



Dear Calvary Member,

Please join us in considering who might have the hand of God on their life as future church elders. As we have studied the Scriptural teaching about church leadership, we believe church members are to be involved in the selection of those individuals. In Acts 6, the apostles asked the Jerusalem church to select those who were full of the Holy Spirit to be leaders. In our context, our Bylaws state that elders will be men at least 25 years old with unreproachable Christian character. The selection of spiritual elders is one of the most important responsibilities of any congregation.

Would you please recommend individuals whose leadership and service are being used by Christ and might serve as elders next year, or even in future years?

All recommendations will be passed to the Elders for consideration. The elders will interview and select a group of men from these recommendations for training in the summer. Quite obviously, more individuals might be recommended for training than we will be able to nominate this fall. God has raised many effective leaders in our ministries yet intends that only a few individuals at a time lead as elders. If a qualified man is not nominated to serve as an elder in the fall, it says more about the needs and vision of our church currently. God may very well be preparing that person for a future year.

After training, the current Elder Board will humbly nominate candidates to present to the congregation at an upcoming business meeting this fall. Your involvement in this process - both in recommendations and voting on nominations - is crucial and appreciated.

You may wonder, "Why is training so early in the year?" The first reason is to allow candidates to learn about the role of an elder before accepting such a call—which involves shepherding, relating to the congregation and staff, and significant time commitments. The second reason is to allow current elders to fellowship with new candidates, as well as to examine their qualifications and testimony. We understand this is a change from past years, but we believe it is an important process for the vitality of the church. We intend to involve you every year.

So, how can you help the process?

As you consider possible recommendations for leadership at Calvary Church, the standard for your

evaluation should be the qualifications given to us in the Bible as described in the attached descriptions. Please take some time to read the attached descriptions of elders and prayerfully take each statement seriously. If the Lord places an individual's name on your heart, pray about it further, and then submit his name as a possible consideration for becoming an elder to the church.

You can write the name(s) you're recommending on the provided card and turn it in to the church office during the week or at The Big Desk on Sunday morning. Please also include your name as the person making the recommendation. If more than one person in your household is including names for consideration, please print each name of the person making the recommendation.

Thank you for your involvement and prayers.

In His Name,

Paul Utnage, Interim Lead Pastor

Consider These: The Qualifications of an Elder

In Acts 6 the apostles asked the Jerusalem church to select leaders who were full of the Holy Spirit to be leaders. In the same way, the apostle Paul wrote to Titus, "Appoint elders in every town." The selection of spiritual men as leaders is one of the most important responsibilities of any congregation. The standards for evaluation will be the qualifications¹ given in the Bible.

Qualifications from the Work of an Elder

- I. It is a leadership ministry. In God's Kingdom, the elder is a primary leader in the church. Many verses teach that the elder has a leadership and management ministry. As such, they are the guiding judges in matters of ministry, vision, faith, and patience.
 - *Does this person understand and appreciate the mission, vision, and strategy of the church? Is he passionate about leading as Christ works in him?*
 - *Has this person already been involved in various ministries in the church? Does he continue to invest himself in the work of the church? Has he demonstrated faithfulness in ministry already? Does this person already express his spiritual gift?*
 - *Does this person work well with other people? Has this person already shown a shepherding and discipling heart? Is he leading in a ministry and shepherding a group of people already?*
 - *Is this person truly a leader? Do people normally appreciate and follow this person's influence and leadership?*
 - *Has this individual exercised discernment, patience, wisdom, gentleness, initiative, and a stick-to-it nature in leading?*

- II. It is a spiritual ministry. One distinction of an elder is spiritual guidance and spiritual leadership. Such passages as Acts 20:28 describe this distinction.
 - *Does this individual demonstrate a Christian character that is necessary for you to submit to his spiritual leadership? Has he consistently shown—openly and publicly—the character qualities of Christ, such as humility, submissiveness, compassion, graciousness, righteousness, and integrity?*
 - *Has this person been spiritually broken before God? If he is still more wrapped up in his own “self awareness” and personal concerns, he will only offer a small world to the church. If he*

¹ Descriptions of elders here are modeled by the explanations of such writers as John MacArthur, David Jeremiah, Alistair Begg, and Tim Keller.

has been clearly broken (as Jacob was broken by God, and limped for the rest of his life as a reminder of his brokenness), then he will offer a spiritual mindset and passion.

- *Does this individual exhibit a prayer life that displays his love for the Lord and a dependence on God in faith?*

III. It is a teaching ministry. Teaching is clearly one of the purposes of the New Testament elder, as seen in 1 Timothy 3:2. Therefore, as you consider possible candidates, consider:

- *Does this person demonstrate a basic, if not even advanced, knowledge of God's Word? Is he familiar with the doctrinal statement of the church, so that he understands what is both essential and nonessential to the faith? Does he know how to study the Bible himself?*
- *Can this person communicate God's truth in a group setting - whether it is a large group or small, private interaction - in a way that is clear and understandable? Can he take a person who is walking in error to the Bible and show God's design for living?*
- *Can this individual clearly share the gospel with an unbeliever?*

IV. It is a shepherding ministry. Oversight and shepherding are tied together in the one role of elder. As such, elders are responsible for the health of the church. They are to care for the flock. In fact, this is the major command of Christ for elders. Therefore, as you consider possible candidates, consider:

- *Has this person shown compassion and love for the body of Christ?*
- *Has this individual demonstrated a commitment to the unity of the church?*
- *Does this person genuinely keep watch over his own integrity and spiritual life?*
- *Has this person already shown a shepherding heart? Is he discipling other people already?*

Qualifications from the Character of an Elder

The Bible offers a number of character qualifications for elders, in passages such as 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

- ***He must be willing.*** Is this person serving willingly or voluntarily? Is he committed to the mission and strategy of the church? Does he aspire to being an elder? Is he willing to serve without any thought of obligation or constraint?
- ***He must be above reproach.*** Does he have a reputation of integrity? Is there something in his life

that would cause people to not respect his spiritual leadership and counsel? Is there some past sin that would hinder him from admonishing another person in a given area?

- **He has a good reputation with unbelievers.** Does this person turn off non-Christians? Is he faithful in paying his bills? Is he respected in his social interactions? Is he gentle and courteous, rather than brassy, when he converses with all people, especially with non-Christians?
- **He is a lover of God.** Does this person gravitate towards doing good? Does the individual already initiate in doing good, without being asked first? Does he have a good character? Is he willing to stand alone in support of good? Is he a person of conviction and purity?
- **He is just.** Is this individual righteous and seeking right living? In his heart, does he love God's standards? Is he indecisive in his thinking, or is he consistent and mature?
- **He is devout.** Is this person close to God? Does he have a daily walk with the Lord, so that circumstances of life don't break up his fellowship with God? Is he concerned that he not stray from God?
- **He is apt to teach.** Has this individual demonstrated an overall understanding of the Bible and the gospel? Is he able to share the gospel with another person?
- **He is not a new convert.** Has this individual walked with God for some time? Is there a sense of maturity to this person? Does the person exude a sense of stability to people? Can people feel that they may trust him since he has experienced much of Christ himself?
- **He manages his own household well.** Does the individual's children respect and obey him while they are in his home? Does he show love and intimacy with his family and wife? If married, is his wife respected? Does she exercise self-control? Does she refuse to gossip about or slander others? Is she in support of his ministry? Is she invested in the church?
- **If married, he is a faithful husband.** Is this person devoted to his wife? Does the individual practice intimacy with his wife in all areas of life (behavior, time, speech, humor, etc.)? Has the person demonstrated purity and integrity in his marriage? Has he demonstrated faithfulness and self-control in the face of temptation?
- **He is temperate.** Is this individual in control of himself? Does he stay calm and collected under periods of great strain and abrasion? Does he act deliberately, not impulsively? Does he stop to think before acting?
- **He is prudent.** Is this person sensible and objective? Does the individual see life as it really is, with an emotional maturity so that periods of high emotion don't cloud or short-circuit his ability to think accurately?

- ***He is respectable.*** Do other people look up to this person? Do other people trust him?
- ***He is hospitable.*** Does this person love strangers and visitors to the church? Does he enjoy getting to know people? Does he open his home and material resources to people? Is the individual involved in hospitality and small groups?
- ***He is not addicted to wine.*** Does this individual drink too much? Has he been discovered drunk? Does he exhibit any addiction to alcohol, drugs, compulsive eating, workaholic, etc.?
- ***He is not self-willed.*** Does this person become negative or defensive towards ideas that are not his own or with other people who don't agree with him? Is the individual a debater or arguer? Does he always want his own way? Does the individual want to get the last word in? Does he yield and submit to the consensus of leadership? Is he a team player?
- ***He is not quick tempered.*** Can this individual control his anger, or does he fly off the handle? Does he make thoughtless, unfeeling remarks? Is he known for gentleness, not shouting, blaming, or harshly judging? Is the individual more helpful than critical?
- ***He is not physically aggressive.*** Does this individual exhibit a physical restraint during times of great emotional upheaval?
- ***He is not contentious.*** Does this person avoid criticalness, argumentativeness, intolerance, and bitterness? Is he judgmental or gracious? Does he regularly find himself in the center of controversy, or is he a peacekeeper?
- ***He is gentle.*** Is the individual tolerant, patient, and respectful of others, especially those in authority? Is the person civil in his dealings with people?
- ***He is free from the love of money.*** Are this person's priorities on God's kingdom or material things? Has this person demonstrated that he can easily and freely give from his financial resources to meet others' needs?