

# Appointment of Elder in Cfc

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of humility and grace in the appointment of church elders, using Apostle Paul as a model of spiritual growth and self-awareness.*

**Duration:** 11:21

**Scripture:** Proverbs 16:18, Matthew 23:12, Luke 14:11, Romans 12:3, 1 Corinthians 15:10, Ephesians 3:8, Philippians 2:3, 1 Timothy 1:15, James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Church Leadership"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and spiritual growth in leadership, using the Apostle Paul as an example. It highlights Paul's progression from considering himself the least of the apostles to the foremost of sinners, showcasing how drawing closer to God reveals deeper areas of sin in our lives. The message encourages a humble attitude, continuous growth, and the need for godly leaders in the church.

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## Transcript

In most churches in the United States, the preacher is not allowed to preach for more than 20 minutes, because the people who come there have already set their microwaves for the lunch to be warmed up at a particular time, and they must get back by then. But since we are serving lunch here, we are a little more free. And we have always wanted good shepherds for all of our flock.

And that's not easy to find. In the last four months, we have had to ask four elders of CFC churches to step down. In every case, it was due to pride.

No other reason. Pride goes before a fall is written even in the worldly proverbs. We want humble men who receive grace, because a proud person can never receive grace.

He may be very clever, but no grace. So we want humble brothers. Many people start humble and end up proud.

Many people start recognizing they are nothing and end up thinking they are something. So I want to show you an example. The greatest man of God next to Jesus in the Bible is I see the Apostle Paul who has been set before us as an example.

In 1 Corinthians 15, he makes a statement. Verse 10. By the grace of God, I am what I am.

Verse 10. 1 Corinthians 15. That's a great statement.

Always to remember. I am what I am by the grace of God. No other reason.

He wrote this when he was 55 years old, as far as we know. 25 years after his conversion on the road to Damascus. What does he say 25 years after his conversion? After having planted churches, written scripture, at the age of 55 he says, Verse 9. I am the least of all the apostles not fit to be called an apostle.

Amazing. That is after 25 years. And out of that at least 15 years he was an apostle.

5 years later, he is 60 years old now. Then he writes in Ephesians 3. And verse 8. Ephesians was written about 5 years after 1 Corinthians. Now he says, not only I am the least of all the apostles.

Verse 8. I am the least of all the believers in the world. Which direction was he going? Up and up or down and down? Spiritual growth. And a man who said, follow me as I follow Christ.

I feel I am the least of all the believers in the world. And God gave me this grace to preach Christ. 5 years later, when he is 65, he writes in 1 Timothy chapter 1. This is written 5 years after Ephesians.

1 Timothy 1.15. And last part. I am the number one of all the sinners in the world. Chief of all the sinners.

Foremost of all the sinners. Now if he had said, I was once upon a time. The foremost of all sinners.

That we can understand. No. Present tense.

No grammar. I am. I am.

I am. The chief of all the sinners. So how do we measure spiritual growth? After 25 years, I am the least of the apostles.

After another 5 years, the least of all the believers. After another 5 years, I feel I am the greatest sinner in the world. Is this spiritual growth? You mean when Paul wrote Timothy, he was committing adultery and lusting after women and stealing.

What does he mean by that? The mark of a true elder. The closer you come to God. The more you see sin in your life.

Which you never saw before. It's like studying mathematics. The kindergarten kid is excited that he knows 2 plus 3 is 5. Great.

He thinks he has learned a lot. 25 years later when he is doing PhD in mathematics. He says, I know so little about mathematics.

It's absolutely true. So, when you are far away from God, you think you know so much. And you know the Bible.

And you can teach everybody. And you know so much. And you can instruct everybody.

And you know exactly what's wrong with others. And you got the balanced understanding. But the closer you come to God, you don't know.

You feel, Lord, there is so much sin in me. One year ago, I didn't even think it was sin. For example, to expect somebody to thank you.

You know that's a sin? For God to expect it is right. Jesus said, where are the 9 lepers? He is the Lord. We have to thank him.

But for you and I, I remember once when I expected thankfulness from some brother. The Lord said, the problem is with you, with me. You served him as unto him.

You should have done it as unto me. Inasmuch as you did it to the least of these my brothers, you did it unto me. I learned something that day.

That when I serve God's people, I'm not to expect a thank you from them for anything. Whether I serve them physically or spiritually. Because I'm to do it as unto the Lord.

Then you'll never be disappointed. I'm not disappointed now. So I'm just showing you that this is the way we want the church to grow.

And we need godly brothers. So with the growing church here in CFC, we have decided that we need to appoint one more brother as an elder. And all appointing and removing of elders in any church is always done in 100% consultation with the existing elders.

Everywhere. That's the principle we followed for 40 years. I'm not a law unto myself.

I work with others in each local church. And wherever we appoint an elder, we do it in 100% consultation with the elders. And whenever we remove an elder, it's in 100% consultation and agreement with the elders.

So we want to pray for a brother also. A brother who is very much hidden. But who's probably done more work hidden, encouraging people, than almost anybody else here.

Brother Stephen, will you please come forward? We want to pray for you. I don't know whether many of you know him. But the people in the remote areas know this brother.

Where he travels at his own expense to different places to encourage brothers. Brother, please come here. This is my brother.

I have 100% confidence in him. And I have no hesitation in recommending him to you as your elder brother from today. And when the name was suggested by our three elders here, they were 100% in agreement.

In fact, the suggestion came from them and I said yes, I agree with it. So I want you to join with me as we commit this dear brother to the Lord. He cannot do this work with any human ability.

Only by the power of the Holy Spirit. And all of you who are jealous, you can work out your salvation. The rest of you can join me in prayer.

Those spirits are pure. Heavenly Father, we dedicate dear brother Stephen to you. In Jesus' name, anoint him with the Holy Spirit.

Give him the power of your Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit he needs to fulfill this ministry. Let your hand be upon him, your nail-pierced hand. And help him to walk in humility and greater humility in the days to come than he's ever had to this day.

Bless him, bless his dear wife and daughter. Protect the family. We pray that he will be an example and many, many people will be blessed in the days to come.

This church will be raised higher through his ministry. That you'll give him grace to work joyfully in fellowship with the other elders. And not just to say yes to them, but to be a balance for them by the gifts and abilities you've given him.

We dedicate him to you, Lord. We commit him to you. We rejoice with you that you are the one appointing him as an elder here in CFC.

Thank you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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