

Applying for a Church Elder Position

Introduction

Becoming a church elder is a serious calling that requires spiritual maturity, biblical qualifications, doctrinal agreement, and a servant's heart.

Step One: Written Questionnaire

Please copy and paste each question into a separate document and provide your answers. You may submit your completed questionnaire by mail, email, or by giving it directly to one of the elders.

Section 1: Understanding the Role of an Elder

An elder is a spiritual leader who oversees the congregation, models godly living, teaches Scripture, counsels members, and helps direct the church's mission in accordance with our Statement of Faith, Constitution, and By-Laws.

1. Do you agree to live according to, uphold, and teach these principles?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, please identify the specific doctrinal statement(s), constitutional provision(s), or by-law(s) with which you disagree.

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2. Do you agree with the elder qualifications and requirements found on the church website?
3. Do you agree to be interviewed by the church elders, who will have the final decision regarding this matter?
4. Do you agree to a criminal background check?

Section 2: Biblical Qualifications

The qualifications for elders are found in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9. These qualifications include:

Sound doctrine and godly character

Self-control, temperance, and hospitality

The ability to teach and manage one's household well

Integrity in finances, relationships, and personal conduct. A reputation above reproach both inside and outside the church.

5. Are there any qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 or Titus 1:5–9 that might presently disqualify you from serving in this position?

Section 3: Personal Testimony and Calling

6. How did you come to know the Lord?
7. Share your testimony of conversion.
8. Why do you desire to serve as an elder?
9. Why do you believe God is leading you to this church?
10. How are you currently serving God?

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Section 4: Doctrine and Theology

11. Do you agree with the church's Statement of Faith, Constitution, and By-Laws?
12. Do you believe anything should be added to or removed from our Statement of Faith, Constitution, or By-Laws?
13. What is your view of spiritual gifts, particularly speaking in tongues and prophecy?
14. Do you believe there is a difference between a pastor and an elder? If so, what are those differences?
15. What are your beliefs regarding church membership?
16. Why is membership in a local church important?
17. What is the relationship between baptism and church membership?
18. Are you comfortable with our requirement of believer's baptism for church membership?
19. What are your beliefs regarding church discipline?
20. What do you believe the church should focus on at this time?
21. Which Bible translation do you primarily use and why?
22. We use the Majority Standard Bible (MSB) in our public ministry. Would this create any difficulty for you?

Section 5: Baptism and Church Membership

23. Have you been baptized?

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24. What do you believe concerning baptism?

Section 6: Counseling and Leadership

25. Do you believe you are gifted in counseling? Please explain.

26. What strengths do you believe you would bring to the elder board?

27. What areas of growth are you currently working on?

Section 7: Family Life

28. What is your current marital and family situation?

29. How would you describe the quality of your marriage?

30. How would your wife and children describe your leadership in the home?

31. What encouragements or concerns would your wife have regarding your serving as an elder?

32. Have you ever been divorced? If so, please explain.

33. Do you or any immediate family members have health concerns that could significantly affect your ministry responsibilities?

Section 8: Personal Integrity

34. Are you currently viewing pornography or sexually explicit material?

35. What steps are you taking to guard your heart and mind against temptation?

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36. Do you have a reputation for honesty and integrity in your personal and business dealings?

Section 9: Financial Stewardship

37. How would you describe your current financial situation?

38. Do you currently carry significant personal debt? If so, please explain.

39. Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? If so, please explain the circumstances.

40. What are your beliefs regarding bankruptcy?

41. What are your beliefs regarding gambling?

Section 10: Lifestyle and Christian Liberty

42. What kind of music do you listen to?

43. Do you believe Christians should listen to secular music? Please explain.

44. What are your views regarding contemporary Christian music, including styles influenced by rock and other modern genres?

45. Have you attended any Christian colleges, seminaries, Bible institutes, or ministry training programs? If so, please list them.

46. What formal education and training have you completed?

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47. On your days off, would we find you at a movie theater watching an ungodly movie that does not support Christian values?

48. Do you believe Christians are required to keep the Saturday Sabbath and observe all the Jewish feast days prescribed in the Old Testament?

Step Two: Provide References

Please provide three letters of recommendation or three references. These may include family members, your wife, close friends, church leaders, or ministry associates who can speak to your Christian character, family life, ministry experience, and qualifications for leadership.

Step Three: Spousal Confirmation & Background Review

If you are married, we believe it is biblical and proper to confirm that your spouse is in full support of your desire to serve as an elder, missionary, or evangelist.

Before moving to Step Four, one or more elders will have a private conversation with your spouse. We request that you not be present during this conversation so that your spouse may speak freely and honestly.

Please note:

- If your spouse is not a Christian, we will not be offering you a position.
- If your spouse does not support your desire to serve in this position, we will not be offering you a position.

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- If your children who are under your care are in rebellion, we will not be offering you this position.

We understand that people often made poor decisions before becoming Christians. Therefore, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant from consideration.

The Apostle Paul himself had a past that included persecuting Christians before his conversion. After becoming a follower of Christ, he openly testified about his past and the grace God had shown him. For this reason, each situation will be considered individually, with careful attention given to the applicant's testimony, character, repentance, and conduct since coming to Christ.

The truth of the matter is that even after becoming a Christian, Paul often had to tell people that he had just been released from prison. Therefore, the existence of a criminal record alone is not sufficient to disqualify a man from ministry. Each case will be examined carefully in light of Scripture, the nature of the offence, the evidence of genuine repentance, and the individual's present testimony.

Step Four: Private Examination

After reviewing your written responses, the elders may invite you to participate in a private examination. This meeting typically lasts two to three hours and includes a meal. During this time, we will discuss your answers, your testimony, your doctrine, and your qualifications for eldership. Additional church leaders may be invited to participate.

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All discussions will be treated as confidential. The purpose of this meeting is not to intimidate or discourage you, but rather to prayerfully confirm God's calling and qualifications for eldership. We will begin and end our time together with prayer and encouragement.

If we decide not to move forward to Step Four, it does not necessarily mean that you are unqualified for ministry. It may simply mean that we believe additional growth, experience, training, or preparation is needed at this time.

Pastor Charles Spurgeon became a pastor at the age of seventeen; however, he was raised in a Christian home and benefited from the influence of both his father and grandfather, who were ministers. Every person's preparation for ministry is different. Many pastors, missionaries, and evangelists pursue four or more years of biblical or theological education before entering full-time ministry. While formal education can be beneficial, spiritual maturity, biblical knowledge, godly character, and God's calling remain the primary qualifications for ministry.

Step Five: Public Examination

If the elders recommend your nomination, a public examination or period of public ministry evaluation will be scheduled.

The congregation will have an opportunity, over a period of approximately three weeks, to observe you serving in the area of ministry to which God appears to be calling you. This may include preaching, teaching, leading worship, evangelism, counseling, administration, discipleship, or

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other ministry responsibilities appropriate to the position being considered.

Members of the congregation may submit written questions, comments, or concerns to the elders. All submissions must be reviewed and approved by the elders before being presented.

The purpose of this process is to help the congregation gain confidence in the candidate's character, doctrine, gifting, and ability to fulfill the ministry role for which he is being considered.

Step Six: Final Review and Appointment

After the three-week public evaluation period, the elders will receive written comments, recommendations, and concerns from members of the congregation regarding your suitability to serve as a pastor, elder, or other ministry leader within the church. These letters will be received by the elders for two weeks.

The elders will carefully review all feedback, prayerfully consider the matter, and seek the Lord's guidance before making a final decision. Following the close of the two-week comment period, the elders will take up to two additional weeks to review the letters received from the congregation and determine whether to proceed with the appointment.

If you are approved, the church will formally appoint you to the ministry position for which you have been selected. At that time, the elders will present a salary and benefits package, if applicable, and arrange a special service of

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celebration, prayer, and the laying on of hands by the elders in recognition of God's calling upon your life and ministry.

We ask all candidates to remember that the goal of this process is not merely to fill a position, but to faithfully discern God's will and to recognize those whom He has called and equipped to serve His church.

Conclusion

We trust God's wisdom in establishing biblical qualifications for church leaders. Through prayer, examination, observation, and careful consideration, we seek to recognize those whom God has raised up to serve His church faithfully.

We look forward to receiving your application and learning more about God's work in your life.