

Am I a Church Planter?

By Pastor Scott Thomas, Acts 29 Director

Every young man that considers church planting asks the question, *Am I a Church Planter?* It is the question I asked myself many years ago. It is the question we ask every man who submits himself to our Acts 29 assessment process to be a lead planter in our network. Many times he is depending on our assessment process to confirm his calling.

When we assess church planters in Acts 29, the top five negative conditions identified are in order, Theology, Vision, Family, Calling and Character.¹

Many churches do not have a vision for church planting and have very little insight into what a church planter looks like. Other churches that are interested in church planting have an intuitive sense of a church planter prospect but have not articulated it and thus may not recognize a man that would make a great church planter. Our church leaders should be able to spot a church planter and then send him to plant as soon as he is ready.

I did a survey of pastors associated with a church planting movement² and asked them to describe the characteristics of a church planter. In order, they said 1) Leader/Visionary, 2) Missionary heart, 3) Preacher, 4) Generalist (can do many things as the lone pastor) and 5) Family Man.

While not politically correct, we believe strongly that the Bible teaches that this office of an elder and pastor is reserved for males. God is a God of order and balance. He has established order within the family (Gen. 3:16; 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22-33; Col. 3:18-21) and the church (1 Tim. 2:11-14; 1 Cor. 11:8-9). Even within the Trinity there is an order; a hierarchy. The Father sent the Son (John 6:38) and both the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 15:26). Jesus said, "For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent Me," (John 6:38). It is clear that God is a God of order and structure.

In creation, God made Adam first and then Eve to be his helper. This is the order of creation. It is this order that Paul mentions in 1 Tim. 2:11-14 when speaking of authority within the church. Being a pastor or an elder is to be in the place of authority. Therefore, within the church, for a woman to be a pastor or elder, she would be in authority over men in the church which contradicts what Paul says in 1 Tim. 2:11-14.

Charles R. Ridley compiled 13 Characteristics³ of a church planter and this list is the most utilized profile in church planter selection.

1. Visioning Capacity
2. Personal Motivation
3. Creating Ownership of Ministry/Building a Core Team
4. Reaching the Un-churched
5. Spousal Cooperation
6. Relationship Building
7. Commitment to a Healthy Reproducing Church
8. Responsiveness to Community
9. Gift Utilization
10. Flexibility and Adaptability
11. Builds Group Cohesiveness
12. Resilience
13. Exercising Faith

My friend, Allen Thompson, an expert with a PhD in church planter assessment compiled the following list of 18 characteristics of a successful church planter.⁴

¹ Based on assessments conducted between July 2006 and July 2008

² [NewFrontiers](#) July 2008 non-scientific survey conducted by Scott Thomas

³ Charles R. Ridley and Tweed Moore, ChurchSmart Resources

⁴ © Copyright 2007, *Church Leader Inventory: A PCA Qualitative and Quantitative Study*, ICPC J. Allen Thompson, *Church Planter Competencies as Perceived by Church Planters and Assessment Center Leaders: a protestant North American study*, Ph.D.

Personal Characteristics

1. Prayer
2. Spiritual Vitality
3. Integrity
4. God's Call
5. Family Life
6. Conscientiousness
7. Humility

Ministerial Characteristics

8. Leadership
9. Evangelism
10. Management
11. Preaching
12. Philosophy of Ministry
13. Training leaders

Interpersonal Characteristics

14. Flexibility
15. Likeability
16. Emotional stability
17. Sensitivity
18. Dynamism

Tim Keller, pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church compiled a list of 20 characteristics for a church planter.⁵

Personal Qualifications (Character and Spiritual Fruit)

Humility Cluster

1. Acknowledgement of limitations
2. Flexibility of spirit

Love Cluster

3. Positive approach
4. Servant heart

Integrity Cluster

5. Responsibility
6. Disciplined lifestyle

Spirituality Cluster

7. Personal piety
8. Theological clarity
9. Family Commitment

Functional Qualifications (Wisdom and Spiritual Gifts)

Nurture Cluster

10. Counseling
11. Involved Caring
12. Discipling

dissertation, Trinity International University, Deerfield, Illinois, 1995. To complete the profile positive and negative indicators are supplied for each characteristic.

⁵ Timothy J. Keller, *Theology and Practice of Church Ministry*, 2004, unpublished syllabus, pp. 34-38. The qualifications were developed for Westminster's Supervised Ministry Program in the 1980s. In the complete version positive and negative indicators are added to each qualification.

Communication Cluster

13. Preaching
14. Education
15. Worship

Leadership Cluster

16. Leading
17. Administration
18. Mediating fellowship

Mission Cluster

19. Evangelism
20. Social concern

Although it seems a little reductionist and arrogant to list the characteristics of a church planter, I offer twenty characteristics based on evidence in the Acts 29 Network and a plethora of books and articles associated with church planting. After reading this list, some men will be more discouraged from church planting than will be drawn to it. But the fact is that church planting is tough for the most qualified men. If a man does not have the needed characteristics, he will frustrate himself and everyone around him.

There are lots of other ways you can serve God in an established church or a church plant apart from being the lead planter. Some very good pastors would make bad church plant leaders. That call from God to do church planting might be a call to go join a team led by another man to help plant a church, or it might actually be a call to financially support so others can go. Please pray as you work through this list that God will either confirm your call or show you that you are not meant to lead a church plant after all.

20 Characteristics of a Church Planter

Acts 20:28 says that we must “Pay careful attention to yourselves” before we care for the flock of God. We must be prepared as God’s man before heading into battle.

1. Am I a Christian? (Integrity is the number one value of a church planter).

This seems like an obvious characteristic. However, some men grow up in churches and are led to believe that they placed their faith in Jesus for salvation while they lack a personal relationship with Jesus. Jesus said that we must be born again or regenerated by the Spirit of God (John 3:16). It is possible that a man could build a church and not be a Christian, but it is not advised.

2. Am I passionately in love with Jesus and is He the Lord of every area of my life? (Personal spiritual dynamics is the second most important area)

The gospel must be evidently at work in every area of a church planter’s life: personally, maritally, domestically, sexually, financially, physically, relationally and ministerially. We are sinners who need forgiveness through repentance and confession. We have to practice this daily as examples of the gospel.

3. Do I believe His word and does it affect my life deeply?

It's not enough to just have good sermon material; it has to flow from your heart. The Word needs to speak to you, and you need to preach out of the abundance of his Word.

4. Am I Spirit-filled, Spirit-directed, Spirit-led and Spirit-controlled? (Acts 1:8)

We are eager to be witnesses, but we have tendencies to lean on our own ideas and abilities apart from the Spirit of God. The church planter needs to be an empowered man. The Spirit needs to be working in and through him and be dripping out. Jesus accomplished work on this earth through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit descended upon Jesus and rested or remained on Him (Matt. 3:16). Luke 4 said that Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit, was led by the Spirit, and began His ministry in Galilee in the power of the Spirit and preached with the Spirit of the Lord upon Him. He rejoiced in the Spirit (Luke 10:21) and promised the Spirit to those who asked the father (Luke 11:13). The Holy Spirit longs to empower us to do our work as a missionary-church planter to the ends of the earth.

5. Am I qualified as an Elder? (1 Timothy, Titus)

Timothy and Titus talk about the qualifications. Study them carefully and assess yourself. Both lists say that to be above reproach is the overarching, summarizing characteristic. You will find a similar (but not identical) list in First Timothy. Being above reproach is the first requirement in both lists and Titus repeats it. The other items on the list explain what above reproach means.— you have to be above reproach. There isn't an exhaustive list of characteristics. They overlap, but the key is to be above reproach. The lists are some "for instances" of how to be above reproach: the husband of one wife with no one else in your hands, your head, your heart, your eyes, or on that screen—none. A church pastor must be totally focused and satisfied in that one woman God has brought to him. Marriage will be a struggle at times. But you cannot stray, even an inch. Practicing the gospel is required for a good marriage. Children should be in submission and pastors need to pastor their wife and kids first. If we peruse the two lists, as well as First Peter, we find 17 qualities of an elder who is above reproach. See list at the end of this document.

6. Do I love the local church as the expression of a gospel community on mission? (Matthew 28:18-20)

Jesus loved the Church – enough to die for her (Eph. 5:25). A planter therefore is a Church lover. He may die for her, but if he doesn't love her, he is nothing (1 Cor. 13). Josh Harris exhorts the pew sitters to stop dating the church. The pastor may need to stop having a junior high affair with the church and make a lifelong commitment.

7. Am I a missionary to the city? Am I sent for the advancement of the gospel in the city (John 20:21)?

If you are a church planter, you have to be a missionary. Every pastor needs to see himself as a missionary for the glory of God and the good of the city. Don't be someone who wants to start something because of self-centeredness and pride and my desire to be recognized. It's not about the church planter or personal success. It's about exalting the grace of Jesus.

8. Do I have a clear vision for this new work? Nehemiah 1:3, 4; 2:11-18

Lacking a vision was the second most obvious void among aspiring church planters submitting to the Acts 29 assessment process. Nehemiah had to have a vision of a complete wall. Not take a survey. The city is in ruins; it's time to build. You know you have a vision when people around you say, "Let's do that." People need to be following your compelling, life-transforming vision.

9. Am I willing to pour myself out in obedience to the vision?

A planter if he is to follow Jesus, must manifest the death of Jesus. He must become less for Christ to become greater. A planter, like Jesus, is one who "aims low" in that sense. Philippians 2 is instructive in general of this pattern. We are to "Have this mind" –the mind of a Christ who emptied Himself out for the gospel. He, being God, humbled himself to the point of death – then he was exalted. Romans Chapter 6 describes the union with Christ in His death that precedes union with Christ in life.

10. Am I healthy? Physically, emotionally, financially, spiritually, relationally, martially

Most church planters get fatter, fussier, angrier, lonelier, poorer and at odds more with their mate and their Lord during the first two years of a church plant. Don't think that having a church baby will solve your deficiencies any more than a baby will solve the problems of a troubled marriage.

11. Am I the kind of leader many people will follow? Have I served as a church leader successfully?

Occasionally a man will aspire to be a church planter who has no experience as a church leader or an elder in another local church. Paul warns the church not to be hasty in the laying on of hands (1 Timothy 5:22) or appointing a pastor who is a recent convert who is prone to pride (1 Timothy 3:6). A church planter will be more effective with a few years of experience involved with the local church in a leadership capacity. The best church planters are those men who have led in multiple venues and people followed over a sustained period of time.

Even a cursory reading of the Bible reveals that when God wants to get something done He starts by selecting a man to lead that change. Examples include sparing humanity (Noah), founding a nation (Abraham), liberating a nation (Moses), establishing a throne (David), building a Temple (Solomon), preparing hearts (John the Baptizer), and redeeming all of creation (Jesus).

Church planting is no different. Simply, before God can build a church plant He must build a church planter who can lead others to follow the mission of Jesus.

12. Can I preach effectively?
You don't have to hit it out of the ballpark every time. But you do have to hit singles pretty regularly. The pulpit is the rudder that steers the church. You need to hit solid singles most every time you come to the plate. If you hit some doubles and triples and home runs every now and then that is good. We cannot make our preaching an idol. The key thing is to avoid popping up or striking out. The worst is taking the third strike looking because we freeze at the pressure. Relax, connect with the Spirit and with your audience and the effectiveness will take care of itself.
13. Can I guard the doctrinal door with Biblical clarity and tenacious confidence?
When you start a church, you'll have new people with new ideas—some for which they got kicked out of their old church. You have to be able to guard the doctrinal door, refute doctrinal error—not arrogantly, but being sure of what the Word of God says and being able to articulate that in a winsome way with authority.
14. Can I architect a new work with entrepreneurial skill?
What have you started successfully? Some men can't see the vision of what is to come, and some—even if they see the vision—can't find the steps toward accomplishing their vision. If you can't be the architect, then you are in trouble. As an example, some very pastoral people are NOT the best people to start a church, or at least not as the main team leader. Be clear about who you are. If you're a shepherd, counselor, caregiver, and you could be a success doing those things in an established church or as part of a team, then that is where you should be. Someone who is called to plant a church is frustrated if they don't do it. Number two leaders rarely make good number one leaders.
15. Am I called to plant a church at this time and in this place?
Acts 17:26 says that God appoints the time and the place of our ministry. Titus was the apostolic leader over the churches in Crete. Before Paul appointed him to do that, he went through a progression of calling:
- 2 Cor. 7:6, Titus was a friend who encouraged Paul
 - 2 Cor 7:13, Titus was overwhelmed by the ministry of the Macedonians
 - 2 Cor. 8:6, Titus was a faithful worker carrying out the wishes of Paul
 - 2 Cor. 8:16-17, Titus developed a heart for the ministry and initiated ministry on his own.
 - 2 Cor. 8:23 and 12:17, Titus was a proven minister
 - Titus 1:4-5, Titus was the senior overseer to appoint elders throughout the island of Crete. His proven faithfulness and calling allowed him to pioneer works in a hostile environment.

In 1 Peter 5:2, Peter exhorts the elders to “Shepherd the flock of God...not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you.” A calling is necessary in a church plant to face the tough times because a hireling leaves when the wolf arrives. But a called shepherd stays with his flock through adversity (John 10:12ff.).

16. Have my church leaders commended me for this calling?
The Book of Acts lacks any reference to asking for volunteers. In Acts 11:22 the believers sent Barnabas. It was the congregation in Jerusalem that selected and sent one of its own gifted members. In all of the subsequent sending of missionaries in the Book of Acts, the emphasis is never upon an individual volunteering or upon his own subjective sense of call, but always upon the initiative of others.
- Saul goes to Antioch because Barnabas takes him there (Acts 11:25-26). It is the whole group of prophets and teachers in Antioch to whom the Holy Spirit says “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them” (Acts 13:1-4). Barnabas and Paul parted company and we are told that Barnabas took Mark (Acts 15:39) and Paul chose Silas (Acts 15:40). Both “departed being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.” Subsequently Paul wanted Timothy to go with him (Acts 16:3). We are reminded that Timothy “was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium” (Acts 16:1-2) implying that the congregations were consulted and involved in his going out with Paul.

While western culture promotes and encourages the personal call and entrepreneurial spirit of the planter, the New Testament by contrast stresses the corporate initiatives of congregations in selecting suitable people for Gospel ministry. It cannot be justified from the New Testament and the best one can scrape up from the Old Testament is the call of Isaiah (Isaiah 6:8). The call of an Old Testament

prophet should be not regarded as normative for a New Testament church missionary. The prophet was sent TO the people of God while the New Testament planter is sent BY the people of God.

When the church in Jerusalem heard of the need in Antioch, together as a congregation they expressed their sense of responsibility and they sent Barnabas (Acts 11:23, 14:22). We should select our best men (Acts 11:24) and send them. Instead of the initiative being left to the individual, churches should deliberately approach their best, most gifted Christian leaders to send them to places of greater need. The individual is still responsible to respond positively to the congregation's approach.

The individual's subjective sense of call is confirmed by the objective call of the church body, recognizing his gifts and qualifications. This reinforces the assurance of the Holy Spirit's call upon a man. Typically a man feels called and informs his church and the lead pastor terminates that man from employment rather than recognizing him as a man called and to be sent by that church.

The missionaries sent out from the New Testament churches were ministering in their local congregations already. We typically want to receive resumes when we should be examining the men in our own congregations. If no one in our congregation is qualified, it is a sad statement upon the leaders of that congregation for not preparing men to be sent into other fields. The chief work of church planting is the birthing, building and blossoming of congregations. Who will do this better than those who are already have considerable local church experience?

As members of the church, we should be going or training others to go at all times. This is an indication of a church with an enthusiastic and fruitful mission that is passionate about following the mission of Jesus.

17. Am I a hard worker? Am I persevering?

Church planting is hard work with no easy solutions or shortcuts. The verse, "If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat" (2 Thes. 3:10) is especially true in church planting. A man must be disciplined, organized, courageous, dependable, patient, well read, hard working, discerning, a man who gets things done in an effective and timely manner, which also means that he's passionate and self-motivated.

The Bible calls a pastor an **ox** (1 Tim. 5:17-18), a **soldier** (2 Tim. 2:3-4), an **athlete** (2 Tim. 2:5) and a **farmer** (2 Tim. 2:6). Those are laborious jobs and the Holy Spirit used them to describe the kind of man who is qualified to pastor a church.

To plant a church that honors God a man must preach and teach the Bible with all of the strength and fortitude of an **ox** that can pull a multitude of people in his wake (1 Timothy 5:17-18). Satan routinely sends heretics, nut jobs, and false teachers of all kinds into a church plant because it's systems are yet fluid, its leadership is yet settled, and it's relationships are yet cultivated.

To plant a church that honors God a man must fight like a dependable **soldier** of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 2:3-4). Throughout his letters, Paul continually admonishes Timothy to fight a good fight. With the world, the flesh, and the devil conspiring to thwart the new work a church planter must continually fight. Weak men who are prone to avoid conflict or crumble under pressure will end up quitting prematurely.

To plant a church that honors God, a man must train and compete with the precision of a **skilled athlete** (2 Timothy 2:5). Lazy men who adore their comfort, food, and hobbies rarely plant an effective church because they end up wasting time, energy and creativity.

To plant a church that honors God a man must sweat at his labor like a **farmer** (2 Timothy 2:6). Many young men are attracted to ministry because, as one pastor said, it's an indoor job that does not require any heavy lifting. When done honorably, ministry in general and church planting in particular is extremely difficult work. Like the farmer who depends on the labor of his hands without a boss, a set schedule or a predictable paycheck, the planter must be self-disciplined, get up every morning and work hard gathering people, studying, teaching, raising money, locating facilities, building systems, training men and repeating that routine day after day.

18. Am I adaptable to new people, places and concepts?

If you don't like change, you don't like church planting! If you are the kind of person who goes into the fetal position with new challenges, you're probably not a church planter.

19. Can I raise the funds needed for my family's needs?

A church planter who won't provide for the needs of his family is worse than an unbeliever and has denied the faith (1 Tim. 5:8). Church planters often hide behind the cloak of "faith" and "calling" to shield them from taking responsibility with their family. A church planter's children need a father more than the city needs a new church. Money is not the key to success but a lack of money is a huge detriment. It is unbiblical to place our family on the altar of our idol of success.

20. Am I humble enough to learn from others—particularly from those who have gone ahead of me in different areas?

This is one of the issues we call "stallers" and "stoppers" in our assessments. A church planter needs to be coachable, teachable. If he is not teachable, his church will stay stunted in its growth. He needs to identify areas where he has weaknesses and blind spots and then seek the advisement of those around him that can help him to continually grow and learn.

Conclusion

Mark Dever has said the local church, in all its glory, makes the audible gospel visible (*A Display of God's Glory* (9marks: Washington, D.C., 2001). The gospel is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. Jesus Christ died and rose again and ascended – people do not see Him. The Church is His Body here on earth. The place where Jesus Christ is made visible is His Body, not just by one individual. When one meets a congregation that is "displaying God's glory" faithfully, one encounters Jesus in one sense. So planting a church is an exercise in making visible the audible gospel of the Blessed God.

What if I am called? What if I am not sure? What do I do?

"Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers" (1 Tim 4:12-16).

Seventeen Characteristics of an Elder above Reproach

(Titus 1:6-9; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-3; cf. Acts 20:17-37)

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This is the highest office in the church and the other pastoral epistle states this as a role exclusively for males (1 Tim. 2:11-15).

Above Reproach (Titus 1:6, 7; 1 Tim 3:2)

This is the overarching, summarizing characteristic. You will find a similar (but not identical) list in First Timothy. Being above reproach is the first requirement in both lists and Titus repeats it. The other items on the list explain what above reproach means. If we peruse the two lists, as well as First Peter, we find 17 qualities of an elder who is above reproach.

1. Husband devoted to wife (Titus 1:6; 1 Tim 3:2) one-woman man.

This is a major qualification in light of the marriage picturing Christ and the church (Eph. 5:22 ff.). The pastors in the church lead by example. They exhibit Christ's love for His church—His bride by their love, devotedness and exclusive faithfulness to their wife. This does not disqualify a single man from being an elder...Jesus was single and Paul was single but it is the exception. Here is the rule: do not look and do not touch unless she is your wife.

2. Children in submission (Titus 1:6; 1 Tim 3:4-5) not perfect.

Equally important is the pastor leading his family. 1 Timothy 3:5 explains that **if a man does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church**. The first flock for a pastor is his own family as Pastor Dad. If this flock is not in order, the larger flock will suffer. Paul instructs **fathers not to provoke [their] children to anger, but [to] bring them up in the discipline and admonition of the Lord** (Eph. 6:4).

3. Faithful Steward (Titus 1:7)

Here the term used is overseer (Greek episkopos). It is not another office, but a functional title of the elder. It is what he does. He is a steward, a manager of God's resources and Jesus' flock. He takes responsibility, but not ownership.

4. Humble - not arrogant (Titus 1:7)

A pastor must constantly demonstrate the gospel by admitting wrong and assuming responsibility and restoring relationships. Arrogance is only concerned with oneself.

5. Gentle - not quick-tempered (Titus 1:7; 1 Tim 3:3)

No man will be of any use in the kingdom that is quick-tempered and lashes out at others. The difference between how Jesus demonstrated anger is that He was angry at the abuse of others and the dishonoring of God. We get angry at how it affects us.

6. Moderate - not a drunkard (Titus 1:7; 1 Tim 3:3)

This is not just overindulgence in alcohol but is idiomatic for any behavior that fuels addictive responses.

7. Peaceful - not violent (Titus 1:7; 1 Tim 3:3)

A pastor is prone to inflict violence through his words. He is to be a peacemaker.

8. Financial Integrity - not greedy for gain (Titus 1:7; 1 Tim 3:3; 1 Peter 5:3)

A pastor is to be upright in his financial dealings and not accused of pursuing money over the kingdom of God.

9. Hospitable (Titus 1:8; 1 Tim 3:2)

A pastor's home is to be open for others to enjoy. This is a difficult qualification as a pastor's life is stressful enough not to have his home as his one refuge.

10. Lover of Good (Titus 1:8)

A pastor genuinely loves what is good. He does not just think he should love it.

11. Self-controlled (Titus 1:8; 1 Tim 3:2)

Self-control is a characterization of every area of a pastor's life: diet, time, mouth, exercise, relationships, sex, and money. Consistent training in righteousness to be able to run the race set before us.

12. Upright (Titus 1:8)

He is upright in his relationships and in how he treats others.

13. Holy (Titus 1:8)

The opposite is *unholy*. It is a life devoted wholeheartedly to Jesus externally and internally.

14. Able to teach (Titus 1:9; 1 Tim 3:2)

All of the other qualifications are character qualities. This is the only ability-based requirement. He is to be able to teach sound doctrine, not just be able to communicate in an excellent manner. His teaching can be to one or two, to twenty, to a hundred or to a thousand. Most of the churches in Crete were house churches. The elders were to defend the faith once delivered to the saints against the numerous false teachers that arose.

15. Spiritually Mature (1 Tim 3:6)

Positions of authority without spiritual maturity lead to the trap of pride. When pride grows in a man sin abounds. 1 Timothy 3:6 says, **“He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. A pastor must first be a convert.”**

16. Respectable (1 Tim 3:7)

1 Timothy 3:7 says that **an elder must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.** That does not mean that all will like him or even appreciate him. It means that there is no criminal, moral or ethical offense against him.

17. Example to the Flock (1 Peter 5:3)

We need models in our life to emulate. Elders are examples of Biblical expressions such as sexuality, time management, marriage, parenting, worship, relationships and any other way. A pastor should be someone your sons could pattern their life after and the kind of man your daughter should marry.

Conclusion

What would you do if an elder violates one of these requirements? 1 Timothy 5:19-20 warns us not to accuse an elder flippantly. Matthew 18:15-18 gives us the steps: 1) Go to the elder alone, 2) If still unsatisfied, go with another person, 3) If still unsatisfied, let the greater eldership know. If accusations are verified and the elder remains unrepentant, rebuking that elder before all is the next biblical step.

Jesus came as the perfect fulfillment of this list of qualifications. He is the “senior pastor” of this church.

Elder Above Reproach

Comparison of Titus and 1 Timothy Passages

Requirement	1 Timothy	Titus
Above Reproach	An overseer must be above reproach (3:2)	If anyone is above reproach...For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. (1:6, 7).
1. Husband devoted to wife	Husband of one wife (3:2)	The husband of one wife (1:6)
2. Children in submission	He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? (3:4-5)	His children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. (1:6)
3. Faithful Steward		For an overseer, as God's steward (1:7)
4. Humble - not arrogant		He must not be arrogant (1:7)
5. Gentle - not quick-tempered	Not violent but gentle (3:3)	He must not be...quick-tempered (1:7)
6. Moderate - not a drunkard	Sober-minded... not a drunkard (3:2-3)	He must not be...a drunkard (1:7)
7. Peaceful - not violent	Self-controlled (3:2)...not quarrelsome (3:3)	
8. Financial Integrity - not greedy for gain	Not a lover of money (3:3) Shepherd the flock...not for shameful gain (1 Peter 5:2)	
9. Hospitable	Hospitable (3:2)	Hospitable (1:8)
10. Lover of Good		Lover of good (1:8)
11. Self-controlled/Disciplined	Self-controlled (3:2)	Self-controlled (1:8)
12. Upright		Upright (1:8)
13. Holy		Holy (1:8)
14, Able to teach	Able to teach (3:2)	He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine... (1:9)
15. Spiritually Mature	Must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit (3:6)	
16. Respectable	Respectable (3:2)... well thought of by outsiders so that he may not fall into disgrace (3:7)	
17. Example to the Flock (1 Peter 5:2-3) <i>Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you... eagerly, not domineering over those in your charge (1 Peter 5:2-3)</i>		