

Questions for Perspective Church Leaders

If you are a part of a pastoral search committee I know your desire is to find God's man for your congregation. Your job will be demanding and may be difficult emotionally.

I have been involved in ministry for almost 30 years and I have served in every level of church leadership. I have talked with hundreds of leadership families and church board members about a variety of issues, everything from finding a vacation spot, burnout, forced termination, marriage and family problems, sexual additions and worse.

One of the things that I have observed as a consistent pattern in church leadership is that sexual temptation is normal and that many in leadership have serious struggles with some form of sexual infidelity. This includes habitual masturbation, lustful fantasies, Internet pornography and adultery. This activity is shrouded by secrecy, manipulation and denial. In some cases the spouse is aware of the activity. But because exposure could result in additional marital strife, termination, loss of security, fear and disgrace she remains silent. Regrettably there has also been an increase of this type of activity among women.

I have had several discussions with others that interact with ministry families. As we compared notes we have come to many of the same conclusions. Issues of this nature are in epidemic proportions! Ministry families and senior pastors in particular are exceedingly vulnerable due in part to isolation and the lack meaningful relationships and personal intimacy with God.

The following questions are very specific and would be difficult emotionally to ask and perhaps even more difficult to respond to. If they are not asked then you must presume that there are no problems in these areas. Please consider adding these questions to your follow up phone interviews.

1. Have you, your wife or children ever struggled with sexual temptation? If yes please explain.
2. Have you, your wife or children ever deliberately logged on to pornographic websites?
3. Are you in a meaningful accountability relationship with one or more men? If yes who and may we contact them?
4. If either of you had serious concerns about one another would you reach out for help? If yes then who?
5. Has there ever been an instance when this has happened? If yes please explain.
6. What steps have you and your family taken to promote sexual purity and marital intimacy?

Here are some additional questions that are also very important.

1. How has your wife been involved in your current church?
2. Have any of your children ever been in trouble with the law? If yes please explain.
3. Have you ever had a foreclosure, filed bankruptcy or had problems with the IRS?