

Christ-Centered



Biblical Training

Matthew 6:33; 1 John 2:6;
2 Chronicles 16:9

**PATHWAY AND KEYS
TO CHOOSING A CHURCH PASTOR
(AND OPERATING A LOCAL CHURCH)
(Or a Teaching Elder)**

by

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PRELIMINARY

Before choosing a pastor, it may be best that the Church leaders first decide the ministry, worship, music, and the course they want the Church to go. The pastor must fit into this direction and he can add to this direction. If the leaders do not adequately know the direction, the pastor can be chosen to help provide much direction. In any case, a pastor should be chosen who has much experience as a pastor, not one just out of seminary. If you do, the Church will drift until the pastor gains the needed experience. The pastor should be a male. Women are not allowed to teach men.

(It must be understood, that the pastor is but one of the elders. He is not head. The Bible does not teach that a pastor is head of the Church. He is like a teaching elder, but called pastor because he does most of the teaching. Churches can have several pastors (teachers) among the elders.)

THREE VERY IMPORTANT KEY UNDERSTANDINGS FOR CHURCH MINISTRY AND OPERATION

- 1. MATURITY IN CHRIST:** The main reason we are on the earth is to gain maturity in Christ-likeness so that we can know and relate to God in eternity towards the maximum. However, we must understand that Scriptures imply (do not directly teach) our maturity in Christ-likeness is most likely fixed forever at death. Thus, to mature her people must be the “main ministry” of the Church. We are not here to mainly teach Bible content, even though greatly needed. But instead, we are here to use the Bible to mature our people in Christ-likeness, living as He lives, relating to God, where God directs every aspect of our lives. We will add Bible content. Apart from having a “mature” relationship with God, there is nothing. We must mature our people, including our children and youth, to the degree we can, before the Tribulation comes and to train them to stand strong under persecution in the Tribulation so they can gain more maturity for the sake of eternity.

2. **IMMATURE CHURCH:** We must understand that the job of Church leadership is not just to have a Sunday School and a church service each week. It is most important that we train people to become maximally mature in Christ-likeness including to be involved in ministry. In order for this to occur, we need an established curriculum - a version of God's Whole Counsel. If we do not do this training, our Church becomes immature with a loss of biblical intellect and with a low plateau of biblical knowledge. Our ministry and Church life plateaus. Our youth often leave the Church after high school. This has been observed in our churches.

3. **ENDTIMES:** We are no longer in cyclic history. We are now in the endtimes sequence with a calamity soon-coming to bring Revelation's endtimes Tribulation with world government. The Church definitely will go through the endtimes Tribulation and be raptured at Christ's Second Coming. Not to believe this and to live normally indefinitely will cause the Church people to be caught blind-sided when the calamity comes suddenly without warning apart from the signs. (The signs now in the United States are similar signs that were in Israel just before Babylon (world empire) invaded.) We must not allow this blind-siding to happen. They will not be prepared with food, maturity, and to stand strong under the coming most severe persecution and martyrdom. The Church will not know what is happening when the Tribulation comes. The Church must be trained for maturity and warned, alerted, and prepared now for the soon-coming Tribulation. The Church need to be taught prophecy. We must do this teaching while we still can in freedom, and while there is still time remaining to train. Otherwise, she must will very likely fall away, particularly the children and youth.

ESTABLISH AN OVERALL CHURCH MINISTRY

(NEEDED ASPECTS PRESENTED BELOW)

(Church Leaders Must (Should) Establish Biblical Church Ministry Before Choosing a Pastor; Church Leaders Should Believe and Act Upon Above Key Understandings Above. Pastor Candidates Should Agree With Chosen Ministry and Key Understandings.)

1. **Maximum worship of God; using hymns and similar good music that addresses God's Greatness – never use any rock music anywhere in the church and Sunday schools. Honoring God in worship (in Spirit and in Truth) has priority over pleasing people. Doing this we will sing the hymns in melody from our hearts.**

2. **Bring own people (including the children and youth) to maximum maturity in Christ for eternity as "the main" job of the Church. Pastor and teachers must know how to do this and have an established curriculum for accomplishment. Believe that most likely that our maturity in Christ-likeness is fixed forever at death.**

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Need to train with Christian life principles for how one lives the Christian life as a main emphasis – not just teach Bible knowledge and content. (See #5 and 8.) The concept is not to teach Bible content per se, but instead to use the Bible to train people to walk with God (pleasing, worshipping, and glorifying Him), become mature in Christ-likeness, and accomplish the work of the ministry. Bible content will be included.

- 3. Evangelize (priority ministry) children in the community in after school Bible clubs and community working with CEF. 85% of the people coming to Christ do so in the age range 4-14. Young people to be trained in CEF CYIA and work with children in summer 5 day clubs. Get the young people trained in ministry.**
- 4. Specialize in Awana and a summer VBS ministry.**
- 5. Needed (required) Training method by pastor and teachers, (do all) – What to do, how to do it, examples for how to do it; testimony for living it out by the teacher, and some form of on-the-job training. (All teachers and pastors must have experience here with testimony) This is experiential based training. This is in contrast to mainly teaching with Bible information and content that provides mainly knowledge.**
- 6. Train people (congregation) with prophecy (Post-Trib Rapture understanding and view) and warn-brief-prepare them for the soon-coming Tribulation that they will go through. There is only a short time period remaining in freedom according to the signs and conditions. Train urgently as if we had only from 9 months to 1 or 2 years or so left in freedom. Only God knows the timing. Must not let our people be caught blind-sided when the calamity comes under any conditions. It does not hurt to be trained early – but too late?????**
- 7. Congregation trained to do on-the-way witnessing to divine appointments in the community – work with other churches to do community wide evangelism. Church leaders should have experience here. (How many of the Church people have led anyone to believe the Gospel and be saved? How many water baptisms are we having of new converts from the community?)**
- 8. Training topics (minimum) at all age levels in the Church – must be done: (1) Worship and glorify God – appreciation for God’s Greatness – know His attributes; (2) live godly head-subordinate relationships as Christ walked with the Father including in families: live by faith and by love; (3) Help in the ministry – evangelism, discipling; building godly families; planting churches; helping the needy; (4) believing and standing on the Christian-Faith doctrines; and (5) Have a personal devotional life of prayer and Bible reading. Must teach Post-Tribulation Rapture. All of this training should be in charts or in text for people to study and**

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read. (Know the difference between discipling for Christian growth (procedure) and for maximum maturity in Christ-likeness (outcome). This training can be done in parts in the pulpit, Sunday School, special studies, and in seminars.

9. Major emphasis in maintaining a college and young people's group. Must train the high school young people in the items of # 8 including training and involvement in ministry so they can see God using them and bringing results.
10. Place the entire Church in home groups for fellowships and safety with 3-6 months supplies of food, water, gasoline, lighting, wind-up radio, etc for future emergencies that is regularly replaced.
11. Keep up to speed with the world's and country's trends and happenings with a projection to the future.
12. Know that In the Church, we have the gung ho, the faithful, the watchers, and new people. We need to spend 80% of our training time to help mature the gung ho and faithful or the ministry and maturity level plateaus. We can have special training times for the others (such as for new Christians to help bring them up to speed.
13. If the Church does not do the above training to maturity, she will be transformed to become an immature Church with a loss of biblical intellect and with a low plateau of Bible knowledge – including that of Bible prophecy – the people will not become mature in Christ. They will not know what is happening when the endtimes come. They very likely will fall away under the coming persecution.
14. The Church must establish an overall curriculum that represents God's Whole Counsel that is taught to every person that includes the topics in #8 using the pulpit, Sunday School, special studies, and seminars, using the method of #5. Churches very often only (wrongly) train with only a small part of the curriculum and only what to do (knowledge based and not experiential based).

COMMENTS:

1. All teachers and pastors must have had training and living-life testimony in all the above #6, 7, 8; "before" they minister. Best that all are married with or have had families. This should be for Church leaders also.
2. To be free of the people's blood, leaders must teach a version of God's Whole Counsel to the people and warn the people of coming discipline in the Tribulation.

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3. To have a dynamic Church, most of the Church people (including the youth) need to be in ministries working together where results can be observed (God working in and around them saving and discipling people) – this includes ministries outside the Church in the community.
4. People should not teach unless they have an established background in the subject they would teach. (of course we can have those in on-the-job training.)
5. Church should work for excellence and thoroughness seeking God's best (not just His good) in all things.

PASTOR REQUIREMENTS

(Not One Just Out of Seminary – Only Males Considered.)

(Must Have Been Pastoring for a Number of Years.)

1. Works well with people – people person; Can train and counsel couples for marriage.
2. Trained (has lived out) in 5-8 above and “normally-regularly” teaches and preaches with all of # 5 above. He, by necessity, must know how (have had experience) to train people how to live by faith and do witnessing. He should have a detailed doctrinal statement with Scriptures (References).
3. Understands and is committed to the above ministries of the Church. He must know how to train using them.
4. Good to have, but not necessary to have, a seminary degree. – But must know Bible well and how to train people to walk with God. Is committed long term to going all the way with God, even if others do not. He emphasizes, knows how to train from experience in training and personal walk, walking with God, not just Bible content.
5. Can be chosen (may be best) from the congregation.
6. His primary goal is not to teach the Bible per se, but instead to train the people to walk with God, do ministry, and become mature in Christ emphasizing 5,7-8 above using only the Bible – of course one can teach Bible content as well. (Teaching mainly Bible content does not mature people in Christ sufficiently.)
7. Meets the biblical elder-deacon requirements and has – is raising- a family (no divorce) – has children who believe. Best to meet Beatitudes characteristics.

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8. Understands prophecy and believes strongly in a Post-Trib Rapture view and having but a short time remaining in freedom. Must plan to complete key ministries in this short time period. Must know the signs that signal a soon-coming calamity that will bring the Tribulation. (Not having this characteristic, he will wrongly lead the Church in operation as if the current times will continue indefinitely – major mistake.) He must, under no circumstances believe a Pre-Trib Rapture or there is no endtimes Tribulation.
9. Believes the Church is the believers in Christ, not the organization with the buildings. (In teaching the Bible and witnessing (evangelizing) - we represent only the Bible – no Church and no religion.)
10. Can (has experience) preach, teach, train, and give seminars. Can answer many Bible questions. Should have references of people who know him in his ministry.
11. Is both procedure and outcome oriented. Best (with elders-deacons) to know “all” of what God wants us to become (mature in Christ-likeness) – from entire Bible (outcome oriented), and “all” the methods (discipleship) for getting there (procedure oriented). These should be written down somewhere where all can read. They should be presented to the congregation so they can know what God intends. The congregation should be able to read them somewhere.
12. He possesses the characteristics of a mature Christian – head-subordinate relationships living as Christ lives, living by faith, and living by sacrificial love – has or is raising a family. He has led many to Christ. (See Keys document below for many key characteristics of a mature Christian.)
13. Working with the elders-deacons, he is working to have a mature Church, so that all will have a maximum relationship with God in eternity and now all in ministry.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

(Written by John Stephenson and Found on His Website;
(Biblicalworldviewministries.com)

1. *Keys to Becoming Mature in Christ-likeness in Godly Relationship Living* (under TRAINING)
2. *God’s Plan Over History for Man to Become Mature in Christ Needed to Eternally Know and to Relate to Our Perfect God in His Greatness* (Under BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW - GOD’S PLAN)
3. *The Pattern View of Prophecy* (Post-Tribulation Rapture View) (Under ENDTIMES PROPHECY)

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- 4. *Living by God's Righteousness* (For Devotions; Includes God's Attributes)
(under TRAINING)**
- 5. *Church Leadership Guide: Training Methods to Have God's Best***