



Congratulations on your call to gospel ministry. Your ordination will likely be one of the most important mileposts in your early ministry. Godly men will gather together on a predetermined date and set you aside for the work of Christ. Pillar Church practices ordination because we believe it is important to do the best job we can assuring that the men we set aside for the gospel ministry are spirit filled, well studied and faithful shepherds. Four primary things will be accomplished at your upcoming ordination:

1. A group of ordained men will examine your fitness to the office of an elder/pastor.
2. A group of ordained men will encourage you by noting the strengths they have observed in your life.
3. A group of ordained men will warn you against potential pitfalls and sinful habits that could render your ministry less effective.
4. A group of ordained men will lay hands and pray for you as you begin a life of service to Christ.

Preparing for Your Ordination

I. Prepare an Opening Statement

You need to be prepared to give a 5-minute explanation of your call to gospel ministry. This also needs to be in written form. Including your future plans, aspirations. This is also a good time to point out the reasons you are compelled to dedicate yourself to Gospel work. The council should know the answer to the following questions after this speech:

1. Why you want to go into ministry?
2. What (if any) scripture did the Holy Spirit use to convince you of your calling?
3. What evidence there is that you have dedicated yourself to this task?
4. How confident is this man that God has called him into ministry?
5. What has this man already done to prepare himself for a lifetime of ministry?

The council will interact with you about your opening statements. They will affirm statements that you made that they have seen as true in your life and they will challenge areas of disagreement. Be prepared to defend the things you say in your opening statements.

II. Prepare a Theological Position Paper

Your theological position paper will be the heart of your ordination. Take great time and attention preparing it. You will provide a written theological statement about each of the following areas of Theology: God, Man, Salvation, Scripture, Missions, the Church, and End times. Your statement should be as concise as possible while still careful and thorough. You are not expected to write or speak like a seasoned theologian but you are expected to have a clear understanding of each of these major areas of theology and be able to provide a sensible and biblically sound defense of your position. Two or more paragraphs are expected for each area but no one doctrine should be more than one page in length. At the beginning of each section you will read your positions (in the order they are listed above) and there will be an opportunity for questions and comments after each section from the council. Each statement should be written in your own words and not “copy and pasted” from any other source. You will be asked to defend statements among those with opposing viewpoints and the council members will be testing you to insure that you have a clear understanding of the theological matter at hand. This will continue for each of the six areas. Make sure you have 20 copies of this position paper ready for distribution on the day of your counsel.

Tip: You are strongly encouraged to submit your paper to trusted theological advisors before stepping before the council in order to receive feedback and correction. The council will concern itself with your ability to articulate and defend important doctrinal positions; areas where you seem uncertain or unclear will be explored in greater detail.

III. Prepare a Philosophy of Ministry

You will write a “Philosophy of ministry” statement. Yours is to be as brief as possible while still covering all areas you consider important. You may even put this section in bullet points outlining the general principles you will allow guiding you as a minister of the Gospel. For example...

I am to equip the saints for the work of the ministry (Eph 4:11-12)

- This means I am to focus on ministering to those who minister.
- This means that teaching is my primary responsibility.

I am to shepherd the flock of God (1 Peter 5:2)

- This means I am to spiritually protect those under my care.
- This means I am to lead them and know them.
- This means that my primary concern is those within the Kingdom of God.

The council should know the answer to the following questions after this speech:

- What principals/beliefs will drive this man as a minister of the Gospel?
- What will stop this man by being “driven about by every wind of doctrine” (Eph 4:14)?
- What will his focus be as a Minister of the Gospel?

Again, the council will interact with you about your philosophy of ministry. They will affirm statements that you made that they have seen as true in your life and they will challenge areas of disagreement. Be prepared to defend the things you say in your philosophy of ministry

IV. Prepare a Statement on Marriage and family

Briefly write your views about the role of a husband and father who is serving in full time ministry. Again, be prepared to defend your statements. Include some commentary about how you expect your family to participate in the ministry that you will lead and ways that you will shepherd them along with the church.

Dismissal:

When you have finished all of your statements you will be asked to leave the room while those invited to the council deliberate about what they have heard. The moderator will call for a recommendation from the council concerning whether or not to ordain you. When a decision is reached you will be invited back into the room and the moderator will read the council's recommendation.

Open Floor for Counsel:

After the recommendation is read the counsel will give you some closing comments, advice, instruction or warning about what they have heard. Each council member will have an opportunity to speak. When all are finished the men will gather around you for prayer.