

GUIDELINES AND SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR A COUNCIL
(Certificate of Ordination and Certificate of Christian Ministry)

Evangelical Free Church of America

The purpose of the council is to ascertain the doctrinal position of the candidates. Therefore, most of the questions should be focused on their theological positions. On the other hand, we need to know how their theology reflects on their personal life and ministry.

Be sure to carefully question the candidate in areas which may not be clear or orthodox in the paper. The following are some sample and suggested questions which may be asked.

1. Do you believe in scriptural inerrancy, and what do you mean by the use of that word? How does it impact your teaching and preaching?
2. What do you understand the terms “verbally inspired” and “infallible” to mean?
3. What is your view of creation? How do you relate that view to your viewpoint regarding inerrancy?
4. What is the difference between revelation, inspiration and illumination?
5. How do you explain the expression: “final authority for faith and practice”?
6. How do we determine which books really make up the canon?
7. Give your understanding of the term Trinity.
8. Give your understanding and extent of “infinitely perfect.”
9. How do you understand the expression “true God and true Man” as applied to Christ?
10. State your concept of the atonement.
 - For whom did Christ die?
 - What difference does His death make?
 - Why was it necessary?
11. What is the nature of Christ’s resurrection and importance of the resurrection?
12. When we refer to the Holy Spirit as the “third person of the Godhead,” what does it mean?
13. What is the role of the Holy Spirit today?
 - (1) in the church;
 - (2) in the individual;
 - (3) in the world?
14. Describe the differences between:
 - (1) filling of the Spirit,
 - (2) the baptism of the Spirit;
 - (3) the anointing of the Spirit;
 - (4) indwelling of the Spirit.
- 15..What is the place of Spiritual gifts in the church?
 - (1) What was the purpose of them in the New Testament?
 - (2) How does God fulfil that purpose today?
 - (3) How would you understand and teach concerning the so called “sign gifts”?On what biblical basis?

What would you do if someone began to speak in tongues in your church?

On what biblical basis? (If there is valid reason, you may ask candidate to sign the EFCA paper on “Sign Gifts.”)

16. Give your understanding of the following:
 - (1) Man was created in the image of God.
 - (2) Man has a sinful nature.
 - (3) Man is eternally lost.
 - (4) Are all the heathen lost?
17. Define the phrase, “Salvation by grace through faith.”
18. define repentance.
19. define justification.
20. Define sanctification.

21. What does it mean to “believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?”
22. Give us your views on baptism and the Lord’s Supper.
 - (1) How do you respond to someone who says you must be baptized to be saved?
 - (2) How do you respond to Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, 1 Peter 3:21?
23. What is the relationship between the local church and the universal church?
24. What are the types of church government and which do you espouse?
25. How is the church to function as a body of believers?
26. Can you support a congregational form of church government?
 - (1) Scriptural support?
 - (2) How does this relate to your elder/deacon board?
 - (3) What decisions should the congregation make?
27. What is the basis for membership in the local church?
28. What are the requirements for membership?
29. Where are the unbelieving dead at present?
30. What is the eternal state of the unbelieving dead?
31. Where are the believing dead at present?
32. Define the following: (1) Hades (Sheol); (2) Gehenna.
33. Briefly outline your eschatological views; define imminency.
34. What are the main biblical passages upon which you base your eschatological views?
35. What is the role of the Old Testament for the church today?
36. How do you relate the Old Testament concept of law to the New Testament concept of grace?
37. What is the destiny of the heathen who never hear about Jesus and salvation?
38. How were people saved during Old Testament times? Job?
39. Can a genuinely saved person lose/reject his salvation?
 - (1) If salvation can be lost, on what grounds can it be lost?
 - (2) How do you deal with Hebrews 6:1-6? 10:26-31?
 - (3) How do you deal with Matthew 24:13?
40. What is your view regarding divorce and remarriage? On what biblical grounds.
41. What is your view regarding the role of women in the church? On what biblical grounds?
42. What is your view regarding homosexuality? On what biblical grounds?
43. What is your view regarding abortion? On what biblical grounds?
44. What is your view regarding social drinking? On what biblical grounds?
45. In what ways does spiritual warfare affect the lives of the people in your church? What should we do to protect ourselves?
46. If some day you find yourself in conflict with the board and/or congregation over a theological or philosophical matter, how would you handle the situation?
47. Suppose some in your church wanted to break away and start a new church with you their pastor. How would you handle the situation?
48. What precautions do you take when you counsel a woman?
49. What are some of the ethical standards that you are committed to as a pastor?
50. React to this statement: A pastor can do just as much harm to a church by erring ethically as he can by erring morally or doctrinally.
51. How would you describe your attention to your personal financial matters? What is your attitude on the use of credit cards?
52. What are some of the things that you do to consciously strengthen your relationship to your wife and to your children?
53. Have you ever thought through some of the possible ramifications of sexual immorality on your part? If so, what would some of those ramifications be?
54. Is there anything in your life today which would preclude our granting affirmation for your ordination?

Required Elements of Theological Papers

A) PERSONAL INFORMATION:

1. Describe your and your spouse's conversion experiences.
2. Describe your call to ministry and your spouse's attitude towards your call.
3. Describe your educational/vocational preparation for credentialed ministry.

B) DOCTRINAL SECTION: (these items follow the structure of the EFCA Statement of Faith; see below for further explanation of what should be included in each topic)

1. Bibliology
2. God
3. Christology
4. The Holy Spirit
5. Man
6. Salvation
7. The ordinances
8. The Church
9. Church membership
10. Church government
11. Eschatology
12. Personal eschatology

C) CURRENT DOCTRINAL ISSUES: Explain your views on these topics and describe how your views affect your practice of ministry.

1. Satan, demons, spiritual warfare
2. Homosexuality
3. Abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia
4. Divorce and remarriage
5. The role of women in the church
6. Worship styles in the church and your preferences
7. Racism, prejudices and ethnocentrism
8. The church's responsibility towards justice, the poor, aliens, and other disenfranchised persons
9. How you as a pastor relate to persons from other cultures

D) ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE EFCA: Please write a brief statement in response to the following questions.

1. The Evangelical Free Church of America purposely allows wide latitude in significant areas of doctrine (e.g. baptism, Lord's Supper, Calvinism and Arminianism, last things, the use of the gifts of the Spirit, etc.). What is your attitude towards those whose views differ from yours on nonessential matters and how would you minister alongside them?
2. Are you in harmony with the principles, purposes and policies of the Evangelical Free Church of America?
3. Are you personally committed to the doctrinal statement of the Evangelical Free Church of America? If you have reservations, share them.
4. Is it your intention and desire to work in cooperation with the EFCA and the district in which you serve or will serve?
5. Are you willing to follow and adhere to the congregational processes at the local church, district, and national conference level in seeking changes in the programs or policies of the EFCA?

6. If at any time you change your doctrinal beliefs and/or find yourself in disagreement with the statement of faith and/or policies of the EFCA, would you be willing to surrender your credentials to the EFCA?
7. Is there any area or issue in your life which, if known, would bring disrepute on the Lord or the Church?

E) **LIFESTYLE CONVICTIONS/PRACTICES:** Please state your personal convictions and practices in these areas.

1. Spiritual disciplines
2. Stewardship, personal finances, debt
3. Moral purity
4. Social drinking
5. Accountability for life and ministry
6. Marriage and family priorities

FURTHER EXPLANATION OF THE DOCTRINAL SECTION:

In this section, please include your doctrinal views and their practical significance in your life and ministry. Include Scriptural support in the body of your text rather than in endnotes.

ARTICLE 1: THE SCRIPTURES

- General revelation
- Special revelation
- Inspiration
- Illumination
- Inerrancy
- Infallibility
- The development of the Canon
- Your hermeneutical method
- Inerrancy's impact on your life and ministry

ARTICLE 2: THE PERSON OF GOD

- The attributes of God (delineate as communicable or incommunicable)
- The Trinity (persons, roles, significance *vis a vis* other doctrines and life)
- Creation
- The problem of evil
- Modalism
- Open Theism

ARTICLE 3: THE PERSON OF CHRIST

- Virgin birth
- Hypostatic union/two natures
- Kenosis
- Duty
- Attributes
- Significance of his life
- Nature/necessity of his death; what accomplished and for whom?
- Burial
- Resurrection
- Ascension and session
- High priestly role

ARTICLE 4: THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- Nature
- Personhood
- Role/Work
- Attributes
- Baptism of the Holy Spirit
- Regeneration
- Indwelling
- Filling
- Sealing
- Spiritual/charismatic/sign gifts (include explanation, purpose, how you minister alongside those with contrary views)

ARTICLE 5: MAN AND SIN

- Man's purpose
- Man's nature
- Image of God
- The fall/its effects
- Sin
- Depravity: definition and extent

ARTICLE 6: SALVATION

- The Gospel
- Redemption
- Regeneration
- Atonement
- Propitiation
- Justification
- Repentance
- Election
- Faith
- Grace
- Sanctification
- Glorification
- Righteousness
- Perseverance
- Eternal destiny of the unevangelized

ARTICLE 7: THE ORDINANCES

- Definition of ordinance
- Role of ordinances in the life of the church
- Baptism
- The Lord's Supper

ARTICLES 8-10: THE CHURCH

- Definition
- Universal
- Local
- Government
- Congregationalism
- Leadership
- Discipline
- Membership

ARTICLES 11-12: ESCHATOLOGY

- Personal return of Christ
- Premillennialism/contrast with other views
- Rapture
- Imminence
- Tribulation
- Resurrection
- Judgments
- Heaven
- Hell
- Significance of eschatology

PREPARATION OF THE THESIS

1. Be concise- substance counts, volume does not.
2. Be clear – refine your paper to say what you mean.
3. Be scriptural – substantiate with passages.
4. Be prepared to defend your position.
5. Papers should be not less than 25 pages and not over 30 pages.