

***Elder Qualification Descriptions, Evaluation &
Recommendation Form***

rev. 10/28/08

Name You Recommend for Elder _____ Date: _____

Oakwood Community Church desires to follow the guidance of God the Holy Spirit in the selection of our church elders (Acts 20:28; 13:1-3; 6:1-6). You can be helpful in discerning the Lord's guidance by prayerfully recommending a prospect to our current elders for their consideration. The following are necessary qualifications for prospective elders.

- ◆ A man of proven godly maturity as prescribed in Scripture
- ◆ Philosophical alignment with elders (values, vision, & philosophy of ministry)
- ◆ Positive relational chemistry with current elders
- ◆ Active, local membership at Oakwood for a minimum of two years.

Since the Lord places a premium upon the character of prospective elders, we ask that you carefully evaluate the individual you recommended according to the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4, and elsewhere.

Circle the most appropriate response
#5 is high (or superior), #3 is acceptable, #1 low (or weak)
U is unknown

General Qualifications

Above reproach: 1 2 3 4 5 U

This quality seems to be the overarching qualification, which the rest support. The elder must have an excellent reputation in his personal life, family life, interpersonal life, and ministry life. He should carry no glaring sins in his life that would cause people not to respect his spiritual leadership, counsel, and discipline. In no way does this mean that he is sinless. 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6,7; Acts 6:3

Willing: 1 2 3 4 5 U

A man must serve willingly, or voluntarily, without constraint. He must not feel as though he has to serve; but rather, that God wants him to do so if confirmed by the leadership and church. Thus, he readily makes the necessary sacrifices to serve as an elder. 1 Pet. 5:2; 1 Tim 3:1

Personal Qualifications
Temperate & Self-control: 1 2 3 4 5 U

Temperate seems to imply the idea of a balanced, moderate life. 1 Tim. 3:2
Self-control means having control over natural passions and desires by the power of the Holy Spirit. He is self-disciplined. Titus 1:8

Prudent & Sensible: 1 2 3 4 5 U

He shows good judgment in various life situations. Emotionally mature, he does not make quick and superficial decisions that are based on emotion or immature thinking. 1 Tim. 2:2; Titus 1:8

Respectable: 1 2 3 4 5 U

His peers esteem his character and see him as an inspiring example. 1 Tim. 3:2; 1 Pet. 5:3

Not addicted to wine: 1 2 3 4 5 U

This requirement prohibits the misuse of alcohol. When alcohol rules, God doesn't. The spirit of this qualification includes all addictive substances or behaviors, for no Christian should allow himself/herself to be dominated or controlled by anything that will harm his/her body, cloud his/her thinking, or hinder his/her testimony for Jesus Christ. 1 Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7; Eph. 5:18; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 10:23-33; Rm. 14

Free from the love of money & not fond of sordid gain: 1 2 3 4 5 U

A man whose priorities are to "*seek first the kingdom of God...*" will allow material things to take their proper place under God's direction. Proportionate and generous giving will be an act of joyful service. He is not greedy nor does he set his affections on money. This does not demand that he be poor, but that his life not be dominated and motivated by money. He is the kind of man whose business practices and motives in relation to financial gain never come into question. 1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7; Mt. 6:19-34; 1 Tim. 6:9-10, 17-19; Heb. 13:5; 1 Pet. 5:2

Loves what is good: 1 2 3 4 5 U

His moral excellence is evident to others. In addition, from within his heart, he earnestly desires those things that are holy and good. Titus 1:8; Phil 4:8; 1 Cor 13:6

Devout: 1 2 3 4 5 U

His is to be a man who is close to God and separated from sin. Titus 1:8

Marriage & Family Qualifications

The husband of one wife: 1 2 3 4 5 U

This means if he is married, he should be purely devoted to his own wife. He should be known literally as a "*one woman man*". Whether married or single, his reputation in relationships with the opposite sex should be *beyond reproach*.

The apostle Paul's qualification list is not intended to be exhaustive, but suggestive of the kinds of character qualities to look for in prospective church leaders. Each qualification is a standard that all believers should strive to meet. However, those who are selected for church leadership especially need to meet these character qualities. Paul guides the church to look for those who demonstrate genuineness, maturity, and depth of relationship to Jesus Christ.

A person's somewhat distant past is not the focus if he has been forgiven and has now demonstrated a consistent pattern of godly character in response to the Holy Spirit. Therefore, neither those who have been sexually impure before or during a marriage in the past, nor those who have been divorced for whatever reason, are automatically disqualified by this qualification. However, as in the case with all other qualities, those who have been divorced or those who have been immoral in the past should be carefully evaluated. Those who have been immoral in the past should evidence genuine brokenness before God for their sin and a humble gratefulness and devotion to God for His forgiveness. Those who have had inappropriate or dysfunctional relationships in the past should evidence that these ill patterns have been significantly transformed and that sufficient emotional healing has occurred. There must now be a clear pattern of healthy intimate relationships with others.

For a fuller presentation of the above biblical conviction, consult *Divorce and Remarriage: Recovering the Biblical View* by William F. Luck, Harper & Row, pages 208-218.

The man's family:

The apostle Paul does not intend to provide an exhaustive elder qualification list in either 1 Timothy 3 or Titus 1, or in both combined. What he does list however, provides helpful indicators of a potential elder's genuine spiritual maturity and fitness to lead others. One key area to examine is the man's example and leadership within his own family, if he has one. The reasoning is from the "*lesser to the greater*". If a man fails to evidence godly example, leadership, and discipline within his own family (a lesser sphere of responsibility), then how will he do this with respect to *God's* family, the

church (a greater sphere of responsibility)? This does not mean that he will have a perfect family. 1 Tim. 3:4-5.

Manages his own household well: 1 2 3 4 5 U

He is to be the leader in his home who effectively oversees and manages his family. 1 Tim. 3:4

Keeping his children under control & not accused of dissipation or rebellion: 1 2 3 4 5 U

As a father, his *firmness* makes it advisable for his children to obey, his *wisdom* makes it natural for them to obey, and his *love* makes it a pleasure for them to obey. 1 Tim 3:4; Titus 1:6; Eph. 6:4

Having children who believe: 1 2 3 4 5 U

The Bible does not promise that every child of a believer will become a dedicated follower of Christ. God is a perfect father and yet He has wayward children (Lk. 15:11-32; 13:34-35; 19:41-42). However, an elder must model a genuine godly example within his home and, through his nurturing influence and teaching (Eph. 6:1-4), exercise a sanctifying influence upon his children (1 Cor. 7:14). If so, then one can *generally* expect to see his children following in the faith of their father. Titus 1:6

Interpersonal Qualifications

Not pugnacious & quick-tempered: 1 2 3 4 5 U

He must not be quick-tempered and given to physical violence or verbal abuse. He exhibits restraint during times of volatile emotional upheavals. 1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7

Gentle: 1 2 3 4 5 U

He is conciliatory, considerate, reasonable, respectful, and while never compromising truth, is willing to yield his rights for the sake of love. 1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 3:2; Phil. 4:5; Jas. 3:17; 1 Pet. 2:18; 1 Cor. 6:7

Uncontentious: 1 2 3 4 5 U

He does not quarrel and engage in selfish argumentation, but is peaceable. He is not critical, argumentative, or punitive, but tolerant, accepting, patient, and considerate. 1 Tim. 3:3; 2 Tim. 2:23-25; Rm. 12:16-18; 14:19; 15:5,6; Eph. 4:1-3

Not self-willed: 1 2 3 4 5 U

He does not force his own ideas and opinions on other people. He does not stubbornly insist upon having his own way. Where opinions or methodology

varies among secondary issues, he must be willing to yield in a peaceable and respectful manner to the consensus of the total leadership. Titus 1:7; James 3:13-18

A good reputation with those outside: 1 2 3 4 5 U

Unbelievers, as well as believers, are to respect his integrity. He is to be "*above reproach*" in the world as well as in the church. 1 Tim. 3:7; Col. 4:5-6; 1 Thess. 4:11-12; 1 Pet. 2:12; 3:15-17

Ministry Qualifications

Not a new convert: 1 2 3 4 5 U

He must be a mature believer who has been a Christian long enough to demonstrate the reality of his conversion and the depth of his spirituality. Linking a trusting, obedient heart to time produces maturity. A person placed in leadership before he senses the awesomeness of Christian service is particularly vulnerable to sinful pride. 1 Tim. 3:6

Hospitable: 1 2 3 4 5 U

"A lover of strangers" Rather than being cliquish, he warmly reaches out to believers and non-believers that he does not know. He ministers to their temporal and emotional needs. This may be expressed by ministering to people within his home. 1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8

Able to teach: 1 2 3 4 5 U

He must be able to communicate God's truth in the Bible to others. This does not mean that he must be a gifted Bible teacher, but that he can teach and apply God's Word to his life and others. He must also be able to instruct others in sound doctrine and correct those who espouse doctrinal error. 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9

Holding Fast the Faithful Word: 1 2 3 4 5 U

He is stable in his faith and obedient to the Word of God in all respects. He is not a hypocrite, but earnestly seeks to live what he teaches. Titus 1:9

Just: 1 2 3 4 5 U

This may have reference to his being a righteous man. It is equally probable that it refers to the prospective elder's dealings with others. He is to be fair and impartial. He is able and willing to make honest, objective judgments based upon Scripture's commands and principles. Titus 1:8

- To what extent does this individual already function as a spiritual leader in our midst (though he may not have an office)? 1 2 3 4 5 U
- To what degree does this individual exemplify the Christian character necessary for you to be under the authority of his spiritual leadership at Oakwood Community Church (Heb. 13:17)? 1 2 3 4 5 U

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