

TOOL 20

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Good interview questions call for detailed answers rather than a simple yes or no. Do not be afraid to ask hard questions. Use this time to learn as much as you can about the prospect. Following is a comprehensive compilation of questions for a prospective pastor. Select the questions that best fit your needs. Add others that are appropriate for the position. The committee will probably want to receive written responses from the candidate, as well as the verbal responses during the interview, for some questions, such as 1, 13, 43, 44, 45, 59, 60.

Questions for the Candidate

Conversion and Ministry

1. Describe your conversion and your call to ministry.
2. Describe important persons in your life and tell how they influenced you.
3. Describe successes and failures in your ministry.
4. What strengths do you bring to ministry?
5. How have you grown since entering the ministry?
6. In what ways do you need to grow now?
7. How do you allot your time among pastoral ministries?
8. What do you like most about ministry?
9. What do you like least about ministry?
10. Describe your spiritual health and your feelings about spiritual accountability.
11. Describe your personal, private devotional time.
12. Share your plans for personal and professional growth.
13. What doctrines do you think are essential?
14. What are your greatest strengths and your greatest weaknesses?
15. Four major elements of kingdom leadership are leadership, communication, administration, and ministry. Of these areas which do you consider your greatest strength in the ministry and why?
16. How do you measure success in ministry? How do you know when you have done a good or a bad job?
17. Who are your mentors or models in ministry, past or present?
18. Why would you consider moving to another church?
19. How do you classify or describe your preaching style?

Denomination and Community

20. What is your relationship with the denomination?
21. Do you support the Cooperative Program?
22. How active are you in associational work? In state-convention work? In Southern Baptist Convention work? In civic clubs or social organizations in the community?
23. Give us your beliefs about the basic Baptist doctrines as stated in *The Baptist Faith and Message*.
24. How do you relate to other denominations?

61. Describe your leadership effectiveness.
62. How do you go about making changes in the church?
63. How do you work with church leaders in planning?
64. What role do you see for the laity in the church's decision-making process?
65. How do you keep up-to-date with recent developments in church-related issues?
66. Outline the way you use your time throughout the week.

Staff and Church Relationships

67. What would be your relationship with the church staff?
68. Would you expect to make changes in the current staff?
69. Do you see the staff as being called by the church? Are you willing to work with the present church staff?
70. Do you schedule office hours and days off?
71. Describe your effectiveness in reaching _____.
(Fill in the blank with a key group of people the church is trying to reach.)
72. Describe how you would communicate with _____.
(Fill in the blank with a key group of people the church is trying to reach.)
73. How would you rate your interpersonal skills?
74. What is your concept of the role of the laity, both men and women, in the church?
75. What is important to you in handling conflicts between you and a member of the congregation?
76. How do you manage disagreements in your church?
77. How comfortable do you feel in working with all age groups in the church?
78. Discuss your work schedule and the way you divide your time among the responsibilities.

Questions for the Candidate's Wife

1. What influenced your decision to become a Christian?
2. Describe important persons in your life and tell how they influenced you.
3. Describe your personal, private devotional time.
4. Were you aware of your husband's call to ministry before you married?
If not, explain how you have come to view this call to ministry.
5. How do you relate to the church where your husband is pastor?
6. What is your role in the family?
7. How do you feel about moving?
8. Will you work outside the home?
9. How do you feel about being a minister's wife?
10. What strengths do you bring to your ministry in the church?
11. Describe your family and tell how each member relates to the others and to the church.
12. How do you encourage spiritual growth in your family?
13. What do you and your family enjoy doing together?
14. What are your hobbies?
15. What is your concept of the Bible?
16. What is your position on missions?
17. What is your conviction on evangelism, and how do you personally practice it?
18. What do you appreciate most about your husband?

Family and Personal Life

25. What do you do for fun and entertainment?
26. Describe your family and tell how each member relates to the others and to the church.
27. Do any of your family members have special needs?
28. How do you encourage spiritual growth in your family?
29. What is your wife's role in your ministry?
30. To what extent is your family involved in your ministry?
31. How would they feel about moving?
32. What do you and your family enjoy doing together?
33. What are your hobbies?
34. Describe your health.
35. Does your family support your calling and vocation?
36. Describe your two closest friends.
37. How do you relate to other ministers?
38. Describe your personal financial situation.
39. What is your philosophy of stewardship and tithing? Do you tithe?
40. Do you have outside business interests? If so, describe them.
41. Describe your exercise program.
42. How many and what books have you read in the past 12 months?

Positions and Policies

43. What is your concept of the Bible?
44. What is your position on missions?
45. What is your conviction on evangelism, and how do you personally practice it?
46. What is your policy on pastoral visitation?
47. What is your policy on pastoral counseling?
48. Do you do personal counseling and, if so, on what level? How extensive is your training in this area?
49. What are your convictions on alcohol and drugs, gambling, pornography, racial prejudice, abortion, homosexuality, and divorce?

Leadership

50. What do you think is the most important thing for you to do during the first year after changing churches?
51. What do you consider, in the order of their importance, your chief duties as pastor?
52. Do you think your best work can be done in a relatively short or a relatively long pastorate?
53. What would the ideal decision-making model look like?
54. What method do you use to accomplish the church's goals and business affairs, such as pastor-led, committee-led, team-led, deacon-led, and so on?
55. What will be your involvement with committees?
56. How do you see the role of deacon in the church?
57. The church allows you to lead revivals and attend conventions and other meetings. How many of these do you normally conduct or attend in a year?
58. What style of public worship and preaching do you prefer?
59. How would you describe an effective worship service?
60. What is your personal belief about the nature and function of the church?