

Comments on Moroni 3

Moroni continues the sacerdotalism theme from the preceding chapter to include details of how the priesthood was propagated among the believers.

1 THE manner which the disciples, who were called the elders of the church, ordained priests and teachers-- **2** After they had prayed unto the Father in the name of Christ, they laid their hands upon them, and said: **3** In the name of Jesus Christ I ordain you to be a priest, (or, if he be a teacher) I ordain you to be a teacher, to preach repentance and remission of sins through Jesus Christ, by the endurance of faith on his name to the end. Amen.

v1-3 The twelve disciples ordain teachers and priests (v. 1) by inspiration and laying on of hands (v. 2), to ordain them to the ecclesiastical office in the name of Jesus Christ (v. 3).

v1 "called the elders of the church", in this case the twelve disciples are the older, wiser leaders of the Church. This is probably not a reference to the ecclesiastical office of Elder as we presently use today. However, in 4:1 it refers to the "elders and priests", suggesting it is an ecclesiastical office. If the twelve disciples are the elders, then the two titles are a unity.

v2 "laid their hands upon them", the ordination requires someone with the authority to lay hands on the individual to obtain the priesthood.

4 And after this manner did they ordain priests and teachers, according to the gifts and callings of God unto men; and they ordained them by the power of the Holy Ghost, which was in them.

v4 "according to the gifts and callings", Moroni appears to be using the same phraseology his father Mormon uses in 7:2 where he references "the gift and calling", meaning that being called to the priesthood ministry is a gift from God. See also Alma 13:3-8 for discussion on the calling to the ministry, and Alma 39:13 for why the calling is a gift. I don't think Moroni is suggesting that someone having spiritual gifts means he is therefore called of God, or eligible to be called.

"by the power of the Holy Ghost, which was in them", Moroni is talking about inspiration, as referenced in v. 2 where it says "after they had prayed". This is not a case of "power" being a reference to priesthood authority.

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