

Questions for the Pulpit Committee to consider when doing an in-depth interview with a Pastoral Candidate whose seems to be well recommended, vetted, and a fit for the local church.

Initial Pastoral Candidate Questions

1. Are you single or divorced? Have either of you been previously married?
2. Are you currently in debt for more than \$10,000, except for your house or automobile?
Do you own your own home?
Do you have an opinion about living in a parsonage?
3. Does your wife support your ministry by sweetly submitting to your leadership and being involved in church ministry herself?
What is her greatest concern about _____?
What is her greatest concern about your family's stability?
Do you have parents or adult children who who may need your daily help?
Have you seen any photos of our parsonage?
4. Do all your children at home attend church regularly?
5. Do you use any version(s) of the Bible other than KJV when preaching or teaching? Why?
6. Do you have a criminal record of past moral indiscretions?
Do you agree with us having you go through a Background Check?
7. Are you currently practicing personal soul winning or mentoring on a regular basis?
What do you think about the Roman's Road model of witnessing? What is your favorite tract?
8. Is there contemporary Christian music in the church you presently attend? Who?
9. Do you maintain a personal devotional time other than for sermon/lesson preparation?
10. Do you maintain a conservative dress standard for your household? For what reason?

Pastoral Interview Questions

1. Closely examine each of the Bible's qualifications for pastors and deacons (1Timothy 3; Titus 1:5- 9; Acts 6:1-6; 1Peter 5:1-4). Which are your strongest qualities?
With which requirements do you have the most trouble?
Why do you believe these areas of difficulty do not presently disqualify you from ministering?
(Note the phrase "must be" in 1Timothy 3:2).
2. What important trends (secular and Biblical) do you see that will affect the future of Christianity?
3. There are many who profess to know Christ who are mistaken. What evidences do you have that you have been given eternal life by God? Comment on why the typical person might have "doubts" about their salvation.
4. According to your observations, what doctrines seem to need special emphasis in our day?
What is your favorite "Doctrinal" book in your library?
5. Can a person have Christ as his Savior without submitting to Him as Lord? Explain.
6. Explain the Biblical term and occasion of "baptism of the Spirit."
7. What are your views on being born of water and the spirit in John 3?
8. What are your views on Calvinism? Does the growth of Reform theology concern you?

9. What does the Bible teach about the extent of man's depravity?
10. What does Christ's atonement accomplish?
11. What does the Bible teach about the perseverance and preservation of believers?
Is the "unpardonable sin" still possible for one to commit in our day?
12. What is the proper use of the Old Testament law?
From where does the New Testament church get their doctrine and policy?
13. How do you articulate your present view of end-time or eschatological issues?
14. Do you believe that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin? What is the significance of your belief?
Do you have a brief comment about the "Hypostatic Union?"
15. What is your interpretation of the biblical teaching on Hell?
16. Do you believe that the events described in Genesis 1-11 are factual or symbolic?
17. What does the Bible teach concerning spiritual gifts? (Do you have a spiritual gift?)
Please delineate your views about prophecy, healing, and speaking in tongues.
18. What is your view on abortion? What if your wife's life was at stake - such as cancer?
19. Many children who appear to be converted at an early age show no evidence of knowing Christ later. How do you handle children when they come to you for counsel concerning salvation?
What is your advice to parents? Do you use the term "Heart" when dealing with younger children?
20. What does the Bible teach is the purpose of the church's weekly gathering?
What is the purpose of Wednesday evening? How does a AM message differ from a PM message?
Do you have an opinion about "Small Group" Bible studies? Do you encourage dialogue in a smaller meeting? Do you use PowerPoint or Keynote when you teach?

Ministry Goals and Philosophy

21. Why are you seeking a change in the ministry? How many years before you retire and leave the pastorate?
22. A pastor is charged by God to both preach to the church and to shepherd the people in a more individual way. Which aspect of the ministry appeals to you the most?
How might there be a difference between public exhortation and shepherding?
What are some specific ways you have been helped to develop your skills in these areas?
23. How would you describe a successful pastor? How would you describe a successful church?
What church may be a good example of such success? What is the key ingredient?
What might you do to encourage a church to make important changes? Any examples?
24. How is the pastor held accountable? What relationships in your life currently provide accountability for responsible attitudes and behavior, both personally and as a pastor?
What is your most watched TV show? Internet site?
25. What is your view of the phrase, "The bishop (pastor) then must be . . . the husband of one wife" (1Timothy 3:2)?
How do you see the list in 1Timothy 3, in relation to the other men of the church?

26. What are your views on styles of church music - and the _____ Hymn book?
 Do you have a problem with _____? (It does include a couple Gather and Getty hymns.)
 Do you want to manage the special music selection? Do you want to pick the congregational hymns every week? Do you sing solos or in a group?
 Do you listen to much music at home or on the road? What is your favorite?
27. What are your views regarding raising money for various projects within the church?
 Should the church solicit those outside the church for a mission trip?
28. What are your convictions about the local church and debt?
 How should the Deacons or a Men's Meeting help lead the finances of the church?
 Do you like a particular church software system (like Power Church)?
29. What does the Bible teach about women in pastoral ministry?
 How about a choir director? How about a VBS director?
30. What does the Bible teach about how churches should make decisions?
 Does the Pastor tell the Deacons, the Deacons tell the Pastor, or are the Deacons the Pastor's counselors? Would a pre-budget meeting with presentations and opportunities for questions be helpful? How important is communication to the congregation about church matters?
31. How should a pastor and his church relate to other local churches?
 Do you feel comfortable cooperating with other denominations?
 Do you draw any line? Should a church member or even the Pastor attend city council meetings?
 Should a pastor get involved as a chaplain of the local police?
32. Are there any distinctions between elders, pastors, and overseers?
 If applicable, what distinctions might exist between staff member and a pastor?
33. What are the biblical responsibilities of deacons? Should they be ordained as Deacons?
 How are deacons (and trustees) and pastors to relate (personally and corporately)?
 How often might the Deacons and Pastors meet for church purposes?

Pastoral Care and Counseling

34. What is your approach to counseling? How do you handle your present counseling load?
 What books or conferences have you had that have helped you in this area?
35. When you have met with opposition, has it been mostly related to your style of leadership, your personality, your beliefs, or something else?
36. What is your view of divorce and remarriage? How strictly will you follow this view in practice?
 Might you be willing to perform a wedding outside a church facility because of a strict church policy about divorce?
 Might a divorced person whose spouse is dead or remarried be qualified to be married?
37. What are your requirements for performing a marriage ceremony?
 Do you require counseling or the reading of books or videos? What ones?
38. How would you handle a "hearsay" case of scandal or immorality by a church member?
39. What is a useful plan for receiving new members into the church?
 What are your preferred prerequisites? Might you want to adjust the way our church does it?

40. What emphasis do you give to the leadership of fathers with their families, especially in terms of family worship?
Do you personally engage in family worship with your wife and children?
Do you have any opinion of Bill Gothard's "Umbrella" approach of leadership?
41. Who should direct or organize the worship schedule of the church? Why?
Which methods of leading corporate worship are appropriate? Which are inappropriate?

Missions and Evangelism

42. What is your missionary philosophy for the church? How are you currently demonstrating missionary interest and involvement?
Have you visited a mission field? Where? Do you distinguish between foreign and USA based missions? Do Biblically qualified missions have to involve nationals mentoring nationals?
43. What mission boards do you support? Who is your favorite missionary?
What foreign area seems to have the greatest need? How critical is mentoring or evangelism on the mission field?
Are you concerned about the dropping number of pastors and missionaries?
44. How often do you use an evangelist? What evangelists have you used in the past in your present ministry? Who are some you would like to use?
Do you have any preference on Faith Promise Giving?

Administration and the Church Board

45. What type of decisions do you currently make without consulting the Deacons or congregation?
46. What are your views on people who are divorced holding positions in the church?
Are their limits? (Special music, SS teachers, Secretary, Ushers, Choir)
47. What qualities do you respect and value in people you work with? Prior Ministry Experience
48. What is the largest congregation in which you have been pastor? The smallest?
What is your present role in your church?
49. Which aspect of the ministry appeals to you most?
50. Please explain your views on church discipline. What is your number one goal?
Relate any personal experience. Is there a limit if the person resigns from church?
Have you read much on this subject?

Personal and Spiritual

51. What are your personal goals (plans) and how do you measure them?
52. What do you like the most about your current ministry? Least?
53. If you were hiring for this position at _____, what qualities would you look for?
What questions do you have for us? What do you think of this part of the country?
Do you have pastor friends in this area?
54. What do you see as your most significant accomplishments at your present church?
55. Who is the person that has had the most influence in your life? (Friend, Mentor)

56. Describe your best friend.
57. At what age would you think about retiring?
58. Have you ever solved a church problem in a creative or unique way? What was the outcome?
59. Should a pastor develop personal relationships with his congregation? How close? Why?
60. What is the toughest group you have ever had to get cooperation from? How did you handle it?
61. What is your position on home-school, private school, and public school education?
62. How does your wife feel about a potential commitment to pastor in _____?
What is one of her greatest concerns?
63. Has God revealed anything about your potential pastorate at _____ Church?
64. What are your methods for involving yourself in the lives of your people as their shepherd and overseer of their souls? Are you or your wife a "People" person?
Do you enjoy visiting in people's homes? Meeting other men for coffee?
65. What activities characterize your evangelistic interest? What is your approach to personal evangelism? Are you finding that the general population are without general Bible knowledge? Corporate evangelism is organized from within the church. Do you have a favorite approach?
66. Who are your favorite Christian writers, commentators, theologians, etc.? Why?
What books have you read in the past year? Do you have an electronic library? Which one?
How often do you use it?
Do you text and email? Use social media? Which ones?
How important is a church's website and Facebook accounts? Have you seen ours?
67. Is there any question you may have been expecting, but it was not asked?

As far as I know, the previous questions were compiled by a pastor in Pennsylvania and over the years it has been adjusted by several others. There are no known copyrights involved.

I would personally send them in advance, so the Candidate could be more thoughtful in his response. Some are leading questions, but none are meant to be of a "gottya" nature.

David Shoaf, Interim Pastor