

## Chapter 2

# The COGIC Elder's Calling and Assignment

1. An ordained elder in the Church Of God In Christ is a person who has been called to follow Christ and serve His Church at the highest level.
2. The rank of the elder is a position of honor and seniority in the Church.
3. The purpose of the Ordination handbook is to explain the following for the candidate for ordination:
  - a. What a candidate for ordination needs to know.
  - b. The lifestyle that he is called to live.
  - c. The spiritual disciplines that he should practice.
  - d. Practical skills and knowledge that he should have that pertain to an elder's calling.
  - e. Some of the roles and responsibilities that may attend to his calling.
4. Jurisdictions have unique and distinct methods for screening, mentoring, educating, and evaluating their candidates for ordination.
5. Jurisdictions use the materials designated by the **Jurisdictional Bishop**
6. Being ordained as an elder is first and foremost a recognition of an individual's calling from the Lord; his commitment to **a life of holiness, honor, spiritual maturity; his knowledge of Scripture, and understanding of the history polity, and doctrine of the Church Of God IN Christ.** (See 2 **Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:4-11**).
- A. His Relationship to the Pastor
  - a. In the COGIC, the Ordained Elder is the property of the Jurisdictional Bishop.
  - b. Ordination indicates that he is qualified to serve at any level in the jurisdiction that the Bishop deems necessary: in the local church, the district and in the jurisdiction.
  - c. The Ordained Elder must always be a member of a local congregation.
  - d. He is subject to and under the spiritual covering of his local pastor.
  - e. A Pastor is the spiritual leader of a local congregation, as well as its chief executive officer.
  - f. As the spiritual leader of a church, a pastor is responsible for recognizing, affirming and helping to develop men and women who have been called to varying ministry offices.
  - g. He must be a good mentor.
  - h. He must have in place a process for mentoring and nurturing persons from their recognition of their call to ministry to licensing and on to ordination.
  - i. A licensed minister and ordained elder must **fulfill ALL** the responsibilities of a local member.
  - j. It is the **pastor's responsibility** to provide additional supervision and training to the elder to assist in his growth.
  - k. Once a person has been ordained, he becomes an Associate Elder of a specific congregation.

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#### B. Biblical Examples of Mentoring Relationships for Pastors, Elders, and Ministers

- a. The life of an ordained elder in the COGIC is rooted in the biblical models of mentoring relationships between many key biblical figures. Ex. Elijah and Elisha & Paul and Timothy
- b. The Apostle Paul Mentored men and women who were significant in his ministry.
- c. Paul mentored the following:
  - i. Ananias, Barnabas, Silas, John Mark, Timothy, Aquilla and Priscilla
- d. The Pastor's ministry should be rooted in serving and Mentoring.
- e. Every pastor needs qualified and **spiritually mature** elders and leaders to support and help the development of the ministry.
- f. The elder should be ready and able to perform
- g. **all** of the practical, spiritual and ceremonial aspects of the pastoral ministry.
- h. The relationship between Pastor and Elder must be one that is rooted in love, trust, and respect.
- i. It must be one that allows BOTH to serve unimpeded in their ministry roles.
- j. The Elder must maintain respect, humility and honor for his leader and never seek to "Outgrow" or "Outshine" his pastor.
- k. The elder should consider himself an extension of the pastor's desire for effective ministry in the Church.
- l. The Ordained Elder should consider himself the pastor's feet, legs, and arms to be used on command.
- m. The Pastor is the Elder's spiritual leader, as such, it is the pastor's job to assist the elder in discerning what specific area that God is calling him to serve in.
- n. The pastor should model and assist with short- and long-range views in mind.
  - i. Questions The Elder Should Ask
    1. Should I be looking to be a senior pastor?
    2. Should I be doing the work of an evangelist?
    3. AM I Called to PASTOR?
    4. What are my primary and secondary gifts?
    5. At this stage in my life, what am I as an elder best equipped to do?
- o. The elder should seek to accentuate the development and growth of the local ministry by supporting the vision of the pastor, while continuing to avail himself for opportunities to serve outside of the local church.
- p. An Elder's work outside of the local church: District Assignments, Jurisdictional Assignments, Independent, evangelistic, and social ministry commitments where the Lord may open doors for him to serve.
- q. Elders must be accountable, available, and faithful AT HOME, while also being available for opportunities to serve outside of their local church.
- r. Not all elders have been called to the office of Pastor.

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- s. Those who have, should demonstrate to the jurisdictional Bishop their Preparedness for appointment to a local congregation.
- t. Elders without the pastoral calling should focus their prayers on efforts towards strengthening the work of the local church of which they are members.

#### C. The Ordained Elder and The Work of Evangelism and Serving

- a. The ordained elder without charge should become an aggressive soul winner.
- b. He should be diligent in utilizing his natural abilities and spiritual gifts to:
  - i. Represent the church
  - ii. Bring witness in the marketplace in his community to assist in building the kingdom beyond the walls of the local church.
- c. Many elders without charge squander their time away idling, doing very little or nothing to advance the kingdom. Why?
- d. They live beneath their calling and waste their spiritual assignment and authority waiting on an opportunity to preach in a pulpit.
- e. Too many of our elders do not understand that they have not simply been ordained to an office a position or title; rather, they have been sanctioned to be kingdom agents for change within and outside of the Church.
- f. 2 Timothy 4:5 states that they should make full proof of the ministry
- g. The elder should be well versed in understanding and interpreting the Word of God and be thoroughly equipped in his explanation of leading people to faith and opening up their understanding about holiness/sanctification.
- h. Every pastor should challenge the clergy that God has assigned him to not rest until his skill at soul winning is proven and mastered. His call should be productive.
- i. The pastor determines how the elder best serves in the local, district and jurisdictional settings.
- j. Tasks that an elder may be possibly assigned:
  - i. Co-pastor
  - ii. Assistant pastor
  - iii. Associate pastor
  - iv. Department head
  - v. Church administrator
  - vi. Armor bearer
  - vii. Marketplace representative
  - viii. Many more
- k. If a pastor plants a church, he may assign an elder to that location. The pastor should consider the following; wife, family, how he will serve between the two churches

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#### D. Elders serving in the District and the Jurisdiction

- a. The duties will be determined by the superintendent and his leadership team.
- b. Elder could serve as staff, department head, in an administrative, ceremonial, or programmatic area of service. These roles are always done with the consent of the local pastor.
- c. The District or jurisdictional bishop will elect to utilize the elder's gifts to serve many different ways based on their level of training skills and commitment.

#### Summary of Roles in which Ordained Elders May Serve

Elders are called to serve in the local church in other areas such as:

- \* Auxiliary Heads: Sunday School, Media Director, Youth Pastor, Evangelism Director, etc.
- \* Administrative Functions: Board of Directors/Trustees, Budget, Fundraising, Accounting aspects of the Ministry.
- \* Facilities: Key holder, Building Maintenance, operate a parachurch organization or ministry in conjunction with their local responsibilities

#### Parachurch Organization:

- \* Nonprofit, Community Development Corporation
- \* Prison Ministry
- \* Bible Study
- \* College Outreach
- \* Marriage Ministry
- \*Pulpit and TV Podcast

Elders should be involved in their district, jurisdictional and national church departments

#### District or Jurisdictional Departments:

- \* COGIC Missions – Youth on a Mission
- \* YPWW – Youth Ministries
- \* Sunday School
- \* Evangelism
- \* Scholastic Motivation
- \* Pastors and Elders Council
- \* AIM Department