

Seven Major Questions When Considering a New Leadership Position

Numerous articles have been written about questions a pastor should ask before going to a new church. After listening to hundreds of pastors, I have developed my own list of major issues that a pastor should consider. Some of the pastors I interviewed shared with me why they viewed their ministry as a joyous match. Other pastors told me the reasons their current or former pastorates had been unmitigated disasters.

Throughout this process I saw seven major patterns emerge. I translate them here as seven major questions. While these questions are typically suited for a pastor who is considering a church, they also could be helpful to the pastor evaluating his current ministry. Church members who are in the process of looking for a pastor might find them helpful as well.

1. **Am I doctrinally compatible with the church?** Make certain you are clear that you know fully all the details of the church's doctrine, even if you are in the same denomination. And be clear and truthful with the theological beliefs you will bring to the church.
2. **Am I the right type of leader for this congregation?** Almost all church members will say they desire to reach others. But not all are willing to accept the necessary changes that must take place to do so. The ideal leader stays out front sufficiently so others will follow; but he is not so far out front that his followers mistake him for the enemy and shoot him in the rear.
3. **Will I have a passion for the community?** The pastor must not only love the church; he must also love the community where the church is located. Are you certain you can love the community sacrificially and wholeheartedly?
4. **What are the true expectations of me?** Most churches have a generic job description for the pastor. It would fit almost any church. Instead of depending on a job description, ask members what their favorite pastor did to make him their favorite. You will then get a good idea of what they really want you to do.
5. **What are the expectations of church members?** Is the church a high expectation church or a low expectation church? Will I really be able to equip the saints to do the work of ministry, or will I be expected to do the bulk of the ministry myself?
6. **What are the issues of conflict the church has experienced in recent years?** How are those issues affecting the church today? Are there some unresolved and lingering issues? What are the expectations of me in dealing with unresolved conflicts?
7. **What are the members' greatest memories in this church?** As members begin to describe the perceived best days of the church, you will begin to get a good idea of what's really important to them. You will then have a more realistic view of your beginning point in the church.

What do you think of these seven questions to help you get to know a church better? What would you add as a major question to ask?

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