

## Considering the Shepherd

Considering men who may serve as elders in the church is a critical time within the life of a congregation. They will be entrusted with leadership which will affect the health and future of the congregation. The process is never to be taken lightly, and biblical guidance must be the criteria upon which selections for both elders and deacons are made. Just because a man is popular, successful in his professional life, or has a great personality does not make him a good selection for one to lead the Lord's local church.

The consideration of our congregation's leaders must consist of much more than checking all of the qualification boxes described in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9. The man who will serve as a shepherd of the congregation should be spiritually mature, compassionate, and humble. He will not be a perfect man, but one who is seeking to be Christ-like and following in the Master's steps. He will not be distracted by power, the care of real estate, or money matters, but will teach us the ways of Jesus Christ and encourage the church to grow and mature in grace and knowledge (2 Peter 3:18). Along with the church's deacons, the elders will practice good stewardship, making the best use of the Lord's blessings.

The motives of the heart of the men who desire to serve certainly must be considered. Will he be one that we can turn to in moments of crisis, and will handle difficult times with grace and patience? Will he serve as the watchman of our souls? (Hebrews 13:17) Will his purpose and goal be to guide the flock toward the sheepgate of eternity?

The consideration of appointing elders and deacons is a serious matter and must be approached with much study and prayer. When godly, qualified, and mature men are selected, we can rest assured that the Lord is well pleased.

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