

No. 8 Making Recommendations—A Serious Responsibility (Part 2)

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. Highlight the importance of following organizational direction when recommending the appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants

HOW ELDERS SUPPORT THE ARRANGEMENT (3 min.)

Effective September 1, 2014, the Governing Body entrusted each circuit overseer with the serious responsibility to appoint and delete elders and ministerial servants in the congregations in his circuit (*w14 11/15 28-29*)

The body of elders supports this theocratic arrangement by carefully following Scriptural and organizational procedures before recommendations for appointment and deletion are submitted to the circuit overseer

We commend you for your willing support of this arrangement

During this part, we will review additional material in chapter 3 of the *Shepherding* textbook as well as selected portions of the July 13, 2014, letter to all bodies of elders. Please follow along in your copy of the letter

APPOINTMENT OF ELDERS AND MINISTERIAL SERVANTS (15 min.)

Question for paragraph 2: How far in advance of the regular visit of the circuit overseer should the Congregation Service Committee submit the *Recommendations for Appointment of Elders and Ministerial Servants* (S-62) form?

Those who are able to access jw.org should use the Web version of the S-62 form. The following video will prove helpful to those who care for this responsibility

<<PLAY VIDEO [5 min. 25 sec.]>>

Questions for paragraph 3:

1. A day or two before the start of the visit, what information should you provide the circuit overseer?

It is the responsibility of the circuit overseer and the body of elders—not the branch office—to review thoroughly all pertinent factors including age, marital status, and theocratic history that could affect a brother's qualifications (1Ti 5:22)

[Refer to key points from *Shepherding*, chapter 3, paragraphs 6-10, such as: Was he previously reprovved or disfellowshipped? Was he guilty of adultery in the past? Did he serve in an appointed position in the past? In situations such as these, the circuit overseer should be provided with complete background information]

If a brother has been baptized for many years but was not recommended to serve in an appointed position in the past, the circuit overseer will want to know why the brother is only now being recommended

When a brother in his late teens is being considered for appointment as a ministerial servant, the circuit overseer will want to know how the brother has been used in the congregation, what makes him outstanding as a youth, what his theocratic goals are, whether he is zealous for the field ministry, and so forth (*km 5/00 p. 8 pars. 1-4*)

2. How should elders respond if the circuit overseer determines that a brother they recommended does not meet the Scriptural qualifications to serve in an appointed capacity at this time?

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Elders should not be discouraged if the circuit overseer after careful and prayerful consideration determines that a brother does not qualify at this time. Trust that Jehovah is guiding the process through holy spirit [Read James 3:17]

Question for paragraph 4: Under what circumstances is it necessary to ask the three questions mentioned in paragraph 4?

If a brother answers yes to being involved in child sexual molestation, two elders should call the Legal Department immediately as directed in the August 1, 2016, letter to all bodies of elders, paragraphs 5-7

Question for paragraph 7: When would the body of elders submit recommendations to the circuit overseer between his regularly scheduled visits, and what procedure would they follow?

Question for paragraph 8: How should the need for a change in the coordinator of the body of elders be handled when it occurs between visits of the circuit overseer?

DELETION OF ELDERS AND MINISTERIAL SERVANTS (10 min.)

Questions for paragraph 9:

1. When an appointed servant demonstrates poor judgment that is not of a judicial nature, why is it usually best that any recommendation for deletion be considered at the next visit of the circuit overseer?

When a recommendation for deletion is handled during the visit, the circuit overseer will be able to speak directly with the elders and the brother in question in order to obtain a more complete view of the matter (Pr 15:22)

2. What are some situations that may raise questions about an appointed man's qualifications? [The following examples should be conveyed]
 - He confesses to viewing pornography
 - He frequently misses congregation meetings and has limited participation in the field ministry because of his secular work
 - He or a member of his immediate family is pursuing university education
 - His child becomes involved in serious wrongdoing while living at home
3. Based on *Shepherding* chapter 3, paragraph 22, what steps should the body of elders take prior to the circuit overseer's visit?
 - Establish the facts and consider the specific circumstances of the brother
 - Do research and consider current direction that may apply [Briefly refer to *Shepherding*, chapter 3, paragraph 15-25; the April 10, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders regarding pornography; and the March 6, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders regarding considering the qualifications of appointed men in connection with higher education]
 - Avoid dogmatic viewpoints or quick decisions based solely on personal preferences (Php 4:5)
 - Seek to help the brother to make needed adjustments (Ga 6:1)
4. At the time of the circuit overseer's visit, if the decision is to delete and the brother agrees with the decision, when should the deletion be announced?

If the brother disagrees with the decision, he will be informed of his right to appeal

Question for paragraph 10: If the body of elders concludes that there is an exceptional need for a recommendation for deletion to be considered prior to the next visit of the circuit overseer, what steps should be followed?

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Of course, the circuit overseer may decide to wait until his next visit to consider the matter. In such a case, he will inform the body of elders accordingly. Meanwhile, the brother will continue to serve as an elder or a ministerial servant, and the body of elders will determine what congregation responsibilities he will have in the interim, according to the circumstances (*ks10* 3:25, second bullet point)

Questions for paragraph 13:

1. How can a brother appeal the decision?

If the brother appeals, the announcement of deletion should be held in abeyance and any letter of deletion should be destroyed

2. How does the Service Department handle these requests?

The provision to appeal a decision to delete reflects Jehovah's loyal love (*Zec* 7:9)

It ensures that the brother has an opportunity to express himself fully if he feels a mistake has been made

Therefore, it would be inappropriate to pressure a brother not to appeal if he wishes to do so, for example, by suggesting that it would take longer for him to be reappointed or that the branch office would view him negatively

Even if the original decision is upheld, being granted an appeal may help him to be more receptive to any counsel he may have received (*Job* 42:3)

Questions for paragraph 15:

1. What information regarding appointments and deletions should be retained indefinitely in the congregation file?
2. Why is it important for the elders to keep a brief explanation of the reason for any deletion in the congregation file?

If you have not already done so, confirm that your copy of the textbook has been updated in harmony with the adjustments noted in paragraph 16

KEEP PROVING YOURSELF FAITHFUL (1 min.)

The circuit overseer relies on your good judgment and spiritual discernment in making recommendations

Continue giving your full support to the decisions of the circuit overseer and following the direction provided by the faithful slave

This will help to ensure that men appointed to privileges of service will honor Jehovah and be a blessing to the congregation

[Introduce the next part on the program]