

No. 7 Making Recommendations—A Serious Responsibility (Part 1)

Note to the speaker:

Audience discussion with video. You may use auxiliary questions to highlight main points and read and apply scriptures from the cited material as time allows. Help the elders to exercise care when recommending brothers as elders and ministerial servants

MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS—A SERIOUS RESPONSIBILITY (3 min.)

Recommending brothers as elders and ministerial servants is a serious responsibility [Read 1 Timothy 5:22]

This counsel to Timothy meant not to appoint a man without due consideration of his qualifications. If the man was not truly qualified, this could harm the congregation and Timothy would bear a measure of the responsibility for the difficulty caused

Appointed men must meet the requirements set out in God's Word. Only if they qualify can it be said that they are appointed by holy spirit (Acts 20:28)

Brothers should not be recommended prematurely. Neither should bodies of elders be overly strict in evaluating the qualifications of those reaching out (Mt 7:1-3)

While the Scriptural standards are high, they are not so high that they cannot be met by Christian men who have real love for Jehovah and are willing to be used by him

CLOSELY EXAMINE SCRIPTURAL QUALIFICATIONS (28 min.)

Please open your copy of the *Shepherding* textbook as we consider direction found in chapter 3

Questions for paragraphs 1-2:

1. What should *each* elder do before meeting as a body to consider recommending brothers as elders or ministerial servants?
2. Why is prayer such an important part of the recommendation process?

Please note in part 1 of the following video the improper way to consider a brother's qualifications

<<START VIDEO>>

[57-second segment]

<<PAUSE VIDEO>>

Question: What weaknesses did you see in the way these brothers handled this recommendation? [The brothers did not really consider beforehand whom they would recommend. There was no reference made to the Scriptures or the *Shepherding* textbook. The decision was based on personal feelings. The record of the publisher's field service activity was not available for review]

Questions for paragraph 3:

1. Why is it essential for a brother to be a spiritual man to qualify for appointment? (2Ti 1:14; w01 1/15 14 ¶11)
2. How can elders determine whether they are recommending a truly spiritual man?

Questions for paragraphs 4-5:

1. Why is a zealous and balanced ministry an important part of a brother's qualifications?
2. What balanced view is needed when considering a brother's activity in the field ministry?

With regard to baptized brothers who regularly assist with the construction or maintenance of theocratic facilities or who support the work at Bethel, the March 17, 2013, letter to all bodies of elders stated: "These brothers and sisters deserve our commendation, encouragement, and support for their part in caring for these theocratic responsibilities. Their caring for this important work may affect their field service activity as well as their share in other congregations."

gation activities. Elders in their congregation can show appreciation for brothers caring for other organizational needs by filling in for them locally when they must be away and not being critical of their reduced field service activity. Consideration along these lines should also be extended when reviewing brothers' qualifications for recommendation as elders and ministerial servants."

3. What aspects of a brother's household must be taken into consideration before recommending him to serve?

Now we will give attention to part 2 of the video. This time the brothers will try to apply the direction we have discussed

<<START VIDEO>>

[1-minute 15-second segment]

<<PAUSE VIDEO>>

Question: Why is it good for each elder to read over the Scriptural qualifications and the material in the *Shepherding* textbook and *Organized* book before meeting to discuss recommendations as a body?

Now we will give attention to part 3 of the video. The elders are considering whether to recommend a brother as a ministerial servant and are discussing his example in the field ministry

Follow along in your copy of the *Shepherding* textbook as the discussion continues with the reading of chapter 3, paragraph 4

Keep in mind that what you are about to see is not meant to establish rules as to how the recommendation process should take place. Rather, the purpose of the demonstration is simply to emphasize the importance of giving careful consideration to brothers who are recommended

<<START VIDEO>>

[3-minute 15-second segment]

Question: What indicates that careful thought was given to this recommendation? [The brothers came well-prepared. They freely referred to the Scriptures and the *Shepherding* textbook. The group overseer had a good grasp of the brother's progress. The record of the publisher's field service activity was available for review. The activity of the brother's family was noted. It was verified that the brother had been baptized for more than one year. Consideration was given to the congregation's view of the brother]

We recognize that it took time to consider the qualifications of the brother, but being thorough is well worth the time spent

CAUTIONS BEFORE RECOMMENDING CERTAIN BROTHERS (12 min.)

Elders should make sure they have full and complete information on brothers they intend to recommend

This is especially vital when recommending brothers who have had problems in the past

Your thorough preparation will be a great help to the circuit overseer when he discusses your recommendations during his visit

Questions for paragraphs 7-8:

1. What questions should elders consider before recommending a brother who was previously reprovved or disfellowshipped?
2. What should be done if the wrongdoing took place in another congregation?
3. If a brother who was guilty of serious wrongdoing in the past is recommended prematurely, what effect could this have on him and others?

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4. What questions must be answered before recommending a brother who was guilty of adultery in the past?

Situation: In the past, a brother was experiencing marital problems with his Witness wife. He confided in a worldly female workmate. They developed an attraction to each other and talked of leaving their respective mates to marry each other. In time, they committed adultery. The judicial committee decided that he should be disfellowshipped. Initially, his wife desired to forgive him and to reconcile. However, he refused to resume sexual relations with his wife and repeatedly told her he did not want to be with her anymore. In time, his wife acceded to his wishes and initiated a divorce. Soon thereafter, he married the worldly female workmate. Eventually he was reinstated. The elders are now considering whether to recommend his appointment as a ministerial servant

Since his wife indicated her rejection of him by initiating the divorce, he did not enter into an adulterous marriage (*ks10* 12:14, first bullet)

Thus, the questions “Is the innocent mate still alive?” and “Did the innocent mate remarry?” mentioned in chapter 3, paragraph 8, do not apply in this situation

However, since there was evidence that he schemed to put away his former mate and pressured her to seek a divorce, many years must pass before he might qualify for special privileges
[Read *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 12, paragraph 17]

Question for paragraphs 9-10: What questions should elders consider before recommending a brother who is separated or unscripturally divorced?

LET HOLY SPIRIT GUIDE YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS (1 min.)

Each body of elders has the solemn duty to review thoroughly the Scriptural qualifications of the brothers they recommend for appointment in God’s congregation

Do all you can to ensure that holy spirit guides your recommendations (*w14* 11/15 28)

[Introduce the next part on the program]