

# ELDER COMMISSIONING SERVICE

**God Calls Men to Lead**

**1 Timothy 3: 1-7**

**March 7, 2021**

## Bonhoeffer on God's Calling:

*“When Christ calls a man, he bids  
him come and die.”*

The death may not be physical, but it is the *death of the self* to the will of God

Oswald Sanders (Spiritual Leadership):

*“Real leaders are in short supply.  
Constantly, people and groups search for them.  
Throughout the Bible, God searches  
for leaders, too.”*

**A Biblical leader *must* have a heart after God**

*“The Lord has sought out a man after His own heart  
and appointed him leader of His people.”*

1 Samuel 13: 14

How does a man become a Spiritual Leader?

*Spiritual leaders are not elected, appointed,  
or created by boards or assemblies*

God alone makes them!

Acts 20: 28

## Leaders are tested by God:

Great men of God are first *tested* prior to leading

*“It is doubtful that God can bless a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply”* (A. W. Tozer)

- 1) It takes the crucible of pain to remove independence from a man and make him *fully dependent* on God!
- 2) Only those *fully dependent* on God can be great Godly leaders!

## Summing up an Elder's calling:

- 1) He must have a *calling* from God recognized by the group
- 2) He must meet the *character* qualifications in 1 Timothy 3: 1-7
- 3) He must be *competent*, able to carry out his duties (*consider wife, family, work, etc.*)
- 4) He must have the *chemistry* to fit into the group

**To be appointed to the office of an Elder, a man  
*must:***

- Be called by God**
- Meet the Biblical qualifications**
- Be presented before the body as a candidate**
- Have a time of examination by the body**
- He must be officially recognized as the one who holds the office before the body**

## Things you may not know:

- The word Pastor, Overseer, Bishop, Elder, are synonymous
- Pastor is the most popular term for the teaching Elder
- Elders are equal in authority, yet all Elders do not perform the same function
- A plurality of Elders is taught in Scripture to protect one man from becoming a despotic ruler
- All Pastors are Elders, but not all Elders have the gift of Pastor-Teacher



## Church Governance (Polity):

There are different forms of governance; each form has its advocates and believe they are right

### Apostle Model:

- Believe in apostolic succession - the Pope is an example
- As Christ's apostles died off, God raised up Elders to lead His Church
- No New Testament support

## Congregational Model:

- The most popular model in the west by far
- Everyone has a vote
- New Testament support for this model

Acts 6: 5

## Moses Model:

- A one-man rule; the man hears from God and then leads the people
- Old Testament model
- No New Testament support
- Works well with the right leader, but is prone to abuse

## Elder Model:

- The New Testament is replete with this model
- A plurality of Elders is called to govern the Church
- A plurality of Elders gives real accountability

Problem: An Elder on an ego trip can disrupt the entire group

No model is perfect; the Elder model does provide the body protection from a renegade leader

## Character Qualifications - 1 Timothy 3: 1-7:

- No one will meet all these character qualifications perfectly
- This should reflect a general way that he conducts his life - *Elders are not perfect!*

**First quality: He must desire the position**

- God will place the calling on his heart
- Others will recognize and confirm his calling

**Second quality: He must be blameless; no adversary can bring a charge against him**

- He has a good reputation with those who know him; no accusation will stick to him

**The other character traits describe what blameless looks like**

## The Elder's Wife:

*All* spiritual leaders must have their wife's *full* support:

- To understand the time and emotional commitment necessary to carry out his calling
- To offer prayer support, comfort, strength and encouragement
- He will need her support! *This is a must!*



# *Elder Commissioning Service*

*March 7th, 2021*

Having received a call of full-time service upon his life from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and having a desire to serve the spiritual needs of this congregation, who had full and sufficient opportunity for judging his God-given gifts and leadership among them, and after satisfactory examination by the Leadership of this Church, in regard to his Christian experience, Leadership and Doctrine, this man is hereby commissioned to the office and service of Elder.



Elder Candidate: *Roy Testolin*

Wife: *Debby Testolin*

Will you, *Roy*, and your wife, *Debby*,  
please stand?

As I ask you, *Roy*, each of these questions,  
please respond to these vows with “*I do*”

**Roy**, do you affirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Savior?

**Roy**, do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the Word of God, totally trustworthy, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, the supreme, final, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

**Roy**, do you sincerely believe the Statement of Faith of this Church contains the truth taught in the Holy Scriptures?

**Roy**, do you promise that, if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the statements in the Statement of Faith of this Church, you will, on your own initiative, make known to the Pastor and other Elders the change which has taken place in your views since your assumption of this vow?

**Roy**, do you subscribe to the government and discipline of Calvary Chapel of Battle Creek?

**Roy**, do you promise to submit to your fellow Elders in the Lord?

**Roy**, have you received, as far as you know your own heart, a call of full-time service upon your life from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and do you have a desire to serve the spiritual needs of this congregation?

**Roy**, do you promise to be zealous and faithful in promoting the truths of the Gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise to you on that account?

**Roy**, will you be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all your duties as Elder, whether personal or relative, private or public, and will you endeavor, by the grace of God, to adorn the professing of the Gospel in your manner of life, and to walk with exemplary piety before this congregation?



**Roy**, are you now willing to take personal responsibility in the life of this congregation as an Elder, to oversee the ministry and resources of the Church, and to devote yourself to prayer, the ministry of the Word and the shepherding of God's flock, relying upon the grace of God, in such a way that Calvary Chapel of Battle Creek and the entire Church of Jesus Christ will be blessed?

Now to you: *The Church*

*Will you*, the body of believers, please stand?

As I ask each of you these questions, please respond corporately with *“I will”*

*Will you,* the body of Calvary Chapel of Battle Creek, acknowledge and publicly receive Roy Testolin as Elder, as a gift of Christ to this Church?

*Will you* love Roy and pray for him and his ministry, and work together with him humbly and cheerfully, that by the grace of God you may accomplish the mission of the Church, giving him all due honor and support in his leadership to which the Lord has called him, to the glory and honor of God?

*Will you* pray for Roy and Debby, asking God to protect them and to care for them, both physically and spiritually, and will you encourage them, knowing that the ministry to which he is called will bring trying times and tough situations?

*Will you* submit to Roy's leadership knowing that he is called as an Elder to this Church and will you seek counsel from him, or direct others in the body to him, when the need arises, and prayerfully consider his Scriptural guidance and input?



Paul references the laying on of hands in his letter to Timothy, as he spoke about the gift from God

*“For this reason, I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”*

2 Timothy 1:6

This signifies that Paul laid hands on Timothy when anointing him for ministry