

Questions for Elders

Jeremy Houck

1. **How would you describe your church?** Does the church describe itself by its past or by its vision. Do core values look inward or outward?
2. **Why was the church started?** If a split that happened over 100 years ago started this congregation there still may be some baggage.
3. **What is the church's Purpose?** Does it have a well-defined mission and strategy or do they go with the flow?
4. **What is your unique role in this community?** What sets this church apart? Who is the target audience? What ministry do they offer that no one else offers?
5. **How would a neighbor around this building portray this congregation?** This tells you a lot about a church's outreach.
6. **What's this church's theology?** Does the church commit that Jesus is the head?
7. **How would you describe the atmosphere of: Worship; Small Groups; Business Meetings; Family Meetings; Special Events?** Do they all agree on these?
8. **What are three areas that you feel need to be changed in this church? What are three areas that you feel need to stay the same?** This will tell you the strengths and weaknesses of this congregation
9. **How many strong ministries does this church have?** The more ministries the more involved the membership is.
10. **What new ministries have been started in the last five years?** If none you may encounter a we've never done it that way before."
11. **If you knew you couldn't fail what would your dreams be for this church?** If they do not dream then neither will the congregation.
12. **What are the statistics for worship over the past five years?** This gives you clues to tension and splits.
13. **Do you have a plan for growth?** Are they willing to pay the price for growth?
14. **What is the single biggest obstacle for growth in this church?** If they all agree you know where to start if they disagree you need to work on aligning perceptions.

15. **What role do you feel ministers should play in the development of a strong, growing, congregation?** Vision will vary here but it makes them think.
16. **When did your last new members join?** If the last family placed membership three years ago, you need to look at stale ministries.
17. **Is there any conflict in the church now?** Conflict should not surprise you but it will allow the committee to be honest.
18. **What issues have regularly caused friction in this church?** Are these real issues or symptoms?
19. **Why do you think I will help this church?** The answers will shed light on expectations.
20. **What were the strengths and weaknesses of the past preacher?** Do they dwell on the negative or push the positive. Also gives more expectations.
21. **How long have previous ministers worked with this congregation in the past?** This pattern will usually follow. If the old minister retired then are you the interim?
22. **How does this church view its staff?** Are they professionals or are they hired help?
23. **To whom do I answer and who will answer to me?** This shows the hierarchy. You should answer directly to the elders.
24. **Has the interim period been healing?** Interims are very helpful. Was it outside help or another minister on staff?
25. **What is the role of the preacher?** Is he the office manager, mentor, or does he run the show?
26. **Will I have the freedom to shape and form my own ministry team?** Or are you expected to work with the old team and their old ties and baggage?
27. **What is expected of my family?** Is your wife expected at every event? Does she have to lead a ministry? Does your family have to answer to the elders or are you allowed to be the head of the home?