

Some Questions To Be Examined in Assessing a Person's Call to Ministry (=Call to the Public Teaching of the Congregation)

- a) Is the call discerned in an individualistic manner?
 - a. Has the candidate been a member of a church continuously for several years and has the church staff/elders personally observed the candidate's involvement in teaching/discipling ministries and carefully assessed this?
 - b. Do the staff who have observed/supervised/worked with the candidate have confidence in his or her relational, emotional and spiritual maturity and conformity to the requirements set forth in the New Testament regarding personal character (1 Tim. 3:2-7; 2 Tim. 2:24ff.; Tit. 1:5-9; 1Pet. 5:2)?
 - c. Does the candidate's account of the call to the ministry or their choice to attend seminary seem to be more like a decision they made? E.g. being sure that ministry is for them because they like working with people but not being sure what gifts they might have OR going to seminary because they feel underdeveloped and would like more foundational knowledge of the Scriptures.
 - d. Has the candidate taken a cautious and self-critical approach to a perceived call? Have they welcomed external counsel and are they willing to hear and seriously consider differing assessments of their calling?
 - e. Have they experienced this calling over a significant period of time and initially considered avoiding it when they recognized the self-denial that is required in the ministry and the stress, downward mobility and deprivation of material honor that often accompanies it? Or do they see ministry as a form or sign of personal advancement or the way to a more satisfying life, to which greater public respect and honor will attach?
- b) Is the decision made with a sacred/secular dichotomy in view?
 - a. Does the candidate contrast the work of the Lord/the Church with secular work, seeing the two as inherently opposed or contrasting secular work negatively with the "spiritual" work of the ministry?
 - b. Does the candidate express a desire to leave another professional field to pursue "professional ministry"?
- c) Did the decision/sense of calling come out of a crisis situation?
- d) Is the decision in some manner driven by a sense of others' expectations?
- e) Is the decision/sense of calling rooted in a desire to "help people" because people helped me?