places in II Timothy
which emphasize ~~fasting~~ truth, doctrine,
Knowledge, and understanding. Permit
me to condense somewhat and run the
passages together.

~~Paul desired that those to~~

"Paul, an apostle ^{of} the will of God,"
had himself been "appointed a preacher,
and an apostle, and a teacher." — Timothy
must ^{retain} ~~the standard of Paul's~~

Paul opens the second epistle by claiming to have been chosen as an apostle by the will of God; and in verse 11 he says he was appointed a preacher and teacher of the gospel. For the present purpose it must be pointed out that Paul was not just a teacher, period; he was a teacher of the gospel. The gospel is the truth which he preached. Among fundamentalists

one part
from typescript
of verse 11.

In verse 13 Paul instructs

~~20.~~
22

Timothy to "retain the standard of
sound words." On this verse, permit
me a short quotation from Calvin.

in commentary

Then Paul goes on to tell Timothy that ~~which Paul had taught him~~. He must "guard" the treasure entrusted to him. To repeat, he must "be apt to teach... handling accurately the word of truth... [unlike the] "men who have gone away from the truth." Then Paul again repeats "apt to teach." Chapter 3:1-8 is a severe warning against those who are "always learning, yet are never able to come to knowledge of the truth..."

~~men of depraved mind~~ opposed to the truth, men of depraved mind, reprobate concerning the faith. Timothy must follow Paul's "teaching," opposing "imposters... [who] deceive and are deceived." Timothy must "continue in the things you have learned." "Preach the word... for [some] will not ensure sound doctrine," as for example, "Alexander the copper-smith... for he vigorously opposed our teaching."

Such is the message of II Timothy.

But I omitted the strongest verse of all, did I not? It is II Tim 3: 16-17:

"All Scripture is inspired of God, and profitable for doctrine ... that the man of God may be completely equipped for every good work."

If this were another occasion it would be proper, in view of current attacks on the trustworthiness of Scripture, to stress the inerrancy of God's written revelation. Historically evangelical ~~Christianity~~ ~~has been~~ has been distinguished by two great doctrines, viz. the inerrancy of Scripture and justification by faith.

Even on this occasion, when we obtain a man to his office, we must insist on inerrancy, for otherwise we should have no authority to ordain anyone. We must ~~not~~ also insist on it because Scripture is the material which the candidate must from now on teach and proclaim. But this verse also has a very important application to the elder's method of operation. The verse says that the Scripture is profitable for doctrine in order that the man of God may be completely equipped for every good work. We need no ~~irrational mysticism~~ ^{irrational mysticism}, nor disturbing

emotional experiences, nor dare we
trust counsellors and advisers.

Scripture by itself equips us completely
for every, not merely some, but for
every good work. Therefore, my

respected friend, proclaim its message,

let the light of divine truth dispel

the darkness of error and false

doctrine, guard the deposit God

has given you, pay close attention

to yourself and to your teaching,

~~_____~~

~~ὁ μακάριος καὶ μέγας θουδότης,~~

~~ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευόντων~~

~~καὶ κύριος τῶν κυριουόντων~~

~~_____~~

and glorify him who is

ὁ μακάριος καὶ ὁ μόνος Δυνάστης,
 ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευόντων
 καὶ κύριος τῶν κυριευόντων
 . . . ᾧ τιμὴ καὶ κράτος
 δι' ὄνιον.

~~g~~ the blessed and only ~~our~~ Sovereign,
 the King of ~~the~~ kings and Lord of lords,
~~who alone possesses immortality and~~
~~dwellts in light unapproachable . . .~~
 to Him be honor and eternal
 dominion - Amen.