

THE OFFICE OF ELDER

DESCRIPTION

The office of elder is one of spiritual leadership and responsibility. Elders are called and charged by Jesus, through the Spirit and the election of the church to exercise their leadership by teaching, managing and shepherding the people of God (BCO 8.1).

1. **TEACHING** - Elders are called to maintain a growing knowledge of gospel theology, to clearly teach the gospel so people are changed and to model gospel-Christianity in their lives and households. (Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9)
2. **MANAGING** - Elders are called to maintain a growing knowledge of missional theology, to strategize, organize and lead effective missional ministries, and to model missional ministry in their lives and homes. (Tim. 3:4-5; Titus 1:6)
3. **SHEPHERDING** - Elders are called to maintain a growing knowledge of grace renewal theology, to lead individuals, couples, and groups in grace renewal and to model grace renewal in their lives and homes. (Acts 20:28, I Peter 5:1-4)

QUALIFICATIONS

In order for a man to serve in the office of elder, he must meet the biblical qualifications for the office with regard to his character, availability and sense of call (BCO 8.2-3). Ordinarily, he must be a member of Trinity or Redeemer for at least one year. However, because this process is in its initial year, nominees who do not meet this requirement must complete the process of membership over the course of the training.

1. **CHARACTER** - He knows and exhibits the biblical character qualifications of an elder. He is aware of sin that he is prone to and has identified the sin beneath the sin. He is growing in holiness by preaching the gospel to himself and being accountable to others. (see Character Summary below)
2. **AVAILABILITY** - He manages his time well and follows through on commitments. He has a supportive wife/family (if married). He is approachable, gentle and can give people undivided attention.
3. **SENSE OF CALL** - He has a general but clear sense that God has called him to ministry. People have benefitted from his ministry and see him as a leader. He has an internal desire to be an elder.

CHARACTER SUMMARY

Most importantly, an elder must understand and experience on going grace renewal in the gospel. He should be convinced that we both begin and we grow as Christians not by our moral effort and performance but by grace through repentance from sin and faith in Jesus. Below is a summary and brief description of the character qualifications for elders as outlined in I Tim 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. By no means is any man perfect or complete in any of these areas, but an elder should exhibit the fruit of grace in the following areas:

- **BLAMELESS, ABOVE REPROACH** - Has a reputation for integrity & is respected by those in and outside of the church.
- **HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE, MANAGES HOUSEHOLD WELL** - Faithful in responsibilities as a husband & father (if married).

- SELF-CONTROLLED, NOT GIVEN TO DRUNKENNESS OR GREED - Not erratic in beliefs or behavior, not ruled by addiction.
- HOSPITABLE - Welcomes strangers & outsiders into the church community; uses his home as a place for ministry.
- NOT QUARRELSOME - Knows the difference between matters of more and less importance.
- GENTLE, NOT OVERBEARING, VIOLENT OR QUICK TEMPERED - Approachable by all kinds of people; not easily angered.
- UPRIGHT, HOLY AND DISCIPLINED - Has a proven track record of gospel change and spiritual fruit.

PROCESS FOR ELECTION

In order for a man to be elected to the office of elder, he must complete the following process (BCO 24).

1. NOMINATION - By 2 or more members of different households.
2. INTERVIEW & EVALUATION - By Redeemer Session - Nominees will be interviewed by current members of Redeemer's session and evaluated in the areas of character, competency and compatibility. If in one or more of these areas a nominee is found unqualified they will be removed from consideration for office in this year's class.
3. TRAINING - Training in theology, shepherding and leadership will be provided.
4. EXAMINATION - Those nominees who complete the training will be examined by Redeemer's session in the areas of theological/biblical competency and church governance.
5. ELECTION - Those nominees who satisfactorily pass their exam will be placed on the ballot for nomination and their testimonies and bios will be published to all Trinity and Redeemer members. Trinity will then call a congregational meeting for the election of these nominees to office.



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