

Evidence supporting false teaching on authority

Demanding absolute submission: Pat's Ordination

On March 11, 2011, GFA held an ordination service for Pat E., the current director of GFA Canada. Here is a link to an audio file of Pat taking the oath (3 minutes of the 50 minute service):

<http://clyp.it/phc02ir4>

Here is a transcript of three key parts of the oath, in which K.P. is heard asking Pat to promise absolute submission, for life. Pat responds (most likely by reading a pre-determined script) that he will “submit and always remain loyal... in all matters.”

Transcript excerpts:

0:55 KP: “Are you resolved to build up the church as the body of Christ and to remain united to it within the order of bishops, Metropolitan, and under the authority of the successor of the Metropolitan?”

Pat: “I am.”

2:09 KP: “Are you resolved to accept and obey the given orders, responsibilities, and disciplines of the church and the ministry and discharge them in absolute submission in accordance with the constitution of the church?”

Pat: “I am.”

2:25 KP: “Will you promise to submit to my leadership, my successors, and authorities of the church and the ministry set over you all the days of your life and ministry?”

Pat: “I firmly make this pledge and promise in the name of God and before this congregation that I will submit and always remain loyal and faithful to your leadership and to your successors and in all matters.”

Contrast this with the bishop ordination script from the Anglican Church:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/texts/ordinal/bishops.aspx>

In that script, absolute submission to a higher bishop is never demanded, nor is a life-time commitment. And notably, the ordinand is asked to affirm his belief that God is calling him to that ministry, not told that he will do it. It is voluntary on the part of the ordinand, for as long as he will choose to continue serving in the office of bishop.

Similarly, in the Episcopal bishops' ordination script:

http://www.bcponline.org/EpiscopalServices/ordination_of_a_bishop.htm

...the ordinand is asked,

“Are you persuaded that God has called you to the office of bishop?”

and,

“Will you accept this call and fulfill this trust in obedience to Christ?”

to which he answers,
"I will obey Christ, and will serve in his name."

(Note the response was not to obey a higher bishop, but

Christ.) And later,
"Will you share with your fellow bishops in the government of the whole Church..."
"...through these promises you have committed yourself to God, to serve his Church in the office of bishop."

Successors are mentioned in the Episcopal script, but specifically as apostolic successors, not merely successors or heirs of the presiding bishop. We recognize that your churches probably do not believe in the apostolic succession of popes etc., but GFA goes even further off track than that by demanding absolute submission to the successors to the Metropolitan himself, without even claiming apostolic succession.

GFA/Believers Church follows an Episcopal model, but we do not even see the demands for absolute submission to higher church leaders, or for life, or in *all* matters (not just matters directly pertaining to the ministry) present in the Episcopal ordinations. GFA differs significantly from mainstream Episcopal, Catholic and Anglican churches in this area, and in a way of which those churches, not unlike your own, would not approve.