



Elder Candidacy

What is an Elder?

An elder is a man who meets the qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, is recognized by his congregation as an elder, and leads the congregation by teaching the Word (1 Tim. 3:2), praying for the sheep (Jas. 5:14), and overseeing the affairs of the church (1 Pet. 5:2). An elder must watch over the flock. He must instruct all the sheep, strengthen the weak ones, guard the vulnerable ones, rebuke the stubborn ones, and bear with the difficult ones (2 Tim. 2:24-25; Acts 20:28; 1 Thess. 5:14). An elder watches over the members of his church as one who will give an account to God (Heb. 13:17).

Qualification of an Elder?

As previously stated in the *What is an Elder?* Section, the qualifications of an elder are found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

	1 Timothy 3:		Titus
3:2	above reproach	1:6, 7	above reproach
3:2	husband of one wife	1:6	husband of one wife
3:2	sober-minded	1:8	disciplined
3:2	self-controlled	1:8	self-controlled
3:2	respectable		—
3:2	hospitable	1:8	hospitable
3:2	able to teach	1:9	able to give instruction



3:3	not a drunkard	1:7	not . . . a drunkard
3:3	not violent but gentle	1:7	not . . . violent
3:3	not quarrelsome	1:7	not be arrogant or quick-tempered
3:3	not a lover of money	1:7	not . . . greedy for gain
3:4-5	manage his own household well, care for God's church	1:7	God's steward
3:4	keeping his children submissive	1:6	children are believers (or "faithful"), not insubordinate
3:6	not a recent convert		—
3:7	well thought of by outsiders		—
	—	1:8	a lover of good; upright, holy

(There are certain cases in which an Elder can be single such as the Apostle Paul, but this must be approved by the Senior Pastor and Elders)

Can a women be an Elder/ Pastor?

Men and women are absolutely equal in essence, dignity and value but are distinct by divine design.

As part of God's good created order, men and women are to have different yet complementary roles and responsibilities in the home and church. As it relates to the church, The Reborn Church of Phoenix is convicted by Scripture that God that men and women are both expected to lead; however, the office of elder or pastor is reserved for qualified men. Our conviction comes from 1 Timothy 2-3 and Titus.

What's the Difference between Elder and Pastor?



Biblically speaking, all elders are pastors. Peter tells the elders among his readers to “shepherd” (Greek: pastor) the flock of God that is among you” (1 Pet. 5:2). Paul told the Ephesian elders to “care for” (Greek: pastor) the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood” (Acts 20:28).

How do the elders relate to the senior pastor?

The senior pastor is one of the elders. The senior pastor is also the chairman of the board. Even though the church has given him responsibilities that are distinct from the other elders, he occupies the same biblical office they do. Because the senior pastor does the majority of the public teaching, he will likely accrue more authority among the congregation and the elders. In other words, he possesses the same formal authority as the other elders, but his opinion will carry more weight. The elders should continually pray for, support and encourage the senior pastor as the primary leader among leaders of the church.¹

What’s the Elder-Candidacy Process?

The Call

The individual feels a personal calling from God on their life to be an Elder. The individual’s spouse believes that her husband is called. At The Reborn Church of Phoenix, an individual who senses God’s calling brings this before the elders (or the elders approach them), the elders work through the process with them.

The Training

¹ Some of this material has been adapted from *By Whose Authority* by Mark Dever, pages 37-38



The Reborn Church of Phoenix employs a twelve month process for eldership. During this time, the individual is assigned reading, completes summary reports of what God is teaching them, attends board meetings, shadows the elders as they minister and shepherd God's people, and sharpens preaching ability. They begin to function as an elder while being trained by the elders. Some books are standard readings for all elders, but the rest are tailored to specific growth areas of the individual. The Senior Pastor will provide a reading list and assignments to the Elder Candidate.

The Testing

Testing is occurring throughout the entire twelve-month process, in the sanctuary, and at home. One's life is being examined and watched over. After the twelve-month process is complete, an official testing takes place. The candidate then is questioned by an oral exam by the board. The topics include theology and philosophy of ministry.

The Affirming

After the testing, comes affirming. With the unanimous, and it must be unanimous, affirmation from the elders, the candidate is considered an official elder nominee who must then be affirmed by the membership of the church.

The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. 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? – 1 Timothy 3:1-5



The process is intensive. The candidate must be able to trust and believe that they are called and that the elder team is going to protect, encourage, and challenge them. The training is a time of intentional discipleship to help soften areas of one's heart, hone skills, and build faith and dependence upon the Holy Spirit to lead and to guide.