

BIBLICAL RATIONALE FOR EVALUATION OF ELDERS

(1) The members select elders to begin with (Acts 6:3). Since the complexion of congregational membership changes over the years, an eldership may conceivably no longer consist of the same individuals whom the present membership would select.

(2) Shepherds cannot lead where sheep will not follow. Even if a man is technically qualified to be an elder, if the membership where he attends does not perceive him as a leader whom they respect and trust, he cannot shepherd effectively.

(3) The Bible makes provision for the evaluation of an elder's spiritual standing (1 Tim. 5:19). Should a current elder be found to be disqualified, he no longer meets the qualifications to be an elder. An evaluation process is simply one expedient means of ascertaining the elder's conformity to God's will. "Once an elder, always an elder" is as false as "once saved, always saved."

(4) Elders have the authority to ascertain the amount of confidence that members have in their leadership capabilities. Any shepherd who genuinely wishes to serve the flock will naturally desire the continued approval and respect of that flock. Should an elder no longer sustain that respect from a sizeable portion of the flock for whatever reason, the only proper attitude would be to remove oneself from a position that depends upon credibility. A Christian does not have to be an elder to go to heaven.

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE ELDER SELECTION SCREENING COMMITTEE

We are now ready to proceed with the elder selection and evaluation process. Packets have been prepared by the committee for distribution to the Brown Trail membership. Each member who wishes to participate in the process is to receive a packet. Complete instructions are enclosed. If you desire additional forms, please see one of the committee members.

While you may not choose to submit names of men for new elders, we urge members to participate in the evaluation of our present elders. Fill out one evaluation form for each of the current elders. Fill out one selection form for each new name you wish to submit.

Only one change has been made in the procedures which were presented two weeks ago to the congregation. The committee is asking that you sign all forms. No forms will be considered which do not include a signature. However, we want to assure you that **ONLY THE SCREENING COMMITTEE WILL KNOW WHO TURNED IN FORMS**. The screening committee has pledged itself to hold all signatures in strictest confidence. The only purpose for requiring signatures is to insure that all participants are members of this congregation and to "provide things honest in the sight of all men."

Please seal your envelope and return it to the committee no later than next Sunday (one week from today).

The committee would like to again remind the congregation that the committee is not and will not make decisions concerning leadership for this congregation. The committee is acting strictly as a liaison between the membership and the leadership. In the final analysis, the congregation will select its leaders in harmony with Bible teaching.

Please do not allow personal likes/dislikes to affect your decisions. This is not a popularity contest. This is a decent, orderly method of looking out from among ourselves as well as determining whether our present elders are qualified. To quote Johnny: "According to divine mandate, elders are selected by Bible qualifications, and not elected by popular vote."

PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTING
ELDER EVALUATION/SELECTION PROCESS

BROWN TRAIL CHURCH OF CHRIST

1. The elders formed a committee to regulate and monitor the process. Committee members: Gary Fallis, Dave Miller, Johnny Ramsey, Don Simpson.
2. Formally apprise the congregation of the commencement of the evaluation/selection process (Dave Miller--April 8). Present sermons on elder qualifications and responsibilities (Johnny Ramsey--April 15 & 22).
3. Distribute evaluation/selection forms to the membership (April 22). Give membership one week to carefully/prayerfully evaluate present eldership as well as potential new elders and submit forms to the committee no later than April 29.
4. Tabulation of forms by the committee. Present elders must receive 75% support of those submitting forms. Individual interview appointments will be scheduled. Interviews will facilitate introspection and review biblical qualifications.
5. Names presented to the congregation (May 13). A two week period will be given for the submission of signed scriptural objections to the committee (Deadline: May 20).
6. If any objections are forthcoming, interview appointments with objectors will be scheduled in order to ascertain the validity of objections. The objector will not be required to meet with the one to whom he objects. The objector's anonymity will be maintained. Scriptural objections will then be discussed with those receiving objections.
7. Appointment/ordination service (May 27).

ELDER EVALUATION FORM

An elder must have the respect, trust, confidence, and support of the congregation. Shepherds cannot lead where sheep will not follow. The present Brown Trail eldership is composed of Howard Barnum, Bob Lauderdale, Dale Peterman, John Tyson, and Bobby Watts. Will you please respond to the following evaluation information frankly and honestly. Please circle the answer that represents your view. Please fill out five forms on the present eldership--one form per man. Your assessment will be held in strictest confidence by the screening committee.

My evaluation of _____

I have reservations about this man being an elder at Brown Trail.

YES

NO

Please express your reason(s) for your decision:

signature