

# Appointment or Ordination of Elders

## I. Ways it has been done in the past

- A. Elders appointed by nomination and vote (as used in parliamentary procedures)
- B. Elders appointed by a preacher
- C. Elders select other elders
- D. In one congregation, those that desire the eldership were put before the congregation, and after a study on elders, if there was no scriptural objection to the man serving, then he was appointed as an elder

## II. Appointment in the Bible

- A. Old Testament examples of appointment to specific offices
  - 1. The Lord chooses Judges and Prophets
  - 2. Saul
    - a. I Sam 8:1-5 - People wanted Samuel to get them a King
    - b. I Sam 9:15-17 - Samuel consulted God, and God chose Saul
    - c. I Sam 10:1 - Samuel privately appoints Saul through anointing
    - d. I Sam 10:24 - The people gave their consent
    - e. I Sam 10:27 - Not everyone accepted Saul at first, but that changed after Saul experienced a success (I Sam 11:11-13)
  - 3. David
    - a. I Sam 16:12-13 - David was chosen by God and appointed by Samuel
    - b. 2 Sam 5:1-3 - The people later gave their consent
  - 4. Ex. 19:8 - Even in following God, the people gave their consent
- B. New Testament examples of appointment to specific offices
  - 1. Acts 1:15-26 - Selection of Mathias to replace Judas
  - 2. Acts 6:1-6 - Selection of servants to oversee feeding of Grecian Widows

### 3. Acts 13:1-3 - Appointment of Preachers to Evangelize

#### a. The Holy Spirit selected Barnabas and Saul

1) Ephesians 4:11 - He gave some to be .... Pastors and teachers

2) The Holy Spirit played a role in this

#### c. The leaders laid their hands on them after fasting and praying

### C. Specific New Testament instruction regarding appointment of elders

#### 1. Acts 14:23 - Paul and Barnabas on first missionary journey

##### a. They appointed elders in these newly planted churches

1) Why so soon with a young church?

2) Due to Jews who may have already been synagogue elders?

3) Certainly not the case in Lystra (Acts 14:8-18)

##### b. It was done with prayer and fasting

#### 2. Titus 1:5 - Instructions to Titus

a. He was to set in order what remains (or what was lacking)

b. This involved Titus appointing elders in the churches of Crete

c. It is not God's intention for a sheep to remain without a shepherd

#### 3. I Timothy 5:21-22

a. Timothy, like Titus was also charged with appointing elders

b. Appointment of elders was not to be a hasty process

#### 4. So elders were appointed by preachers and church planters

D. Since there is very little *specific* and consistent instruction concerning the appointment of elders, one can assume there is some freedom in the process. From passages regarding appointment, we can infer up the

following:

1. As in the case of Timothy and Titus, qualifications had to be understood by all involved. It is also wise to make sure everyone understands the process of selection as well.
2. Though not explicitly stated, you may infer that the preachers/ leaders did not select elders independent of either God or the people
  - a. As in the Old Testament examples, God chooses (Eph 4:11) elders through the qualifications laid out in scripture
  - b. The preachers/ leaders (like the Old Testament examples) guide the people through the process
  - c. After the people give their consent, the preacher appoints the elders
  - d. Note: It is not stated exactly *how* Timothy and Titus went through the actual selection process. The actual selection may have been *overseen* by them with the people doing the actual selection, and then they gave their approval by appointing whom the people selected (or veto if it was person not fit for eldership).
3. The appointment was accompanied by prayer and fasting and the laying on of hands
4. If elders are already in place, it would be reasonable to assume that they themselves (as leaders) would guide the congregation through the selection of additional elders

### III. Other Considerations

- A. What if not everyone consents to being under the oversight of elders?
- B. How long is an elder and elder?
- C. If it is pressed to far, no one would be “qualified” to be an elder. In this way, a person eliminate anyone they didn’t like saying he is not “qualified”
- D. This raises the question of how should the qualifications list be viewed?
  1. Is it an all-inclusive check list?

2. Is it meant to be a non-exhaustive descriptive list
3. Consider this: There is a list in Timothy, one in Titus. Both were written at the same time. One was for Timothy in Ephesus, the other for Titus in Crete. Yet, the lists are not identical! They couldn't compile the two lists together as we do today.
4. These lists spell out some general principles for evaluating both the quality of character and the abilities of the man being considered for shepherding.

## Review of the Qualities and Qualifications

### Quality

### Qualifications

*(According to Timothy:)*

Aspiration to Ministry

Above Reproach

Temperate (clear headed)

Prudent (sensible)

Respectable (modest)

Hospitable

Not pugnacious (not a bully)

Gentle

Uncontentious (not quarrelsome)

Free from the love of money

Good Reputation with outsiders

Husband of one wife

Able to teach

Not addicted to wine

Manages his own household well

Keeps children under control with dignity

Not a new convert

*(Additional ones according to Titus:)*

Not self-willed (stubborn)

Not quick tempered

Not fond of dishonest gain

Lover of what is good

Just (righteous)

Devout (pious, holy)

Self controlled (disciplined)

Faithful children

Holds fast to the faithful word

Able to exhort in Sound Doctrine and

refute those who contradict

## Summary of Qualifications:

This grouping can serve as a guide for both self-examination and evaluation of those that aspire to the ministry of shepherding:

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| <b>1. Has the heart of a shepherd</b>          | Aspires to the overseership  |
| <b>2. Has good Christian Character</b>         | Above Reproach<br>Good reputation with outsiders<br>Not fond of dishonest gain<br>Loves what is good<br>Husband one wife (one woman<br>man |
| <b>3. Can communicate well</b>                 | Able to teach<br>Uncontentious (not quarrelsome)<br>Exhort in Sound Doctrine &<br>refute those who contradict                              |
| <b>4. Displays Christians maturity</b>         | Not a new convert<br>Holds fast to the faithful word   |
| <b>5. Loves others</b>                         | Hospitable<br>Not Pugnacious (not a bully)   |
| <b>6. Is Self Disciplined</b>                  | Not quick tempered<br>Self Controlled (disciplined)<br>Prudent (exercises restraint)   |
| <b>7. Is a Proven Leader</b>                   | Manages own household well<br>Keep children under control<br>Faithful children   |
| <b>8. Dedicated to God</b>                     | Devout (pious, holy)<br>Holds fast to the faithful word<br>Free from the love of money   |
| <b>9. Displays wisdom</b>                      | Temperate (clear-headed)<br>Prudent (sensible, exercise<br>restraint)<br>Respectable (modest)  |
| <b>10. Displays both humility and strength</b> | Not self-willed (arrogant)<br>Able to refute those who<br>contradict   |