

The Profile of a Pastor

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The first question that should be answered by a Pulpit Committee is this: “What are we looking for in our search for a new pastor?” The qualifications of a pastor are very clearly defined in the two passages of Scripture listed below under *The Pastor’s Qualifications*. These are generally accepted by fundamental Independent Baptist Churches and should not be up for discussion. Most Pulpit Committees do not struggle with these qualifications. If a potential pastor meets them, he may be considered as a candidate. If there is any known violation of these Scriptural qualifications, he should not be considered by the committee. Move on to the next potential candidate.

The Pulpit Committee’s struggle usually comes in the area of “ministry type.” What should we look for in a prospective pastoral candidate? Unfortunately, many committees begin looking at personality, lovability, social interaction, dynamic preaching ability, personal appearance, personal talents, age, etc. All of these qualities are important and obviously should capture some of the attention of the committee. However, these qualities, as noble as they are, should not be the first qualities the committee looks for. There are three important passages of Scripture, listed below under *The Pastor’s Ministry*, that should be the guidelines the Pulpit Committee uses in its search for a pastor. These are the biblical qualities of a pastor’s ministry for which a Pulpit should be looking.

The Pastor’s Qualifications

1 Timothy 3;1-7

Titus 1:5-9

The Pastor’s Ministry

Ephesians 4:11-16

1. He is a “gift” to the church (vv. 8, 11).
2. He is a pastor/teacher (v. 11).

NOTE: The construction of the phrase “*pastors and teachers*” in the Greek text indicates that this person is a combination of a pastor and teacher. The one who shepherds God’s flock is also a teacher of the Word, having both the gifts of shepherding and teaching the flock.¹

3. His ministry is to perfect (equip for the work of the ministry²) the believers in the church to do the work of the ministry so they can build up the body (v. 12).
4. His primary work is not that of evangelistic soul winning, although he is personally to do the work of evangelism (2 Tim. 4:5). His primary work is to teach the “*body*” of believers to do the work of the ministry which includes soul winning (vv. 12-13).

¹ Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament, Volume 1, The Exegesis of Ephesians Chapter 4, Page 100.

² Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: Abridged in One Volume, Page 80.

NOTE: The church should not be looking for an “evangelistic” pastor. It should be seeking a “pastor/teacher” who can teach the “*body of Christ*” how to do it. That by no means excuses the pastor from being a soul winner. He is to personally “*do the work of an evangelist,*” but evangelism is not the priority of his ministry as a pastor. While God gave the church the gift (see v. 8, “*gave gifts unto men*”) of “*pastors/teachers,*” He also gave the church the gift of “*evangelists.*” Evangelists should definitely be used by the church specifically for the work of evangelism; i.e., an outreach to the unsaved in the church’s community. The pastor’s priority is “*perfecting the saints*” by the “*edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith...unto a perfect (spiritually mature, complete) man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*”

5. He is to solidify the church’s doctrine to the church body and teach the body how to discern false doctrine and deceptive religious movements so they will not be led astray (v. 14).
6. He is to preach the truth, but preach it with love and compassion. A condescending spirit is never an acceptable way for the shepherd to feed his flock (v. 15-16).

2 Timothy 4:1-5

1. He is to preach the Word, not his opinion (v. 2).
2. He is to be consistent in preaching the Word whether it is convenient or not (v. 2).
3. There are times when he will have to “*reprove*” (to convict, refute, confute, generally with a suggestion of the shame of the person convicted³), “*rebuke*” (charge one with wrong⁴), “*exhort*” (to entreat, to admonish⁵) (v.2).

NOTE: It should be understood that Paul’s instruction to Timothy to “*reprove, rebuke, exhort*” is in the context of verse 3 when believers “*will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.*” That should not be the regular diet that the shepherd feeds his flock. The regular diet is food that perfects and edifies the saints (Eph. 4:12).

4. He is to be vigilant (v. 5).
5. He is to expect opposition (v. 5).
6. He is to do the work of personal evangelism (v. 5).
7. He is to fulfil his calling to the ministry (v. 5).

“*make full proof of the ministry*” = to fulfil the ministry in every respect⁶

³ Thayer’s *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, Page 202.

⁴ Ibid, Page 245.

⁵ Ibid, Page 482.

⁶ Ibid, Page 517.

1 Peter 5:1-4

1. He is to “*feed the flock*” (v. 2). This is the same as “*edifying of the body of Christ*” in Eph. 4:12. In other words, he is to be engaged in a diligent study of the Word so his preaching is always “*rightly dividing the word of truth*” to the flock.
2. He is entrusted with the stewardship of “*oversight*” of the whole ministry of the church, not because he has been compelled to do it, but with a willingly heart (v. 2).

NOTE: “One should exercise the task of pastor not because of any outward or inward constraint but voluntarily. No one should be a pastor because he is hired to be one, but because he has been called of God to be one whether he is paid or not.”⁷

3. He is not to be obsessed with money but serve willingly regardless of the monetary compensation (v. 2).
4. He is not to be a dictator; rather, he is to lead by example (v. 3).
5. He will be rewarded by the “*chief Shepherd*” for his faithful ministry as an under-shepherd.

⁷ The Complete Word Study Dictionary – New Testament, Page 146.