



## A NOBLE TASK

### An Introduction to Eldership at Coram Deo Fellowship

*"If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task."* 1 Timothy 3:1 ESV

Thank you for your interest in the office of Elder at Coram Deo Fellowship. Know that we understand the position of Elder as God's highest calling in the New Testament church full of hard work, love, joy, and reward. Thus, we hope your pursuit of this office will be marked by caution, humility, and excitement: *caution* because of the spiritual, emotional, and physical demands of shepherding God's people; *humility* because of the biblical qualifications given; and *excitement* because being an elder must be completely voluntary. If you are not excited about the prospect of eldership, turn back now.

Because of the biblical emphasis on male leadership in the home and the church and the texts of Scripture pertaining to Eldership, we are convinced that the office of Elder is relegated to men only. This is not an arbitrary decision and in no way reflects a devaluing of the gifts and talents of women who are equally loved and valued by God and members of the body, the church. Rather, we hold to this as a parameter given by God in his infinite wisdom and goodness.

In addition to the biblical qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:2-4 we have established these following requirements we believe are wise.

- Anyone who aspires to be an Elder at CDF must be a member and have faithfully attended CDF for at least one year.
- Anyone who aspires to be an Elder at CDF must be already involved in ministry in such a way that displays interest in and giftedness for serving the body.

Being an Elder is a considerable commitment of your time each week. Certainly there are weeks requiring less time and weeks requiring more time. Included is a weekly meeting with the Elder Team during which there is prayer, study, and dialogue regarding the life of the church. Furthermore, you would commit to the following process.

- 1) A candidate will be paired with an Elder for regular meeting, preparation, and encouragement. This "partnership" is intended for the duration of the candidating process.
- 2) At least two of the Elders will meet with the candidate and his wife (if applicable) to confirm her support of his pursuit of Eldership.
- 3) The candidate will read and work through *For An Aspiring Elder*—a manual of sorts consisting of CDF's doctrinal statements and positions, understanding of qualifications, philosophy, et al., with which he must be in complete agreement and thoroughly familiar.
- 4) The candidate will complete the following reading\* and respond to each with a 1-2 page paper:
  - *Ten Questions to Diagnose Your Spiritual Health*, Donald S. Whitney
  - *The Cross and Christian Ministry*, D. A. Carson
  - *Biblical Eldership*, Alexander Strauch

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\* This list of reading subject to change.

- 5) At least two of the Elders will interview the candidate's wife (if applicable) or pertinent family members as confirmation of his qualifications.
- 6) The candidate will write a self-analysis of his giftedness, the reason(s) he feels compelled to pursue Eldership, and the desires and goals he has for ministry.

Once these are completed and approved unanimously by the Elder Team, the candidate will then,

- 7) Begin to attend Elder Team meetings for 1-3 months for the purpose of observing.
- 8) Undergo an oral examination by the Elders regarding Eldership, doctrine, and ministry.
- 9) Be presented to the church for confirmation of his blamelessness and "good reputation with outsiders."

If the candidate passes the oral examination and is found above reproach before the church,

- 10) The Elder Team will then vote upon the candidate (unanimity necessary).
- 11) The candidate and his family will be presented to the church and commissioned by the elders.

Upon the completion of this process, the Elder would begin to shepherd and lead Coram Deo Fellowship as a participating member of the Elder Team until God calls him away to a new ministry, he moves, he disqualifies himself, or he voluntarily steps down because of pressing, personal circumstances (prolonged illness, family crisis, etc.).