

Shepherd Search

**Biblical Insights for your pastoral
search**

Dr. Rick Thompson

Introduction

At the end of his ministry, Moses prayed: “May the Lord, the God of the spirits of all mankind, appoint a man over this community to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the Lord’s people will not be like sheep without a shepherd” (Numbers 27:15-17). God’s people in every culture need a sacred shepherd. God developed Joshua to be the answer to this prayer. The fruitful future of a local church rests in part in God’s answer to this prayer for a good shepherd.

As I saw God use me as a shepherd in a campus ministry, I experienced a call to pastoral ministry. After seminary, my wife and I served the Hope Evangelical Free Church of Dubuque, Iowa for 13 years. We moved to Moscow Russia as missionaries from 1992-1997 and served as pastor of the Moscow Bible Church. Today we serve as a superintendent with the Great Lakes District of the Evangelical Free Church of America. We have a wonderful team of regional superintendents who work directly with our search committees (www.gld-efca.org). They serve as gatekeepers with the placement tool of the EFCA: (www.ministerconnection.net). Our regional superintendents serve our churches and potential pastors in the shepherd search.

In Scripture we see three key biblical terms for the senior leaders of the local church. Peter uses all three words in one exhortation: “To the **elders** among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be **shepherds** of God’s flock, that is under your care, serving as **overseers**—” (1 Peter 5:1-2).

- **Elder** is the Greek word *presbuteros* (1 Timothy 5:17, Titus 1:5, and Acts 20:17) from which we get *Presbyterian*. *Presbyteres* means “an old man.”
- **Overseer** is the word *episkopos* (1 Timothy 3:1, Titus 1:7, Acts 20:28) from which we get *Episcopalian*. *Episkopeo* means “responsible care.”
- **Shepherd** is the translation of the Greek word *poimen* (Ephesians 4:11, Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:2) from which we get *pastor*. He shepherds sheep.

The search for a new shepherd, elder, and overseer is an opportunity to experience God in a new and fresh way. God calls sacred shepherds! This work is designed to be a resource to those charged with discovering the person **God** is calling to serve his people. There are manuals that cover the details of a healthy pastoral search. The Evangelical Free Church of America recommends the book, **Finding the Right Pastor**, by Wes Johnson, former district superintendent of the Great Lakes District of the EFCA. This book is available from the EFCA bookstore called “Next Step Resources” (800-745-2202). We highly recommend this manual to search committees. This work called, **Shepherd Search**, gives more biblical insights for a healthy process of searching for a senior or solo pastor to the glory of God.

Search Lights

“I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without **partiality**, and to do nothing out of favoritism. Do not be **hasty** in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.” (1 Timothy 5:21-22)

David Livingstone, the legendary missionary to Africa, tells the story of the ant lion. It destroys the strongest victims by a masterful strategy. The ant lion excavates a little pit in the form of an inverted cone; imagine an ice cream cone, stuck in the ground. On the surface there is a large opening. The ant lion sits underground at the base of the cone waiting for some unsuspecting insect to tread too near the edge of the crumbling sand. When an insect peers over the edge of the strange excavation, they tumble in. At the bottom of the pit, the ant lion suddenly opens its mouth. Like a sharp pair of scissors, with one quick movement, the ant lion slices off a limb of the insect and disappears. The insect tries to scramble out of the pit only to stumble back down the slippery slope. The ant lion strikes again and another limb is gone. Again and again the ant lion and the pit combine to dismember and destroy the unsuspecting victim.

The Ant Lion and the Pit

Impatience is a pit and partiality is an ant lion. Paul warned Timothy against doing things too fast and partiality. The wrong pace leads to the wrong path and partiality destroys everything. Our Lord warns us against being a racehorse that runs ahead of the Commander of the Lord's armies.

“This is what the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One of Israel, says: In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it. You said, No, we will flee on horses. Therefore you will flee.” (Isaiah 30:15-16)

Some churches panic when the pastor leaves town. People think: “We will lose our people.” “How will we pay our bills?” “What if some tragedy arises that we cannot handle?” God's faithfulness becomes a distant memory and the rush is on.

Some search committees enter the first meeting and everyone knows who will decide the next shepherd. Powerful patriarchs or elite elders decide who the next victim will be. These people have earned enormous chips and they cash them in during the choice of the next pastor. Powerful people can cause us to miss the joy of God's guidance. The selection of a shepherd that simply fulfills the will of a church patriarch or a popular cliché leads to the result it deserves. Even the apostles in Acts 1 guarded against favoritism in the choice of Matthias to replace Judas by casting lots. With the outpouring of the Spirit living in each of us, we can trust the peace of Christ to act as our umpire (Colossians 3:15) as we seek the Lord and follow a biblical process.

I met with a ten year old church that had never been without a pastor. Powerful people had steered the process in the past and the previous choice of a pastor was made with little discussion. Now, for the first time, it was ambiguous and uncertain who should serve as the next senior pastor of a growing church. As the board scanned the congregation they saw only a recent Bible college graduate who presented himself as willing and eager to take the mantle of leadership. As the elders groped in the dark, they sensed no other possibility. People were willing to overlook youth and lack of experience because of the pressure of being a church without a pastor and the immediate suggestion made by strong leaders.

“Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you;
He rises to show you compassion.
For the Lord is a God of justice,
Blessed are all who wait for him!

Your ears will hear a voice behind you,
Saying, “This is the way; walk in it.” (Isaiah 30:18, 21b)

I met with the church pulpit committee and the elder board. They are wonderful servants of God who really want a growing church. I encouraged them to establish a healthy process to discover the will of God and to wait upon God for the clear call of a new good and godly shepherd of the flock. The leaders agreed to call the church to prayer and fasting every Wednesday evening for one hour. They agreed to openly discuss their ideas, dialogue on the issues, and trust God for the person He will send. They waited on the Lord and God gave them a good shepherd after a healthy, year long search. God guides. People rush.

The Search Light of Prayer

The search for a shepherd is the open door to a new season of church growing stronger in prayer. In my first meeting with elders after a seasoned pastor leaves, I encourage the elders to lead in prayer. If the elders do not lead the way to the throne of grace, who will? Here are the patterns of prayer that we encourage for elders.

One prayer request for the pastoral search in the worship service bulletin every week is a great place to start to engage the congregation in prayer. For instance, the first prayer request might be that God would guide in the selection of the search committee for the pastoral search. Pray that we would faithfully follow the constitution and give the constitutional guidelines for the search committee. The next week, the prayer request might be for unity among the elders on the search committee selection. The next week might be a prayer request for the member of the search committee and you list their names. One prayer request every week (or every other week) keeps the congregation involved in the search as they labor in prayer. The Psalmist says that it is God's light that we have light and prayer helps to turn on the God's light.

The Search Light of 3-D Communication

Communications are the wiring of a church. Healthy communications keeps the lights on and the church bright. If communications short out, the lights go off. You have little more than an empty shell of a church. One healthy pattern of communication that is invaluable for a search committee is 3-D Communication.

Dimension-1 is discussion. At the beginning of a process of good communication we need to simply discuss the facts of a situation. The members of a search committee need to set the pace of open and honest discussions. A search committee needs to establish a good pattern of prayer before God and healthy discussions that are objective and truthful with one another. I have found it useful in the past to read and discuss a key book like Gene Getz's **Measure of a Man** on the qualifications of an elder or my book, **E3: Effective, Empowering Elders** by Dr. Rick Thompson (Church Smart). The danger is the development of a pseudo search group.

“The first response of a group seeking to form a community is most often to try and fake it. The members attempt to be an instant community by being extremely pleasant with one another and avoiding all disagreement. This attempt-this pretense of community-is what I term, “pseudo community.” It never works. In pseudo community a group attempts to purchase community by cheap pretence. It is not an evil, conscious pretence of deliberate black lies. Rather, it is an unconscious, gentle process whereby people who want to be loving attempt to be so by telling little white lies, by withholding some of the truth about themselves and their feelings in order to avoid conflict...The essential dynamic of pseudo community is conflict avoidance...**true community is conflict resolving...**”(M. Scott Peck, *The Different Drum*, 86-88)

Search committees need to understand that a healthy process of discussion and waiting upon God in prayer takes time, increasing transparency, and honesty with humility. I have seen a good search process last only a few months and I have also seen some searches last over two years. A search committee needs to understand that sometimes they will need to meet together for many months and so it is important to begin with an atmosphere of open discussion that respects and honors the comments and opinions of each member of the search team.

Dimension #2 is dialogue. Beyond discussing the truth, we need to disclose how we really feel about an issue. This is the subjective side. This is the personal, heart-felt, honest unveiling of what we really think and feel about a pressing problem. We need to discuss difficult decisions with God in prayer and with each other in real dialogue that includes our perceptions, our feelings, our fears, our frustration, and our hopes for the future, and everything that is relevant.

“Dialogue takes its meaning from two Greek words; *dia* meaning “through” and *logos* meaning “word.” This suggests a discourse in which the full meaning is finally arrived at as persons seek to understand the ideas and feelings of others,

building upon idea until the fuller meaning of all the ideas and feelings emerge. The result is a larger pool of understanding that cannot be claimed by any one of the persons as their own. In dialogue, no one is trying to win by having her ideas and desires prevail. Rather, all are supporting something beyond themselves, with the expectation that all will gain greater insight than that which could be gained by any one of them, alone.” (Shawchuck, *Managing the Church*, 108).

Without bad mouthing the previous pastor, the search committee must honestly discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the past and the needs for the future. With objective honesty the dialogue must look at the tough issues.

- The generation needed in the next pastor (builder, boomer, millennial)
- The experience needed in the next pastor (senior pastor experience?)
- The shape of the gifting needed in the next pastor
- The family dynamics that will work and will not work (young children?)
- The cultural background that is important and unimportant for a shepherd
- The education needed in a shepherd for this flock
- The preferred leadership style of the shepherd for this season
- The strong point of leadership needed for this chapter of the church

No potential pastor is strong in everything, so which of these are most important? There needs to be an honest, unguarded dialogue with a spirit of submitting to one another in the fear of Christ (Ephesians 5:18-21).

Dimension #3 is the decision! Life is a decision-making process. Johnson and Johnson in **Joining Together** show different kinds of decision-making.

1 decides / 1 decides & consult / executive committee / majority / super % / unanimous

Decision-making can be from one extreme where one leader makes the decision alone to the opposite extreme of a unanimous vote. The president and his cabinet is one stage from the left end of the spectrum as people discuss and dialogue, but the president decides. The other end of the spectrum is where there is no action until there is a **yes** vote from everyone involved in the search. Some churches hold a core value that there will be no decision until everyone agrees.

As we move from left to right on this spectrum, it takes more time and more work. One man acting alone can decide something quickly. It takes more time and energy as more people are involved in the decision, but the ownership in the decision and usually the quality of the decision increases as we move from left to right along the scale.

It is important to establish early in the process how decisions will be made. Search committees seek unanimous consensus. We have all experienced the joy of good discussion, healthy dialogue, and a unanimous decision. It takes patience. It takes prayer. It takes the leading of the Holy Spirit to just the right decision.

At the same time, pulpit committees are human and sometimes a unanimous decision is not an honest reflection of the real situation. Romans 14 describes how Christians can come to completely different conclusions and at the same time be acting in faith, hope and love. There are reasons that church constitutions do not call for a unanimous vote to call a pastor; but rather a supermajority such as a two-thirds or a three quarters vote of the members needed to issue a call. Some search committees seek consensus; but agree to proceed with the same supermajority needed to call a pastor. If the church will require an 80% vote of the members; the search committee can agree to an 80% vote to recommend a potential candidate-agree ahead of time.

One strong caution is that a divided search committee should not use the congregation to settle the issue. One divided church recommended an internal candidate to become the senior pastor and the congregation failed to affirm that person by one vote. The congregation was more divided than ever. The vote of the membership should affirm God's calling and not be the arbitrator of a conflict.

It is superior to work through the conflicts in the search process and then come to the congregation with a person that the leaders agree upon as they seek the affirmation of the congregation. At the same time, one danger of an absolute law of unanimity is that one person can use this to control a church. One person can block the vote on many qualified people because they are seeking their own "candidate." A healthy search process does not give one person the final authority to approve a person or the final authority to block a qualified candidate.

God called Philip to plant a church in Texas where a new church was desperately needed. Philip was a gifted evangelist. Every week people trusted Christ. At the end of five years, the church celebrated Easter with 1,000 people present. Just when everyone was excited, God called Philip to another church. I resisted the thought. How could he walk away from such fruit? God called. Philip was transported half way across the country only to experience God's hand upon his life in another city.

Meanwhile, the church of 1,000 shrank to 350 people by Christmas. The church followed the principles of a search described in this book. At the end of the process, one man emerged clearly. I was in the church on the Sunday the congregation voted. Ninety-nine percent of the people voted **yes**. David came as the new pastor. The church is growing again and God is glorified. This church invited me to preach almost a year after calling their new pastor. I met with the elders and they are energized by God's gift of their new senior pastor. The church is experiencing solid growth again with over 500 people coming. Some searches have zeal with knowledge. Here is a healthy process that honors the Living God who will take care of his church and call forth his shepherd for his sheep.

Shepherd Qualifications

“The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God’s work, he must be blameless, not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.” (Titus 1:5-9)

Crete was a tough place to grow a church: “Even one of their own prophets has said, ‘Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons’” (Titus 1:12). The Greek verb for “to lie” is *kretizein*. “To lie to a liar” in Greek is literally *to cretan a cretan*. If you think it is tough to grow a church in your city, remember Crete.

The church on this long island in the eastern Mediterranean Sea south east of Greece could have started shortly after Pentecost. Acts 2 says that Cretans were among the pilgrims at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit fell upon the early church. Others suggest Paul planted the church of Crete. Either way, Paul had been there, seen the situation, and left Titus “to straighten out what was left unfinished” (Titus 1:5).

God was not finished with Crete, and Titus was God's man for that hour. God's assignment to Titus was to straighten out what was left unfinished. The place to start was: “Appoint elders in every town.” Some suggest that this means a plurality of elders in every town. Others suggest that the idea here is appointing one pastor who is qualified as an elder in each town. In any case, the emphasis is upon the character qualities of the leader. It is the responsibility of the search committee to study these character qualities of an elder and assess the maturity of potential candidates who are seeking to shepherd the flock of God.

Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3 give a biblical portrait of those whom God will call to be elders. These character qualities can fall into four clusters: family life, Christ-like character, friendships, and the handling of the word of God.

Family Life

An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. (Titus 1:6)
If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church? (1 Timothy 3:5)

In the corporate world, a person can be a very successful leader and leave his family in broken fragments. In the political world, a man may be an adulterer and a womanizer, but as long as his approval rating in the polls is high his job is safe. Thank God that his church does not conform to culture. "Be holy, for I am holy!" Holiness starts at home! Howard Hendricks of Dallas Seminary hits this hard: "If your Christianity does not work at home, please don't export it!"

"An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife." Dr. Homer Kent, past president of Grace Theological Seminary in Winona Lake, Indiana, offers five different interpretations of this phrase in the Greek, which can be translated "the husband of but one wife" or more generically, "the man of one woman." Interpretations include a prohibition of polygamy, of divorce, of a widower's remarriage, of single pastors, or a promotion of the idea that the pastor must have but one wife, namely the church (Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 218). Every local church must study the Scriptures, pray and come to agreement on how to interpret this phrase for their local church. Every local church must agree before the Lord on the interpretation of this qualification as it relates to serving as a pastor, an elder, a deacon, a deaconess, a Sunday school teacher, and so on.

The Evangelical Free Church of America credentials pastors. The rule is that credentialed leaders in the EFCA need to be the husband of one wife without a divorce. At the same time, the EFCA recognizes exceptions to that rule when a leader had a wife who committed adultery or abandoned the marriage. There is a careful process to securing this Exception Clause for EFCA Ordination. Every church must study the Scriptures and agree before the Lord on how to interpret this Scripture. We would all agree at least that this phrase points to sexual purity in marriage and a growing, healthy marriage. The first priority of the Christian leader is not their co-workers or their friends. There must be a healthy focus on the family under Jesus Christ.

According to Titus 1:6, an elder must be "a man whose children [*tekna*] believe and are not open to the charge of being **wild** [*asotia*] translated, "riotous living" in Luke 15's parable of the prodigal son. **Disobedient** [*anupotakta*], is the word in the Septuagint to describe the sons of Eli who slept with temple prostitutes. Although the Greek word *tekna* [children] is used of posterity in general and occasionally of grown adults, it usually refers to youngsters who are regarded as being under their parents' authority. The command "to obey your parents" is given to *tekna* in Ephesians 6:1-4 and Col. 3:20-21, thus pointing to children still at home. When a child is struggling, the parents struggle. If we are to develop leaders and not just use them, we must give room for seasons of focus on the family. Check out the children of a potential pastor.

Jan and I have been married since 1978 and have served churches since 1979. By the grace of God, we have three believing children. The lessons I have learned or failed in my family have impacted the effectiveness of my ministry more than any other single factor. Faithfulness at home will mean fruitfulness for God's household of faith!

Christ-like Character

“An overseer...must be blameless, not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain.” (Titus 1:7)

Christ-like character in a person might be rejected by this world as old-fashioned or fundamental, or fanatical. But, Christ-like character is blameless, literally, “not called in.” Elders are to be absent of any valid accusation, like our Lord. Political leaders in our country can be selfish, explosive, drinkers, brawlers, and even crooks and still get elected year after year. The church is God’s work, and leaders must be blameless. To clarify the blameless lifestyle, Paul lists five “nots.”

First, shepherds are not to be overbearing (*not taking pleasure in self*). W.E. Vine says that an overbearing person *asserts his own will*. Our Lord was never overbearing and elders must never be self-willed and self-pleasing. We must say with our Lord, “not my will, but thine be done.” My will is to do the will of him who sent me! It is very destructive when an elder develops “MY WAY IS YAHWEH” thinking. When an elder believes that he has prayed, God has led him, and he will never change his position, it is not faithfulness, but an inflexible self-will.

Second, shepherds are to be not quick tempered (*not wrathful/Kent-not prone to anger*.) Jesus was not afraid of showing righteous anger. His righteous indignation burned in the temple in Jerusalem, for God's house was to be a house of prayer, not a den of thieves. But, our Lord was not an angry man. His under-shepherds must be forgiving and forbearing.

Third, shepherds are to be not given to drunkenness (*me paroinon= not alongside wine*.) Our Lord Jesus Christ made water into wine, and I believe that he drank some! We need to be careful here to not be legalistic and also to allow for different personal convictions. My personal conviction is to be like John the Baptist and totally abstain from alcohol. At the same time, I have served with shepherds who did drink some alcohol, but they were not given to drunkenness.

Fourth, shepherds are to be not violent (*not a striker*). Jesus said of himself, *I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls (Matthew 11:29b)*. The shepherd must not beat the sheep; he must gently lead the sheep by his good example. Sacred shepherds in the church are to be known for their tender touch with the young as they feed His lambs. Sacred shepherds live out Isaiah 40:11: *He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young*.

Fifth, shepherds are not to pursue dishonest gain. Gainful employment is a must; but, never dishonest gain. Christ never pursued dishonest gain. Jesus was never motivated by money. His treasurer, Judas was all about the money. Jesus our Lord sought the honor of His heavenly father and any not personal profit off God’s people.

Friendships

“Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.” (Titus 1:8)

Philoxenon, the word translated as “hospitable,” means “a friend of strangers.” Elders of God’s flock must be friendly to the stranger; they must welcome the newcomer. God’s leaders must be open to the new person whom people do not know; they cannot just hang out with churchgoers and those who make them comfortable.

We cannot simply welcome only the people who have proven themselves for years. Shepherds must set the pace in reaching out to new people with warm hearts and open homes. Shepherds must genuinely like strangers. Elder-caliber people discover what C.S. Lewis described:

The difference between a Christian and a worldly man is not that the worldly man has only affections or "likings" and the Christian has only "agape love." The worldly man treats certain people kindly because he "likes" them: the Christian, trying to treat everyone kindly, finds himself liking more and more people as he goes on, including people he could not even have imagined himself liking at the beginning. (Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 117)

Elders are a friend of the stranger and “a friend of the good,” *philagathon*. This word is found only here in the New Testament; it gives us our word “philanthropist.” “This word described a person of large charity and a supporter of all good causes” (Stott, *Guard the Message*, 177). Elder-caliber people need not be wealthy philanthropists, but they are friends to good causes. Some help in food kitchens. Some are on the board of the local Red Cross. Elders are to be the friends of good causes.

Effective shepherds cannot spend all their time at church and with the church crowd. They must be out in the world as a friend of strangers and seeking the lost. We are in the world and not of the world. They are the friend of sinners and at the same time they are **...self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined**. As the great Presbyterian pastor of a previous generation, Dr. Clarence McCartney observed:

“The better the man, the better the preacher. When he kneels by the bed of the dying or when he mounts the pulpit stairs, then every self-denial he has made, every Christian forbearance he has shown, every resistance to sin and temptation, will come back to him to strengthen his arm and give conviction to his voice. Likewise every evasion of duty, every indulgence of self, every compromise with evil, every unworthy thought word or deed, will be there at the head of the pulpit stairs to meet the minister on Sunday morning, to take the light from his eye, the power from his blow, the ring from his voice, and the joy from his heart.”

The Handling of God's Word

“He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.” (Titus 1:9)

In the search for elders, we need to look at their family, their character, their friends, and their skills in the Scriptures. John Calvin writes of these verses:

The pastor ought to have two voices: one for gathering the sheep and another for warding off and driving away wolves and thieves. The Scriptures supply him with the means of doing both; for he who is deeply skilled in it will be able both to govern those who are teachable and to refute the enemies of the truth. (Calvin, *Pastoral Epistles*, 361).

One of the most valuable books I have ever used in developing my skills in using the Scriptures in small groups is Roberta Hestenes, **Using the Bible in Groups**. It is a great book to use to develop small group teachers.

In 1991, I went on a missions trip to Hong Kong and I was invited to preach in one of our Evangelical Free Churches in that city. In China, there is a shortage of pastors and so there is a tradition in the churches of **Bible Women**. Our Free Churches in Hong Kong share the conviction of the EFCA that only men should serve in the position of senior or solo pastor in a local church. At the same time, some women have the gift of teaching and their ministry is incredibly valuable to the local church. In China, these gifted female teachers are called Bible Women.

As I traveled in Hong Kong to the church where I would preach, a Bible woman served as my interpreter. After the service, I gave her a book I had brought to give as a gift. It was Roberta Hestenes' **Using the Bible in Groups**. This Bible woman's jaw dropped. She looked at me in amazement and said she had been praying for a long time to have access to this book. Glory to God.

A pastor must be apt to teach (1 Timothy 3:4). They must develop skill in using the Scriptures. The ministry of the word of God is one of the “hedgehogs” of the church of Jesus Christ in the hands of biblically qualified elders (see Chapter 8). This ministry of the word makes the local church unique as the pillar and foundation of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15). It is the ministry of the word that transforms individual Christians (Romans 12:1, 2) and even whole communities.

Liars, evil brutes, and lazy gluttons will not produce a healthy church. May God give us godly elders who are worthy of being entrusted with God's work. Pastors have a sacred trust. May we be found faithful!

What Christ-gift are you asking for?

“It was he [Christ] who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11).”

Many search committees start with the desire to call a teacher like Warren Wiersbe, a pastor teacher like Chuck Swindoll, an evangelist like Bill Hybels, a prophet like Erwin McManus, or an apostolic genius like Dave Ferguson or Tim Keller. The preference is for someone who has the strengths of all these leaders.

Christ gives gifted people to pastor churches, but he distributes the gifts. No one has all the gifts. However, there are some “combination gifts.” The most recent analysis of the Greek language in Ephesians 4:11 is very useful. The Greek construction of “pastors and teachers” in the plural means that every pastor is also a teacher, but not every teacher is also a gifted pastor. The old understanding of Granville Sharp’s rule in the Greek language said that pastor teach was one gift. Actually, this rule only applies to the singular. Since pastors and teachers are in the plural, the larger circle is “pastors” and the smaller circle within the larger circle of pastor is “teachers.” Therefore there are pastors who are simply gifted as a teacher and there are pastors who are gifted as both a pastor and teacher.

It is critical for an elder board to understand the “gifting” of their previous pastor(s) and ask God for wisdom on the giftedness that is needed in the next chapter of the church. For instance, one church of 700 people in a large suburb of Chicago had been served by a very effective Bible teacher for almost twenty years. When he left, the elders believed that the church needed a gifted evangelist to be the next pastor. They turned down good men who were gifted pastor teachers and teachers because they were looking for a strong leader with a proven track history of evangelistic effectiveness in the position of overseer of the local church. The elders called such a man and the church lost 200 people who sought a strong Bible teacher. But, ten years later, the church is now around 3,000 people using a Willow style model of disciple making.

A church needs to understand the gifting of previous pastors and the “disciple making pathway” the church has used historically. The elders and the search committee need to agree on “what time it is at church?” Is it time for a pastor who will have great continuity to the gifting and the disciple making pathway of the previous pastors or is it time for a change?

Church leaders needs agreement on their disciple making pathway. Without it, we are in danger of starting down one pathway and creating confusion by later changing pathways. The big idea here is that the lead pastor needs to accurately assess their spiritual gift (Ephesians 4:11) and serve a church where their disciple making pathway fits the next chapter of the church. We can learn from examples of American churches so that the lead pastor and the disciple making pathway fit.

Teacher: The Bible Driven Pathway

Some church starters are gifted Bible teachers who emphasize expository preaching and teaching. This seems to be Paul's primary approach in Ephesus:

"(Paul) had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord" (Acts 19:9-10).

George Barna gives a useful definition of the gifted pastor who is a "**Teacher.**"

Influences via **ideas and words**

Sees the church as a classroom

Motivates people to think

Needs a teachable audience

Provides intellectual challenge

Seeks individual growth

Loves to study

Courage to teach unpopular truth

(George Barna, *The Second Coming of Church*, 35)

This is where I started as a young pastor. I did not spend half of my week building new relationships in the city (as we encourage church planters today). I invested half my week in the library working on the Sunday sermon, Sunday school, and leading home Bible studies (four the first year). "A Bible teaching ministry" was our mantra. By God's grace we laid a solid foundation for a church of 700 people today.

My wife grew up in a Bible driven pathway church with one of the most gifted teachers of our time. Dr. Warren Wiersbe served the Calvary Baptist Church of Covington, KY for ten years before moving to Moody Church in Chicago, IL. In both places the churches, many people came to Christ from the teaching of the truth of Christ and starving Christians showed up who were hungry for good Bible teaching. My wife's family moved from a Baptist church that did not teach the Word of God and my wife's mother who was from a Roman Catholic background found Christ in this church. I am grateful to God for the firm foundation of this church that taught my wife to obey everything that Jesus had commanded.

Bible driven churches can struggle when their leader receives a call to another church and the new leader comes who has a different gift. Without the agreement of the elders that it is time for a change, the new pastor teacher who leads the church down a different pathway of making disciples will face opposition. The new wine does not taste very good to the old timers who long for the ancient path of Sunday morning, Sunday School, Sunday night, and Wednesday night Bible teaching. When you change pastors and you change disciple making pathways it is a tough time; especially when no one understands what is happening.

Meet Warren Wiersbe



Distinguished Professor of Preaching at Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary, Warren Wiersbe is the author of more than 100 books. Billy Graham calls him "one of the greatest Bible expositors of our generation."

Warren wrote many articles and guidebooks for Youth For Christ and was eventually hired by Moody Press to write three books. The much-sought-after author then moved on to writing books for Calvary Baptist Church. It was during his ten years at Calvary that Expository Outlines on the New Testament and Expository Outlines on the Old Testament took shape. These two works later became the foundation of Warren's widely popular Bible studies known as the Be series, featuring such titles as *Be Loyal* (a study on Matthew) and *Be Delivered* (a study on Exodus). Several of these books have been translated into Spanish.

His next avenue of ministry was Chicago's Moody Memorial Church, where he served for seven years. He wrote nearly 20 books at Moody before moving to Lincoln, Nebraska, where he and his wife, Betty, now live. Prior to relocating, he had been the senior pastor of Moody Church, a teacher at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and a producer of the *Back to the Bible* radio program. During all these years of ministry, Warren held many more posts and took part in other projects too numerous to mention. His accomplishments are extensive, and his catalog of biblical works is indeed impressive and far-reaching. Most of the information for this profile was drawn from Warren Wiersbe's *Be Myself: The Autobiography of a Bridge Builder*, available at CBD. <http://www.christianbook.com/html/authors/1466.html>

Pastor Teacher: The Transformation Driven Pathway

The pastor teacher seeks life transformation teaching the Bible but also using several vehicles for the disciple making pathway. Good Bible preaching in the worship services is complemented by small groups (and mid-sized groups), and life on life disciple making.

Life on Life Discipling	Small/Mid-Sized Groups	Worship Services
1:1 or 1:3-7	1:12 or 1:40	20, 200, 2,000 or 20,000
<i>...iron sharpens iron...</i>	<i>...not quickly broken...</i>	<i>...spur one another on...</i>
Proverbs 27:17	Ecclesiastes 4:12	Hebrews 10:24, 25
Intimacy & accountability	Involvement & acceptance	Identity & affiliation
Asking hard questions	Asking good questions	Listening and learning
Sense of satisfaction	Sense of safety	Sense of significance
Sensitivity to one another	Affinity with one another	Diversity of one another
Truth telling	Teaching one another	Pastor/teacher
James 5:16	Romans 15:14	Ephesians 4: 11
Developing Leaders	Tested Leaders	Trusted Leaders
Operation Timothy	Sticky Church/ABF	Expository Preaching

In our first church in Dubuque, Iowa, I worked hard on expository preaching and I added Operation Timothy published by The Christian Businessman’s Committee in one to one disciple making, and the Colossians 2:7 Series in small discipleship groups. We changed a traditional Sunday school with one man teaching one large audience to several Adult Bible Fellowships with a class shepherd, a teacher, and a social captain. Finally, we tried some sermon-text based small groups that in recent years have been developed and popularized by Larry Osborne’s **Sticky Church**.

Finally, circa 2000, I profited (and our church in Dubuque led by Matt Collins) added a clear disciple making baseball diamond from Rick Warren’s **Purpose Driven Church** with Fellowship, Discipleship, Ministry, Evangelism, and Worship. While serving as a superintendent, our home church taught the Purpose Driven Life on Sunday, my wife and I led a Purpose Driven Life small group in our home and most of our small group members reproduced the material later by leading their own group. But, I noticed that after the Purpose Driven material, people did not know what to do next and many groups ended. What’s next? The answer I now embrace is Osborne’s **Sticky Church** and regular rounds of sermon-text based small groups.

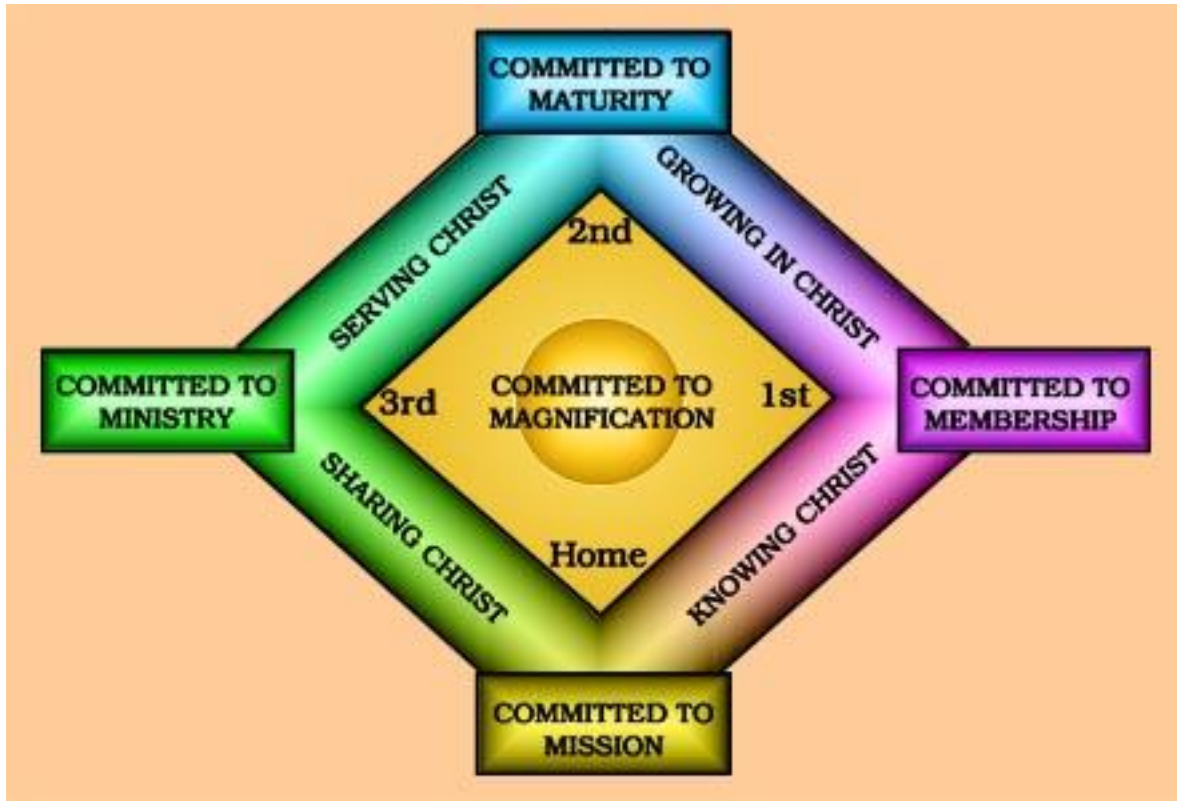
Thom Rainer in **Simple Church** gives a good summary of this pathway.

One church leader says, “We ask people to do three things a week here. Come to a worship service to fall more in love with God and his Word. Go to a small group to love others in community. Serve in a ministry to impact others. Love God, love others, and serve the world. We really try to keep it that simple. (Rainer, Simple Church, 40-41)

The Purpose Driven Church Disciple Making Model

<http://www.purposemedia.com/archived/pdm4/paradigm/process.htm>

A SIMPLE PROCESS...for moving people from unchurched and uncommitted to mature believers who fulfill their ministry in the church and their life mission in the world. This process is so practical; you can immediately implement it in your church.



The Purpose Driven® Church (PDC) Baseball Diamond is a visual road map to help communicate to your people God's purpose for their lives. This strategy will teach you how to move your people from each "purpose" base.

FIRST BASE: MEMBERSHIP Learn the keys to reaching the unchurched for Christ and assimilating them into your congregation.

SECOND BASE: MATURITY Learn how to measure spiritual growth in your people, and leave with a process for leading them to maturity.

THIRD BASE: MINISTRY Learn how to equip your people for service by helping them identify their S.H.A.P.E. for ministry.

HOME PLATE: MISSION Learn how to help your people define and fulfill their life mission in the world.

- o One of the greatest influences on my life as a church planter and founding pastor of the Hope Evangelical Free Church of Dubuque, Iowa was the ministry of Chuck Swindoll. His expository preaching for life transformation and the Bible study guides published by Insight for Living for small groups, and his background in one to one disciple making with the Navigators guided me to the transformational disciple making pathway.



“Two passions have directed the life and ministry of Chuck Swindoll: an unwavering commitment to the practical communication and application of God’s Word and an untiring devotion to seeing lives transformed by God’s grace. Chuck has devoted more than four decades to these goals, and he models the contagious joy that springs from enthusiastically following Jesus Christ.

“For more than forty years, Chuck’s pulpit ministry has emphasized the grace of God alongside an uncompromising commitment to practical, biblical truth and its application. He has served the following congregations in his pastoral ministry:

Grace Bible Church, Dallas, Texas, Assistant Pastor, 1963–1965
Waltham Evangelical Free Church, Waltham, Massachusetts, 1965–1967
Irving Bible Church, Irving, Texas, 1967–1971
First Evangelical Free Church, Fullerton, California, 1971–1994
Stonebriar Community Church, Frisco, Texas. In October of 1998, Chuck founded Stonebriar Community Church, where he continues to serve as senior pastor.”

<http://www.insight.org/about/about-chuck-swindoll.html>

Evangelist: The Seeker Driven Pathway

We can build on Barna's grid of teacher and pastor teacher by adding evangelist.

Evangelist	Pastor Teacher	Teacher
Influences through converts	Influences through vision	Influences by ideas
See the church as a crusade	See the church as army	See as classroom
Motivates people to witness	Motivates people to action	Motivates to think
Needs a core of witnesses	Needs a core of activists	Needs an audience
Preaches the gospel	Provides direction	Provides challenge
Seeks the lost	Seeks transformation	Seeks growth
Loves to share the gospel	Loves to strategize	Loves to study
Has courage to witness	Has courage to take risks	Teaches the truth

Simplistically, in the Bible belt, Baptist churches preach the gospel and call people to salvation every Sunday. Many believers seek more Bible teaching on Sunday mornings and thousands of "Bible" churches, "Purpose Driven Churches" and "Life Transformation" churches have spread across America.

In one of these Bible teaching churches, Bill Hybels served as a youth pastor (Park Ridge, Illinois in the early 1970s). As a gifted evangelist, scores of youth came to know Christ, but their parents with little Bible background, could not connect with this Bible teaching church. Bill and over 100 youth started a new kind of church.

The innovation was "seeker services" on Sunday where Bill preached Christ and "new community" on Wednesday with great Bible teaching by men like John Ortberg. In a Leadership Network publication, Hybels explains the model and why it works.

So, why be involved in this type of ministry? Hybels has five reasons why he is staying with building seeker churches: (1) I have an unmistakable calling on my life, and for me to do anything else would be deceitful and rebellious; (2) I really do believe to the core of my being that lost people matter to God and my personal conviction is that seeker-oriented churches are doing the most effective job at reaching them; (3) our kids deserve to be a part of a prevailing church; (4) all things considered, it is the best reflection of my gifts, passions, and temperament; and (5) I truly believe the church is the hope of the world. We're trustees of the hope of the world. It's not government, it's not education, and it's not business. It's us, under the leadership of Christ.

<http://media.leadnet.org/blog-content/leadnet/downloads/archives/NetFax-leadnet-org.pdf>

By Bill's own admission, the seeker driven model matches his gifts (evangelist and leadership). I would add that the model works when the evangelist leader with humility empowers gifted pastors and teachers to also use their gifts. In reality, every model works best when there is a strong complementary team of gifted leaders who use their gifts and the church does not just become the stage for the senior pastor's gifts.

Prophet: The Experimental Pathways

The core idea of prophecy is “shining forth God’s truth.” We are not speaking capital “P” Prophets who gave us the Word of God and are the foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20). We are speaking of little “p” prophets who shine forth the truth in strong preaching or in cutting-edge churches on the doorway of the darkness.

Two disciple making pathways are very popular with prophets. One is the mega church where great preaching can impact the greatest number of people. John Piper and Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, MN is an excellent example. The term “mega church” now refers to any Protestant congregation with a sustained average weekly attendance of 2,000 persons or more in its worship services (1,250 churches in 2008 in America). http://hrr.hartsem.edu/megachurch/megastoday_profile.html Some prophets prefers to work alone or do not conquer the complexity of the large church.

Some prophets lead smaller churches that flow along the prophetic edge of the culture. Erwin McManus of Mosaic Church is an example by his own words. “At Mosaic, the community where I serve as lead pastor in Los Angeles, we don’t describe ourselves as a modern church or a postmodern church, a contemporary church or an emerging church. The only description I use is that we are an **experimental** church. We volunteered to be God’s R&D Department... A part of our ethos (the spirit of our congregational culture) is a value for risk, sacrifice, and creativity.” (McManus, *The Barbarian Way*, 50, 51*). McManus tells a story that describes the spirit of innovation.

”The Church Communication Network sent me an invitation to do a session on leadership in one of their national conferences... I would follow one of the most credible experts on church leadership... I was honored... Somewhere in his lecture he started to say something that totally threw me. Point-blank he instructed, “Don’t be an innovator; be an early adaptor... the innovator is the guy who eats the poisonous mushroom and dies. The early adaptor is the guy right next to him, who doesn’t have to eat it...” After thanking him for his amazing contribution to the body of Christ and for mentoring me through his books and ministry I went on to thank him for a new metaphor for my life. I am a mushroom eater... Any day now might be my last supper. But without risking the poisonous mushrooms, we never would have discovered the joys of portobellos. The barbarian call is just this simple; we are called to be mushroom eaters. A world without God cannot wait for us to choose the safe path. If we wait for someone else to take the risk, we risk that no one will ever act and that nothing will ever be accomplished. John the Baptist was a mushroom eater, and it cost him his life...* Erwin Raphael McManus, *The Barbarian Way: Unleash The Tamed Faith Within*, Thomas Nelson, Nashville: TN, 2005, 50, 51 (ISBN 13: 978-0-643-3)

Prophet starters are mushroom eaters who leave safety and gain adventure. They are outsiders who do not quite fit in the boxes. Prophet are not domesticated but live dangerously. Prophet are not establishment but are a bit exotic. Prophet are mushroom eaters who take great risks and receive great rewards.



Erwin Raphael McManus is an author, speaker, activist, filmmaker and innovator who specializes in the field of developing and unleashing personal and organizational creativity, uniqueness, innovation and diversity. In other words, he gets bored really easily. He is committed to creating environments that expand imagination, unleash creativity, and maximize the creative potential in every individual and organization. Erwin is also the catalyst behind Awaken. Convinced that the world is changed by dreamers and visionaries, Awaken serves the purpose of history by maximizing the divine potential in every human being.

Engaging such issues as culture, creativity, change, and leadership, Erwin is widely known as a thought-provoking communicator. Erwin also serves as the primary communicator and cultural architect of Mosaic in Los Angeles. He is the author of *An Unstoppable Force*, a Gold Medallion Award finalist; *Chasing Daylight*; *Uprising: A Revolution of the Soul*; *The Barbarian Way*; *Stand Against the Wind*, *Soul Cravings*, and *Wide Awake*. He also serves as a Research Advisor with The Gallup Organization. Erwin is a native of El Salvador, and is a graduate of the University of North Carolina and Southwestern Theological Seminary. He and his wife Kim live in Los Angeles have two children, Aaron and Mariah, and a foster daughter Paty. (www.erwinmcmanus.com)

Apostle: The Multiplying Pathway

¹ While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus... He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord(Acts19:1-10)

The word “apostle” means “sent one.” The pathway of the apostle is one who is sent. In turn, they seek to send people forth on the mission of God again and again. Sent, sent and sent looks like reproduction and the multiplication of ministry as multiplying churches start churches that start churches. House church movements that multiply are often led by people with evangelistic or apostolic gifting. Our thesis is that the gifting of lead church planters is reflected in the disciple making pathway of these churches that emphasize reproduction. Allan Hirsch calls this “apostolic genius” in **The Forgotten Ways**. One quick tool that tries to measure apostolic gifting is an on-line test developed by Alan Hirsch (www.apest.com).

The word “apostle” means “sent one” and we see it used in three ways. First, Jesus chose from among all his disciples the Twelve “Sent Ones.” The capital letter “**Apostles**” were to be with him and not just around him. They were given his authority and they did not to act on their own authority. In my view, the last of the capital letter “Apostles” was Paul (1 Corinthians 15:8) who was personally commissioned by the risen Lord Jesus on the Damascus Road (Galatians 1). The New Testament is the “Apostolic” teaching (Acts 2:42) that is unique and inerrant. The early church fathers understood there was a categorical difference between the apostles and themselves. As Ignatius of Antioch said around 110 A.D., “I do not command you like Peter and Paul, they were Apostles; I am a sinful man.” The Apostolic teaching of the original Apostles (and members of their circle like Luke) are foundational for the church (Ephesians 2:20). A foundation is laid once. The Apostles are unique and we do not see them today.

Most believe in small letter “apostles” sent by the churches to serve as “messengers of the churches” (2 Corinthians 8:23 and Philippians 2:25). These small letter “apostles” serve as representatives from one church to another church as Barnabas did in Acts 11 with the churches of Jerusalem and Antioch. Small letter apostles have a big heart for the “care of the churches” (2 Corinthians 11:28) and church planting. Some lead church planters have “apostolic ” gifting. One quick way to explore if you have apostolic gifting is to do the on-line test developed by Alan Hirsch (www.apest.com). Capital A “Apostles” are unique. Small letter “apostles” are sent by the churches and are listed among the spiritual gifts of 1 Corinthians 12.

The third way that “apostle” is used is for every Christian as a “sent one” into this world to represent Jesus Christ as his ambassador. “As the father sent me, so send I you” (John 20:21) applies not just to “Apostles” and “apostles,” but to every Christian. Every member is a missionary sent with the gospel to their world. Every member of the

body of Christ can start churches just as we see unnamed Christians start the church of Antioch in Acts 11.

“What exactly is an apostle, what does the gift of apostleship look like, and how should we understand an apostle's role today?”

Various theological streams and ecclesiastical traditions hold opposing views on apostleship. Some ... contend that apostleship flourished during the foundational era of the church but is no longer active today. On the other end are those who believe modern apostles exist and possess the same authority as the Apostles who penned the New Testament... But the middle-ground viewpoint acknowledges there is a difference between being gifted as an apostle (little "a") and possessing the authority of an Apostle (capital "A")...

Dave Ferguson, senior pastor of Community Christian Church in Naperville, Illinois, adds, "People with the apostolic gift see over the horizon. They're able to look at the spiritual landscape and see where God is working." Ferguson recognizes this drive to extend God's kingdom and initiate new things within himself, but he avoided the term "apostolic" for years. Instead, he described himself as a "**spiritual entrepreneur**"—a term with less theological baggage and more cultural panache.” Apostles Today? Rediscovering the gift that leaves churches and well-connected pastors in its wake, Skye Jethani, 6/13/2008 <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2008/spring/15.37.html>

Dave and Jon Ferguson of Community Christian Church in Chicago evidence the apostolic heart of multiplication (2 Timothy 2:2) at every level.

- Disciples apprentice disciples
- Small Group Leaders apprentice small group leaders
- Creative arts directors apprentice creative arts directors
- Campus pastors apprentice campus pastors
- Pastors apprentice pastors
- Movement leaders apprentice movement leaders



Dave Ferguson is the Lead Pastor of COMMUNITY (www.communitychristian.org), an innovative multi-site missional community who “help people find their way back to God”. He is the author of The BIG IDEA (2007) and Exponential (2010) and the forthcoming On The Verge (2011). <http://daveferguson.typepad.com/about.html>

Search Process

“And the wise heart will know the proper time and procedure. For there is a proper time and procedure for every matter, though a man’s misery weighs heavily upon him.” (Ecclesiastes 8:6)

Shepherds do not magically appear from web sites or search firms. The local church needs a careful process saturated with prayer that leads to the selection of a shepherd. As we pray and study the Scriptures, God clarifies the steps of a healthy search and prayer is the engine that drives the process. Here is a proven process of searching for the next pastor of local churches that many churches have found useful.

Prayer

The shepherd search is an open door to strengthening the prayer life of a congregation as well as the members of the elder board and the search committee. First, the search committee can update the congregation through the church bulletin every week or two with specific prayer requests that reflect the “state of the search.” Second, a prayer team for the search committee can be established so that at least one person is praying daily for each member of the search committee. The search committee can then communicate weekly with the prayer team (e-mail) and the entire church (the church bulletin and website) where they are in the search process.

One important caution that should be obvious. The search committee never gives the names of potential pastors. **No names.** The search committee must receive recommendations from the people in the church, but they must never share with the members of the church how they looked upon a recommended candidate. The only name that comes out of the search committee is the name of the official candidate; like the white smoke from the inner chamber of the cardinals in Rome announcing that they have agreed upon a pope.

Ask the congregation for names of potential candidates complete with home address and home telephone and clarify that the search committee will not provide any explanation for why someone is or is not a candidate. Prayer requests are for the progress of the search, not input on potential candidates.

Preparation

The following documents for candidates need to be ready for the process.

- . Church Brochure
- . Community Profile
- . Church Vision Statement, Core Values, and Strategy of Ministry
- . Church Constitution

- Church Annual Report (including the budget)
- Church History including milestones, missionaries, and ministries
- Job Description for the position sought
- Pastoral work agreement (salary, benefits, vacation, work week, reviews)

There needs to be information prepared for a person who is taking a first look at the opportunity and then a second more comprehensive package of documents for potential candidates who enter the process so there is clear understanding of the opportunity.

Position Profile

God gave us a profile of the Messiah in the Old Testament so that we would recognize his Great Shepherd when he came. The healthy church develops a profile of the next shepherd to guide a search committee when the resumes come in like a flood.

A profile is different than a job description. A job description focuses on the competencies necessary for the job. A profile looks more at calling, character, and gifting. Appendix 1 gives a good example of a good job description and profile.

- **Family** Married or single; children at home or empty nest
- **Leadership style** Director, influencer, collaborative, or steady (DISC)
- **Spiritual Gifting** Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers
- **Education** Bible College or seminary required?
- **Special Experiences** Missionary service, urban experience or other
- **Wiring** Are you more entrepreneurial or managerial?
- **Community Style** is your preference urban, suburban, or rural?

The Evangelical Free Church of America has an excellent tool to serve churches in their search: www.ministerconnection.net. This website matches churches to the names of pastoral candidates who are approved in an interview with an Evangelical Free Church leader. This tool measures temperament, motivation, leadership style, participation style, personal convictions and personal comfort zones for a candidate and a church. It is a match making service. The church that fills out a profile has a gatekeeper in the EFCA who matches potential candidates in the system to the church so that the church can match potential candidates across the same set of questions and answers. One member of a search team can be the point person for using these tools.

Prayer Preparation Profile Pool of Resumes

There are two approaches to gathering resumes.

The “head-hunter” approach With their profile in hand; many search committees now “go after” the right person. They look for effective leaders who match their profile, approach them, and ask them to pray about a change. Some churches hire a “head-hunting” pastoral search firm to do the entire search for them (Sima, Dingman Group, and many others).

The “traditional” approach Search committees can just review the resumes of leaders who know they are ready to take a new position. Pastors post their resume with people they trust as they look for a new opportunity. *There are four starting points I recommend.*

There are at least four solid streams of resumes.

Family and friends The committee should announce to the congregation when they are receiving resumes. The committee must be clear with parishioners that the search committee will receive resumes of favorite sons; but they will never discuss a specific person outside the search committee. They will never give a reason why someone was selected or not selected. If there is not an assurance of confidentiality in the search committee, there is no authentic search. The committee must speak freely within the committee without fear of being called into account by an angry attendee.

Pastors and church leaders Denomination leaders, former pastors, seminary professors, visiting speakers, missionaries, district superintendents, and other Christian leaders can be a fruitful source of potential names.

Bible colleges and seminaries Most churches have a school or seminary they trust. Here is a short list of schools where I would send a son or daughter. Then, I list some helpful web sites:

Moody Bible Institute
Wheaton College
Trinity International University-Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Dallas Theological Seminary (serves only DTS graduates)
Denver Theological Seminary (open site-candidates can see churches)
Gordon Conwell (open site-you can see all requests from churches)
Talbot Seminary
Many others

Web sites

www.christiancareercenter.com

www.christianjobs.com

www.churchjobs.net

www.churchjobsonline.com

www.churchstaffing.com

www.churchstaffsearch.com

www.cmalliance.org/jobs/

www.experiencingworship.com/jobs.html

<http://findachristianjob.com/>

<http://documents.fuller.edu/career/search/churchsearch.asp>

www.ministryemployment.com/jobseeker.html

www.ministerconnection.net

www.ministersearch.com

www.ministryjobs.com

www.ministrylist.com

www.ministrysearch.com

<http://www.navyreserve.com/careers/chaplain-support/chaplain/?campaign=search Reprise/Google/Chaplain+Pastor/pastor+employment&sid=pastor+employment>

www.pastorsearch.net/

<http://www.postjobfree.com/skill/jobs/pastor>

www.simainternational.com/mbd_what_pastoralsearches.cfm

www.theshepherdsstaff.com/

<http://vanderbloemen.com/>

www.westernseminary.edu/placementwebsite/index.asp

<http://willowcreek.churchstaffing.com/>

www.xpastor.org/jobs/job_boards.html

www.youthpastor.com/jobs/

www.youthspecialties.com/jobbank/jobs/openings/

www.youthworkers.net

<http://www.covchurch.org/jobs/>

www.christiannet.com

www.incm.org

www.crosssearch.com

www.sbc.net

www.cbamerica.org

<https://www.rca.org/jobs>

<http://www.efccm.ca/wordpress/efcc-national-mission/church-opportunities/>

Some positions will generate hundreds of resumes. Other ministry opportunities are difficult to fill. As the resumes are gathered, the profile becomes the tool to reduce the flow to a few precious potential candidates. No matter how many or how few resumes come into the search, we need to remember that it only takes one resume to make a successful search. Be patient for a few people who fit the profile.

Once resumes have been received from many sources, an information packet should be sent to people who fit the profile broadly. Included in the packet of information can be information about the church and a questionnaire that can be returned by a candidate as an expression of their interest (See Appendix A). The candidate can also be requested to fill out information on www.ministerconnection.net. They can do this free of charge as a special candidate who will be considered only by one church and not every church in the minister connection system.

Candidates who take the time to fill out a questionnaire should receive a letter if they are eliminated from the search process. After the questionnaire is received, it is time to check references. A sample form to use in calling references is found in Appendix B.

I was deposed in a civil law suit against our association of churches some years ago. I spoke with an attorney representing a church insurance company at that time. I asked him about reference checking. He emphasized that it is critical for a church to be able to prove due diligence in the search for a shepherd. Due diligence includes checking references. This attorney informed me that if a person lists me as a reference, then I may speak freely without any fear of legal action. If there is a problem, I need to share that information. If there is a good report, I rejoice in affirming the potential candidate. If a church calls me about a potential pastor and I am not listed as a reference, the attorney advised me that I should ask the church to secure a signed release from the potential pastor before I speak freely. If a potential pastor refuses to sign a release for anyone to be a reference, there is something wrong.

Do a criminal background check. One insurance company to consult is Church Mutual Insurance (800-554-2642) (www.churchmutual.com). Contact your insurance company and check to see if you are doing everything that is required to show due diligence in case there is a problem with a pastor that might have been prevented.

Prayer
Preparation
Profile
Pool of Resumes
Preaching

After the careful development of a profile, the receiving of resumes, the checking of references and hours of prayer for discernment to see if a person does fit the profile, I recommend a next step is listening to the preaching of the potential candidate.

It is much easier today to get messages of potential candidates on the web. If there are no messages on the web accessible to the search committee, it is appropriate to ask the candidate for several sermons (the last one, the best one, and a short series).

My personal observation is that a search committee can learn more from one hearing one message in the pulpit by a potential candidate than from any other source. Listen to the style, the spirit, and the skills of the potential shepherd in teaching.

Chris Barnes wrote the book, **When the Word Leads Your Pastoral Search: Biblical Principles and Practices to Guide Your Search**, Moody Publishers, 2011. His sermon evaluation forms on pages 128-131 very useful in calculating the final score of a candidate's sermon. "His big idea is right on target: *Did the sermon fire a biblical bullet aimed at the life of the listener?*" He also includes good questions to ask a candidate in the behavioral interview (150-162).

- What is your philosophy or theology of preaching?
- What biblical passages on preaching have influenced your approach to preaching?
- What well known preachers do you hold in high regard?
- What constitutes a good sermon?
- How far in advance do you plan your sermons?
- Could you give an overview of one or more sermon series you have preached?
- How do you borrow material that someone else has prepared?
- How important do you believe it is to focus a sermon on one "big idea?"
- How do you make sure that your sermon speaks to a wide range of people?
- In what areas does your preaching need to grow?
- What do you consider to be your greatest strength as a preacher?

Some search committees send two people to go and hear the preacher in person. If you invite a potential candidate into your pulpit to preach, do not let a potential candidate preach more than once. I have observed churches who asked men to fill the pulpit and they kept them "under consideration" as their next pastor for months. They were not really interested in anything more than consistent pulpit supply. This is using people.

Prayer

Preparation

Profile

Pool of Resumes

Preaching

Personal Behavioral Interview

Some churches move directly from the preaching to the official visit to candidate without ever meeting the person. This is unwise in my view. The next step is a personal interview with the potential candidate and the spouse. Today, this step can be done on Skype. This is the step that narrows the search from around 3 to 5 people to the potential candidate.

Have you ever heard of a behavioral interview? I never had until I became responsible for overseeing the distribution of around \$400,000 for church planting. When there is a major investment, there is a call to careful research and analysis. In developing an intentional, systematic approach to church planting, many organizations have developed behavioral interviews for potential church planters.

There is excellent training material available on how to do behavioral interviewing (www.churchsmart.com). A team of at least three people needs to be developed that are skilled in this tool of behavioral interviewing. It is called “behavioral” because it focuses on the past performance of a person. Rather than just asking a person if they like to work with parents in youth ministry, a behavioral interview asks for two examples of when the candidate involved parents in the youth ministry that they organized. Rather than asking if the person enjoys teaching, the interview teams asks for two examples of teaching ministry that God blessed in the person’s last ministry.

The interview is all questions of the potential candidate by the interview team. The questions are developed from the profile that was prepared to help identify the servant of God that God is calling to this new role. The interview needs to take around four hours. If the candidate is married, it needs to be with both the candidate and their spouse. Unlike the marketplace, ministry is a family effort. **The focus is not the future!** People can have impressive ideas, but the issue is their experience. The best indicator of future performance is past performance. There are some people who can cast a tremendous vision, but they have never accomplished a significant task. I have given some possible questions for an interview at the end of this work. There are questions to use for a potential pastor in the appendix of my book, **E³: Effective, Empowering, Elders** www.churchsmart.com

Prayer

Preparation

Profile

Pool of Resumes

Preaching

Personal Behavioral Interview

Pastoral Candidate

The shepherd search committee has established called the church to prayer, established a profile, taken resumes, checked references, listened to preaching, conducted behavioral interviews, and now it is time to make a decision before the Lord. After prayerful consideration of the Scriptures, the search committee recommends one person for approval by the elders and the congregation.

Obviously the search committee always operates within the parameters established in the constitution of the church. The candidate and his family are invited to the church for a series of meetings designed to introduce the candidate to the entire congregation for their final decision. See Appendix 4 gives a very thorough process that one church did during the week that the candidate met the body.

For a detailed discussion of a healthy process of calling and confirming your new pastor please read Wes Johnson's Finding the Right Pastor (800-745-2202). Wes includes a suggested schedule for the candidates visit, sample call letter, sample installation service, and many other valuable suggestions.

Pastors have a sacred trust from the Lord Jesus Christ to lead the local church. Churches with ineffective pastors merely meander downstream. Churches with effective, empowering pastors contribute to God's movement of multiplying healthy churches among all people. This booklet is designed to serve your search for the next shepherd/ elder/ overseers who will serve your church for the glory of our Great Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Appendix 1

Senior Pastor Role and Responsibilities, River of Life Church

River of Life Vision: *Our vision is to develop all people into devoted ambassadors for Jesus Christ in the Over-the-Rhine community, Cincinnati, and the world.*

Overview of the Position

1. General Responsibilities

With our small congregation, the Pastor is the primary leader and change agent of the church. We are Elder governed with the Senior Pastor considered to be Head Elder.

The Senior Pastor of River of Life will:

- Lead the church in executing its vision through
 - Regular pulpit supply (preaching and teaching)
 - Leadership development of staff and lay personnel
 - Modeling outreach and discipleship
- Provide counsel, support and servant leadership for the existing staff consisting of a Youth Pastor (full time), Worship Minister (part-time), and Food Pantry Coordinator (part-time)
- Provide pastoral counseling
- Manage the operations of the church (facility oversight and administration)
- Nurture River of Life's relationship with both Hope Church and Faith Church, our key partner churches in suburban Cincinnati, as well as City Gospel Mission, a key partner in our youth ministry.
- Build coalitions and partnerships with other neighborhood churches and community organizations
- Explore external financial support opportunities for church ministries

2. *Shepherding/Nurturing & Leadership Development*

The Senior Pastor is to practice a lifestyle of discipleship by meeting regularly with the church leadership and investing in their lives.

The majority of our Pastoral Care is provided through our successful small groups system of ministry. The Senior Pastor is expected to continue to develop and expand this mode of ministry.

Additionally, the Senior Pastor is expected to provide pastoral counseling. He is also expected to do the work of an evangelist and follow-up new visitors and other guests. The pastor is expected to spend time interacting with pantry clients on a regular basis.

3. *Preaching/Teaching, Outreach, & Discipleship*

The Senior Pastor must be a strong communicator of God's Word through highly effective pulpit ministry. He is expected to equip members for outreach within an urban cultural context. The Pastor is expected to be in the pulpit at least 40 of 52 Sundays.

In addition, theologically he must be willing to work under the auspices of the Evangelical Free Church of America (see attached doctrinal statement). For further information on our denomination, visit the website at www.efca.org.

Senior Pastor Profile, River of Life Church

Abstract: The senior pastor of River of Life Church will be a pastor-teacher, shepherding the diverse flock in this urban church. He will have a deep knowledge of and clearly preach the Word of God, a passion for outreach and discipleship, and a talent for envisioning and realizing strategies of growth in the church and community.

River of Life Church is a ten-year-old multiethnic church in Cincinnati, Ohio. Located in the Over-the-Rhine neighborhood, River of Life seeks to partner with God to build His Kingdom in our community. We are a member of the EFCA.

Spiritual Gifts and Strengths:

As the Bible teaches us that the Holy Spirit endows certain gifts for the betterment of the Body, we desire that the candidates demonstrate evidence of gifting in:

- Pastor-Teacher (Eph 4:11)
- Leadership (Rom 12:8)

In addition, the pastoral candidate should demonstrate spiritual strengths in

- Administration (1 Cor 12:28)
- Exhortation (Rom 12:8)
- Hospitality (Rom 12:13)
- Wisdom (1 Cor 12:8)

Characteristics:

In the New Testament, the pastor is considered an elder. We expect that the successful candidate will meet the requirements for eldership as set forth in Titus 1 & 1 Timothy 3.

Additionally, the successful candidate will demonstrate the following characteristics:

- Passion for Teaching/Preaching God's Word
- Engaging communicator
- Talent in developing a ministry of discipleship
- Compassion for the poor and disadvantaged
- A shepherd's heart for the flock, and an evangelist's heart for the non-believer
- Talent in organizing strategies of growth
- Wisdom with urban and inter-cultural ministry
- Coach of staff and lay leadership
- Agreement with the Evangelical Free Church Statement of Faith

Education and Experiences:

- A Bachelor's degree in a theological discipline required (Master's degree preferred) or equivalent pastoral experience
- Three to five years ministry experience, with pastoral experience preferred
- Involvement with urban ministry with exposure to diverse worship styles

Appendix 2

PASTORAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE Evangelical Free Church

All answers to this questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential, and all copies and computer files will be destroyed upon completion of the pastoral selection process. They will be destroyed immediately upon your personal request and notification that you are withdrawing your candidacy for the position of Senior Pastor for this church. Final candidate(s) will be asked to submit additional personal information beyond the scope of this questionnaire.

ALL SALARY INFORMATION WILL BE REMOVED FROM THIS QUESTIONNAIRE BEFORE REVIEW BY THE FULL SEARCH COMMITTEE AND SEEN ONLY BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE AND NON-STAFF ELDERS.

Please send the completed questionnaire on a computer disk or CD marked CONFIDENTIAL to:

Richard Thompson
Chairman of the EFC Search Committee
P.O. Box 1114
Wheaton, IL 60189

This questionnaire has been designed to be completed using a computer and returned to us on a disk. We discourage returning it by email due to the lack of confidentiality. Please feel free to use as much or as little space as you feel is necessary in responding to the questions. Hit the ENTER key as many times as necessary to provide the space for your response to each question. Also, please feel free to "cut and paste" any information from documents that you may have already prepared that you feel would appropriately address the questions.

Date:

A. PERSONAL

1. Name:

Street Address:

Phone:

FAX:

City:

State:

E-mail address:

Zip Code:

2. State when and how you came to Christ.

3. Your background: I grew up in a: (Mark with an X after appropriate response)

Large city: Medium-sized city: Small town: Rural farm area: Variety of settings:

4. Academic training: List all education and special training above high school including dates, schools and degrees earned:

Dates	Schools	Degrees
1.		
2.		
3.		

5. Are you currently pursuing (or planning to pursue) additional education? Yes: No:
If Yes, please explain.

6. Martial status: Married: Single: Widowed: Have you ever been divorced? Yes:
No:
Your wife? Yes: No:

7. Wife's name:
In what areas of ministry is your wife involved?

8. Financial information: (To be extracted by the Chairman of the Search Committee and shared only with non-staff elders):
Current salary, *excluding* benefits: \$

Do you have outside income-producing work? Yes: No: If Yes, please explain nature and amount.

What are your current benefits (e.g., insurance, allowances, reimbursements, vacations, educational, etc. Please show amounts if applicable)?

9. Please explain your personal beliefs and practices on stewardship specifically addressing tithing and indebtedness.

B. CHURCH EXPERIENCE

1. Are you ordained? Licensed? Date: By what church?

2. Would you be willing to be ordained by the Evangelical Free Church? Yes: No:

3. Please provide the following information for all churches in which you have served, beginning with the most recent:

Church: City/State:
Position: From: to: No. Years:

Type community: Developing: Settled but growing: Stable: Declining: Rural:

Location: Small town: Small city: Medium city: Large city: Suburban:

Morning worship attendance: How many full-time staff?

Denomination:

Comments on the ministry:

Why did you leave this ministry, or if it is your current ministry, why might you consider leaving?

4. Please list and describe the nature of all non-church related employment since graduating with your undergraduate degree. Please also list dates of employment.
5. Please identify your strengths in pastoral ministry and share how your ministry has demonstrated each of those strengths (e.g., preaching, teaching, administration, counseling, strategic planning, evangelism, discipleship, leadership development, etc).

Please discuss any areas of weakness that you feel you may have and how you have compensated for them.

C. SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES

1. Please list your experience in any area of specialized ministry (e.g., Christian education, music, youth, evangelism, missions, etc.).
2. Do you have any ongoing ministry commitments outside of the church? Yes: No: If Yes, please explain the nature and time requirement of this commitment.

D. REFERENCES

Please provide the following required references including full addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses, if available. You may include additional references, but no more than two pastors outside your church or one seminary professor. All references with the possible exception of the non-Christian should be able to assess your leadership, your ministry style, and your spiritual giftedness. **Reference checking will be done only in the very last stage of the hiring process and we will personally contact you before any contacts are made.**

REQUIRED REFERENCES:

- A. A Pastor who knows you and your work

Name:
Address:

Phone: Home:
Work:
Email:

- B. Two Staff Pastors of a church you have pastored

Name:
Address:

Name:
Address:

Phone: Home:
Work:
Email:

Phone: Home:
Work:
Email:

- C. One active deacon / elder of a church where you have served

Name:
Address:

Phone: Home:

Work:
Email:

D. Two other persons who know you well (who may or may not be a member of your church and at least one of which is a non-Christian).

Name:
Address:

Name:
Address:

Phone: Home:
Work:
Email:

Phone: Home:
Work:
Email:

OPTIONAL REFERENCES:

Other:

Name:
Address:

Name:
Address:

Phone: Home:
Work:
Email:

Phone: Home:
Work:
Email:

E. YOUR DOCTRINAL VIEWS

Please clearly state your beliefs in each area listed below and provide Scripture references substantiating your views. You may also add a personal statement of doctrinal views on issues not discussed here.

The EFCA Doctrinal Statement can be found at www.efca.org

INCLUDE AT THIS POINT IF DESIRED, ANY PERSONAL STATEMENTS OF DOCTRINAL VIEWS ON ISSUES NOT DISCUSSED ABOVE.

F. YOUR PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICES IN THE MINISTRY

1. Please discuss in some detail your Philosophy of Ministry (Please include a discussion on your personal leadership style including if available any Meyers-Briggs or DISC evaluations).
2. Discuss your approach for evangelism and church growth (local church growth and new church planting).
3. Describe your approach for training staff and lay leaders in the local church.
4. Discuss your view of the role of worship in the church (including use and style of music)

5. Discuss your plan for pastoral care (both personal and by church members)
6. Discuss your views on church governance and specifically the role of the Senior Pastor.
7. Describe your view of a senior pastor's role with the Body of a large church. Specifically address accessibility and how to connect with the people.
8. What is your view of women serving in positions of authority in the local church?
9. Describe your practice of church discipline
10. What is your conviction regarding divorce and remarriage. (Do you feel differently about the marital status of church leaders as opposed to lay people?)
11. Discuss your convictions regarding **your** use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco and non-prescription drugs. (Do you feel differently about their use by others in the church?)

12. What are your convictions concerning abortion, homosexuality and pornography?

13. Please underline the number on the continuum that best shows your position or preference and change its type to **bold**:

Church Music:	Traditional	1	2	3	4	5	4	3	2	1	Contemporary
A.M. Worship Style:	Formal	1	2	3	4	5	4	3	2	1	Informal
Sermon Style:	Expository	1	2	3	4	5	4	3	2	1	Topical
Sermon Series:	Frequent	1	2	3	4	5	4	3	2	1	Infrequent
Charismatic:	Anti-	1	2	3	4	5	4	3	2	1	Open to
Theology:	Calvinistic	1	2	3	4	5	4	3	2	1	Armenian
Church Growth:	Directed	1	2	3	4	5	4	3	2	1	Spontaneous
Leadership Style:	Consensus	1	2	3	4	5	4	3	2	1	Top-down

14. Are you currently in discussions, in any stage, with any other church concerning a possible move?
 Yes: No: If yes, please explain:

Appendix 3

Behavioral Interview-Sacred Shepherd

“Since an overseer is **entrusted** with God's work, he must be...” (Titus 1:7). Leaders have a **sacred trust**. Rather than just looking at the educational background or the resume of work experience, Titus 1, complemented by 1 Timothy 3 gives us clusters of biblical qualifications for sacred shepherds in the local church. For the complete background to these questions you will need to read my book entitled: E3: Effective, empowering, elders (www.churchsmart.com).

1. Sacred trust of God's Call

“Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work...” (Titus 1:7).

Question #1 Describe how you became a Christian and how God called you into the ministry.

Question #2 If God would allow you to do just one thing for the rest of your life, what would you most want to do?

Question #3 Describe one ministry that you know the Lord called you to accomplish. How did God call you? What happened?

Qualities to look for: Trusts Christ
Has an inner drive and passion for shepherding
Knows how to find the will of God and has demonstrated obedience to God's call

2. Sacred trust in the family

“... the husband of but one wife” “... a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient” (Titus 1).

“... he must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church” (1 Timothy 3)?

Question #1 Please describe to us how you and your wife became a Christian.

Question #2 Please describe to us your childrens' relationship to Christ.

Question #3 Describe a very difficult period you experienced in raising children.

Question #4 Please describe the most difficult period you have experienced in your marriage.

Question #5 (To the wife) Is your primary calling to ministry (perhaps before you even met your husband) or is your primary calling to your husband and his call? How do you feel about being a pastor's wife?

Qualities to look for: Wife and Children trust Christ
The family shares a call to ministry
Honesty, transparency, and balance

3. Sacred trust in character

"Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless-not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain." (Titus 1:7)

Question #1 Describe to us a ministry experience where you thought that the Lord was leading you in one direction, but the elders or the congregation said no. What happened?

Question #2 Describe to us a time when God closed a door in your life. How did you respond? What happened?

Question #3 Give an example of a work that God gave you that you completed, and stayed with through to completion.

Question #4 What is your attitude toward the use of alcohol for yourself and others?

Question #5 What is your attitude and practice toward giving?

Question #6 Have you ever declared bankruptcy or been convicted of a crime? Is there anything in your life that you need to master before taking this ministry?

Qualities to look for: Not taking pleasure in self/not asserting his own will
Legalistic in spirit? Do they allow for differing personal convictions?
Values ideas different than their own and does not squash discussion; is open minded
Refocuses during times of ambiguity; able to make mid-course corrections effectively
Does not allow sudden or negative events to knock off course; dedicated to the mission
Evidences balance between flexibility and firmly staying the course; is not rigid
Above reproach

4. Sacred trust in friends, evangelism, and enfolding

“Rather he must be hospitable, (philoxenon), literally means **a friend** of strangers one who loves what is good **one who likes what is good** (philagathon is **a friend** of the good), who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.”
(Titus 1:8)

Question #1 Are you more energized by being with Christians or with lost people? In what ways do you typically associate with unchurched people?

Question #2 Have you ever had the honor of leading someone to Christ. Describe to us how God has used you in this way.

Question #3 How have you equipped people for evangelism in your ministry?

Question #4 How have you welcomed newcomers in your previous ministries?

Question #5 Describe the ways that you are in the world but also set boundaries so that you are not of the world.

Question #6 Describe a ministry you developed that targeted a specific need outside the church you served in the community.

Note: Look for illustrations across three different **times**, in three different **places**, and in three different **groups**. *Tell me about a time...tell me about another time...*

Qualities to look for: Person of large charity and a supporter of all good causes
Friend of the lost and the newcomer and yet not of the world
The ability to develop trusting friendships and healthy family relationships over time

He does the work of an evangelist
He is a proven assimilator of new people

5. Sacred trust in holding the Word of God

“He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.
(Titus 1:7)

Question #1 What is your approach to spiritual disciplines like prayer and the Word?

Question #2 Who is your favorite preacher? Who do you emulate in a good way?

Question #3 How do you prepare sermons? What is the complete process you use?

Question #4 Describe to us how you would approach the work week as a church planter-how would you allocate your time and energy, breaking it down day by day?

Question #5 How have you led a local church in the ministry of prayer?

Qualities to look for: He is well trained in the Scriptures
He has an inner drive and passion for teaching the Bible
People “feel” feed by his teaching ministry

6. Disciple making and Spiritual Formation

“And the things you have heard me as in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” (2 Timothy 2:2)

Question #1 Who is your Timothy? Describe someone you disciplined who is reproducing what you taught.

Question #2 How have you started small groups? Have they multiplied?

Question #3 What is the role of small groups and Sunday school in spiritual formation?

Qualities to look for: Proven disciplemaker
He is a proven small group multiplier
He has a clear strategy of small groups and how they fit in a church

7. Sacred Trust of spiritual gifts

“We have different gifts (charismata), according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to (the) faith. If it is serving, let him serve, if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others., let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.” (Romans 12:6-8)

Question #1: Read Romans 12:6-8: What is your spiritual gift? How has this gift been confirmed and developed?

Question #2 Describe the most effective church system you have ever seen that identifies, develops and empowers others to serve in their area of giftedness.

Question #3 When you were young, describe your activities in school-did you ever start something from scratch or did you usually join an organization? When you have needed to make money, what kind of jobs have you been attracted to?

Qualities to look for: Knows himself
Sees the value of equipping and matching gifts of people with ministry needs
Develops others

8. Sacred trust of equipping God's people

“It was he (Christ) who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare (equip) God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:11-13)

Question #1 If we interpret Ephesians 4 in the following way, which gift do you have?

Question #2 Who is your Paul? Who is the Christian leader you respect and would see as an effective model of Christian ministry?

Question #3 There are many models of effective churches today. Which is your favorite and why? How have you implemented some of their approaches?

Question #4 Are you more of an idea person or more of an implementer?

Qualities to look for: Has a clear understanding of his gifting and role
Is this the gifting that is needed for our church in this season
Coaches others into higher levels of responsibility-systematically trains and equips
Is an effective implemented of church growth principles
Has experienced a successful ministry model first hand
Appreciates slow, steady growth without preoccupation for quick success

9. Sacred trust of multiplication

“And the things you have heard me as in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” (2 Timothy 2:2)

Question #1 Describe a ministry you delegated to someone else and what happened.

Question #2 Describe a ministry that multiplied under your leadership.

Question #3 Describe ministry training that you have offered in the local church.

Note: Look for illustrations across three different **times**, in three different **places**, and in three different **groups**. *Tell me about a time...tell me about another time...*

Qualities to look for: Recruits others effectively
Evidences solid follow through after delegation
Demonstrates an ever widening circle of individual leaders who reproduce themselves
Able to influence others to take responsibility for the growth of the ministry
Consistently sets and completes growth goals; has a track record of growth
Has a track record of starting small groups and ministries that reproduce with a multiplication mindset

10. Sacred trust of leadership

“Obey your spiritual leaders and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they know they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this joyfully and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit.” (Hebrews 13:17)

Question #1 Describe to us the kind of supervision that you found most effective and most ineffective in your past experience. Describe the kind of supervision you give.

Question #2 Describe a ministry experience when you had to seek the Lord for clear vision and set a strategic direction for a ministry.

Question #3 Describe significant risks that you have taken to lead a ministry in a new direction.

Question #4 Give us an example of developing a ministry team that produced an effective ministry. Has the ministry reproduced?

Question #5 Describe to us a time when you had an assignment with many obstacles and little or no supervision. How did you respond?

Qualities to look for: Leadership that sets new direction and builds a team
A self starter who works with diligence, excellence, high energy, and stamina
Able to effectively handle large workloads and significant responsibility
Initiates projects and completes them in a timely manner with little or no supervision
Strong character; sticks with commitments even under less than ideal circumstances

This material is also available for presentation.

For information contact:

***Dr. Rick Thompson
Great Lakes Superintendent
Evangelical Free Church of America
P.O. Box 1114
Wheaton, IL 60187
512-415-3017
gldefca@cs.com***