

ELDERS AND DEACONS SELECTION PROCEDURES IN THE LOCAL CONGREGATION

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Introduction

Brethren, we give glory to God Almighty for yet another opportunity granted this local congregation at Grey St, Warri to kick start another Elders and Deacons selection process. Brethren, as the Evangelist of this local Congregation, I am delighted to inform you of the intension of the Church to add Spiritually qualified men to the present Elders of this local congregation for excellent performance and growth. It is on this basis, in the next four weeks, lessons will be thought to sensitize the Church of her role in the selection process. May God bless and grant us a successful process in Jesus Holy Name – Amen.

GOD'S PLAN FOR LEADERSHIP IN THE LOCAL CONGREGATION

Beloved, it is no longer news that after the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ back to heaven, the Lord, when He had accomplished His redemption plan for the Salvation of Sinful man, In **Eph. 4:11 – 14**, apostle Paul by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit declared.

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, NKJV.

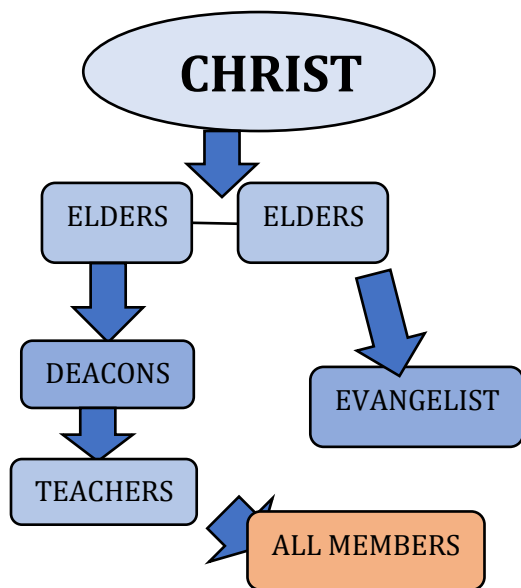
WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ELDERS AND DEACONS SELECTION EXERCISE IN THE LOCAL CONGREGATION?

After the establishment of the New Testament Church (The Church of Christ) on Pentecost, the Church began to grow, and local congregation continue to multiply throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria and beyond. And it became necessary that the local Churches should be Scripturally Organized as required by the Lord. It is on this basis Apostle Paul by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit charged Brother Titus in **Titus 1:5**, and he declared. *(For this reason, I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you).* Therefore, the authority to Select Elders and

Deacons and to ordain them in the local Congregation is the soul responsibility of the Evangelist (the Preacher) of the Congregation.

2. Scripturally every individual member of the local Congregation also have a role to play in the selection process as they are allowed to select Men who are Scripturally qualified into the of Elders and Deacons. (For Example). The Selection of what is believed to be the first Deacons at the Jerusalem Church in **Acts 6:3**. (*Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;). NKJV.*

THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE LOCAL CONGREGATION



**THE ELDERS
WHO ARE THESE MEN?**

TERM	GREEK – WORD	EMPHASIS	MEANING OF WORD
Elder	Presbyters	An Older Man	Spiritually matured/ Experience Acts. 14:23; 20:17, 1tim.3:6
Bishop/Overseers	Episkopos	To Oversee	Take Care Of 1 Peter 5:1-2, 1 Tim. 3:4-5
Pastors Or Shepherds	poimen		To Shepherd Eph. 4:11, Acts.20: 28, 1 Peter 5:1-2.

APPOINTMENT OF ELDERS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH IS ALWAYS (PLURAL) TWO OR MORE MEN – **Acts 14:23, Tit. 1:5.**

QUALIFICATIONS OF THOSE TO BE SELECTED AS ELDERS IN THE LOCAL CONGRGATION 1Timothy 3:1- 7

1. This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a BISHOP, he desires a good work. One must want to serve
2. “BLAMELESS” – such a man must not be subject to Blame
3. The “HUSBAND” of one wife – This would exclude a bachelor, a bigamist, or a divorcee. Clearly this is to be a man who has followed God’s divine laws of Marriage
4. “TEMPERATE” – One who is mild or restrained in behaviour or attitude. Not self-willed.
5. “SOBERMINDED” – The idea here is, one who is not intoxicated – not under the influence of drugs or alcohol
6. “OF GOOD BEHAVIOR” – The word used here communicates the idea of orderliness. One who is modest in all manner of is life.
7. “HOSPITABLE” – The word used here means that an elder must be one who is friendly, and generous to guest or strangers. One who is willing to help those who are in need.
8. “ABLE TO TEACH” – The KJV renders it as (apt to teach) This means that, an elder must have the ability to teach both (privately and publicly) this is one vital qualification of an elder.
9. ”NOT GIVEN TO WINE” – This simply means that an elder must not be a drunkard, in other words, this man must refrain from all intoxicating drinks.
10. “NOT VIOLENT” - This means that an elder must not be a troublemaker, nor a fighter
11. “NOT GREEDY FOR MONEY” – This simply means that an elder must not be lustful for money.
12. “BUT GENTLE” – simply means, one who have a mild and kind nature or manner. A man of peace
13. ”NOT QUARRELSOME” – An elder must not be a violent man, not contentious, but a man of a sound Spirit.
14. “NOT COVETOUS” – An elder must be peacefully happy and satisfied with what he has.
15. “ONE WHO RULES HIS OWN HOUSE WELL, HAVING HIS CHILDREN IN SUBMISSION WITH ALL REVERENCE” – This is one important qualification of an elder. It must be One who tirelessly brings up his Children under his control. Not a man with wayward Children. (If a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the Church of God?)
16. “NOT A NOVICE” – An elder must not be a new convert, but one who is long and experience in the faith.
17. “A GOOD TESTIMONY AMONG THOSE WHO ARE OUTSIDE” – one who is an elder must have good relationship with his neighbours, he cannot be an elder having bad reputation with those outside

Elders are to take oversight of the local congregation, and be example to the flock, therefore the following Traits should not be associated with them.

1. PRIDE – **Proverbs.16:18** - Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. NKJV.
2. SELF-WILL – **Titus1:7**.
3. For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, NKJV

4. LUST - **1 Tim 6:9-10**

But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

5. **ANGER - Eph 4:25-27 - 26 "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, 27 nor give place to the devil. NKJV**
6. **GREED – Proverbs 27:20 Hell and Destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied**

NOTE OF ADVICE

Brethren, before we proceed further, it is timely to inform you that the process of selecting Elders and Deacons in the local Congregation is not by the wisdom of men, but by God. Therefore, we must look at what the process is not:

1. It is not a political election were Brethren will be campaigning on behalf of any Brother.
2. It is not a popularity contest – I am more popular than others (NO)
3. The Eldership is not an Honorary position, but an office
4. It is not the show of educational qualification or riches
5. The process is not a worldly exercise, but purely Spiritual as required by God in the Scriptures. E.T.C.

Conclusion

Brethren, the road to select men into the Eldership is not an easy task, but if we follow the guideline of the Holy Spirit, as stipulated in God's inspired Word (the Bible) we will make it.

Finally, Brethren, we must understand that what qualify a man into this honourable office can also disqualify him, if such qualification is no more.