



NEBRASKA MINISTRY NETWORK

**Information and Requirements for
Obtaining Ministerial Credentials**



This publication provides information and requirements for obtaining ministry credentials with the Assemblies of God in Nebraska. ***Please take time to read this booklet IN FULL.*** It should answer most of the questions you may have in regards to the process. *Please note: all male pronoun references should be understood as including females as well.*

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Credential Process Deadlines

| Action Required by Applicant | Certified & Licensed | | Ordained |
|--|----------------------|--------------|-------------|
| | Spring | Fall | |
| Request Application from District | October 1 | May 1 | August 15 |
| Return Official/Upgrade Application & Transcript | November 1 | June 1 | September 1 |
| Take Written Exam With Presbyter | February 15 | September 15 | December 1 |
| Oral Interview Takes Place With Presbytery | Mid-March | Mid-October | Mid-January |

General Guidelines

Purpose

It is of utmost importance that all of those who serve the Lord in a vocational ministry capacity—have a clear sense of God’s **calling** into that ministry. All true Christ-followers are called in a broad sense to live their lives in a manner of holiness, love, and witness. However, those who would devote their full time to the Lord’s service should be driven by a narrower and **certain call**. This call needs to be **clear**, **compelling** (not just a desire) and **confirmed** by Godly leaders.

This **call** would be comparable to the gifts He gave the church found in Ephesians 4:11 “...*the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers...*” He goes on to say “*Their responsibility [to the King who “calls them”] is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.*” Ephesians 4:12-13 (NLT)

This passage emphasizes that there will be a distinction between a calling which is common to all the members of the corporate body and the **calling** extended to those whose responsibility is to “*perfect/equip*” the corporate church. The objective of the latter is to “*perfect/equip*” them until they reach “*the full and complete standard of Christ.*” If then a person is “**called**” by the Holy Spirit to “**devote one’s life**” to one of His five-fold gifts to the church (Eph. 4:11), this unique intrinsic drive will be evident in the person’s life just as salvation or the infilling is evident. Paul described His intrinsic drive to do what He was called to do by saying Acts 20:24 (NLT) “*But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.*”

Recognition of Ministerial Candidates

The General Council Credentials Committee delegates to the Nebraska District Council the authority to examine, approve and recommend candidates who qualify as certified ministers, licensed ministers, and ordained ministers. Final approval and issuance of the ministerial credential shall be made by the General Council Credentials Committee. All ordination services with the laying on of hands, shall take place under the auspices of the Nebraska District Council.

The Nebraska District Council Credentials Committee through the credentialing process must determine whether the candidate has been **called** to “**devote one’s life** in service to the proclamation of the gospel.” (GC Bylaws, Article VII, Section 3 Specific Qualifications, d Licensed Minister; NDC Bylaws is identical). The “**devoting one’s life**” refers to one’s primary life passion, not the place where he/she derives their financial support. This concept of “**devoting one’s life**” is a conviction deep within the spirit of the individual rather than just an occupational preference.

While a person seeking the first credential level (Certified Minister) may not necessarily have arrived at a place where they are “**devoting their life**” to this purpose, nevertheless they will “**show evidence of a divine call**” and “**show promise of usefulness in the gospel work.**” [NDC Bylaw VII. Ministry, Section 3. Specific Qualifications, c. Certified Minister, (1) General Requirements]. The implied message here is that one day, in the near future, he/she will “**devote one’s life**” in service to the King.

The District Bylaws list other qualifications for each credential level. These are also part of the evaluation process as each candidate is considered on a case by case basis by the District Council

Credentialing Committee.

Proper Motives

When the trials and pressures of ministry arise, a minister of the Gospel must be anchored with the confidence that they are not in God's service because of their own good intentions, a general drive to do good works or a personal need to be useful in God's kingdom. They are in the ministry because they believe God has personally **called** him/her to do this. It seems quite clear that a "call of God" will be evident in various ways with the most certain being a strong conviction within a person that will be confirmed by those around that person and especially spiritual leaders responsible to God for confirming that person's call.

Unity and Cooperation

The Assemblies of God is a cooperative fellowship based on mutual agreements, voluntarily entered into by its members. All certified, licensed, and ordained ministers shall be amenable to both the Nebraska District Council and The General Council of the Assemblies of God in matters of doctrine and discipline.

Unity is a vital principle for numerical growth and spiritual development. It is essential that we recognize our relationship to each other, and that we practice Christian cooperation in all our pastoral, evangelistic, missionary and local church work.

Each applicant for credentials should be convinced that God is directing him/her to become a part of the Assemblies of God. He/she should purpose in his/her heart to be in harmony with the principles and practices of the fellowship, and should in no way allow him/herself to come into conflict with or be a divisive force within the church.

Advancement of Credentials

The District Credentials Committee is not obligated to advance any credential until all qualifications of the General and District Councils are satisfied and ministerial activity justifies the action. Advancement is not automatic just because educational and time requirements have been fulfilled by the candidate. The District Credentialing Committee alone will determine if the maturity of the applicant and his/her ministry are sufficient to warrant advancement.

On the other hand, when there is a compelling burden, a credentialed person will continue the credentialing process until they reach ordination which indicates their vocational call to ministry, their growth and maturity as a minister and strong commitment to the Assemblies of God. Ordination is the highest credential recognition and endorsement that can be bestowed by the General Council.

Ministers From Other Fellowships

If a minister from another reputable body desires to affiliate with the Assemblies of God, the credentials committees of both the General Council and the Nebraska District Council are under no obligation to accept the applicant's previous ministerial status, but will judge each candidate on his or her own merits

as to the level of credentials to be granted. Such applicants shall be required to:

- 1) Conform to Assemblies of God criteria for recognition.
- 2) Complete an application for ministerial recognition.
- 3) Submit a letter of recommendation from a neighboring Assemblies of God minister or the sectional presbyter for the applicant's area.
- 4) Submit a recommendation from the body with which the minister was formerly affiliated. If such is not available, letters of recommendation should be sought from three reputable ordained ministers who are familiar with the applicant's ministry, two of whom should be with the applicant's former credentialing body.
- 5) Take the credential examination.
- 6) Complete such courses as may be prescribed by the General Presbytery for ministers transferring from other credentialing bodies.
- 7) Meet with the District Credentials Committee for an oral interview.
- 8) Be recommended by the District Credentials Committee for action by the General Council Credentials Committee.

Ministers who receive Assemblies of God recognition shall relinquish their ministerial credentials with any other organization, unless an exception is granted by the General Council Credentials Committee upon recommendation of the Nebraska District Council Credentials Committee for a minister serving as a missionary in this country who holds a credential with a member body of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship.

A minister holding ordination (or equivalent) with a member group of the Assemblies of God World Fellowship, may transfer his or her ordination to The General Council of the Assemblies of God. These applicants must complete the regular application along with meeting the following criteria:

- 1) A letter of recommendation from the executive committee of the national church or equivalent letter of recommendation.
- 2) Acceptable equivalency between our governing bodies.
- 3) Provide proof of completion of the U.S. version of AG History, Missions, and Governance, or they can study the condensed manual.
- 4) Provide a copy of documentation proving legal residency in the United States.

Bylaw Requirements

The following requirements are taken from the General Council and District Council Bylaws:

Article VII. MINISTRY

Section 1. Ministry Described

Christ's gifts to the Church include apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (Ephesians 4:11), exhorters, administrators, leaders, and helpers (Romans 12:7,8). We understand God's call to these ministry gifts is totally within His sovereign discretion without regard to gender, race, disability, or national origin. Three classifications of ministry are recognized and transferable among all Assemblies of God districts: the ordained minister, the licensed minister, and the certified minister.

All ordained, licensed, and certified ministers holding current ministerial credentials, as well as those holding a local church credential as provided below, are authorized to perform the ordinances and ceremonies (sacerdotal functions) of the church.

A fourth classification of ministry, a local church credential, may be provided by a local General Council affiliated church under basic guidelines adopted by the General Presbytery and such additional guidelines adopted by the Nebraska District Council. The local church credential shall be non-transferable (limited to the issuing local church) and shall be limited to 2 years (renewable by the local church for an additional 2-year term). A person holding a local church credential can perform the ordinances and ceremonies (sacerdotal functions) of the church if authorized in writing by the senior pastor of the local church issuing the credential.

No other classification of ministry shall be recognized other than those described in this section.

Section 2. Basic Qualifications

The following qualifications pertain to all Ordained, Licensed and Certified applicants for ministerial recognition:

a. Salvation

Testimony to having experienced the new birth (John 3:5).

b. Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Testimony to having received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues according to Acts 2:4. The Spirit-filled life will enable a minister to fulfill the fourfold mission of the church (Article V, paragraph 10, of the Constitution).

c. Evidence of call

Clear evidence of a divine call to the ministry, evidenced by a personal conviction, confirmed by the work of the Spirit and the testimony of fellow ministers.

d. Christian character

A blameless Christian life and a good reputation with those outside the church (Titus 1:7; 1 Timothy 3:7).

e. Doctrinal position

A thorough understanding of and agreement with our doctrinal position as contained in the Statement of Fundamental Truths.

f. Assemblies of God polity

A satisfactory working knowledge of the principles, practices, and purposes of the Fellowship through a study of the General Council and Nebraska District Council Constitution and Bylaws.

g. Commitment to the Fellowship

An active loyalty to our constitutional agreements, a cooperative spirit, and a readiness to seek and receive the counsel of older mature Christians and those in positions of authority.

h. Basic education requirements

Any level of formal academic achievement (diploma or degree) shall not be a requirement for credentials; however, credential applicants shall meet the following criteria:

- 1) All applicants are required to be interviewed by the District Credentials Committee and, in preparation for the interview, pass a standard exam approved by the General Presbytery whereby they demonstrate knowledge of the Bible, Assemblies of God doctrines, and ministerial practices; and either
- 2) Successfully complete equivalent training to that indicated in paragraph (3) below, preferably, in an endorsed Assemblies of God post-secondary school; or in a seminary, college, Bible college, or school approved by the District Credentials Committee consistent with criteria established by the General Council Credentials Committee; or
- 3) Successfully complete courses, prescribed by the General Presbytery, offered in correspondence through Global University of the Assemblies of God, or pass the final examinations in the prescribed courses; or
- 4) Be recommended by the District Credentials Committee as qualifying for credentials through self-study and ministerial experience. Such candidates shall have a proven and fruitful ministry of substantial duration. Requests from the Nebraska District for such a candidate shall be presented to the General Council Credentials Committee and may be granted on a case by case basis.

i. Marriage status

We disapprove of any married persons holding ministerial credentials with the Assemblies of God or district councils granting credentials to such, if either marriage partner has a former spouse living, unless the divorce occurred prior to his or her conversion or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital faithfulness, or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever, except as hereinafter provided.

j. Annulments, marriage dissolutions, and divorces

The Executive Presbytery shall have the authority to determine whether an applicant's annulment of a former marriage is consistent with the scriptural position of the Fellowship relating to the granting or holding of ministerial credentials; or, in the case of a divorce or a dissolution whether the circumstances would more appropriately be classified as calling for an annulment; or if the divorce occurred prior to conversion or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness, or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever. In those cases involving pre-conversion divorce, they shall be decided on an individual basis just as those that deal with annulments are decided. The application annulment must be accompanied by clear and satisfactory evidence of an illegal marriage through deception or fraud. Appeals from the decisions of the Executive Presbytery may be made to the General Presbytery.

k. Eligibility of women

The Scriptures plainly teach that divinely called and qualified women may also serve the church

in the ministry of the Word (Joel 2:29; Acts 21:9; 1 Corinthians 11:5). Women who meet the qualifications for ministerial credentials are eligible for whatever grade of credentials their qualifications warrant and have the right to administer the ordinances of the church and are eligible to serve in all levels of church ministry, and/or district and General Council leadership.

I. Ministers from other organizations

If a minister from another reputable body desires to affiliate with the Assemblies of God, the credentials committees of both the General Council and the Nebraska District Council are under no obligation to accept the applicant's previous ministerial status, but will judge each candidate on his or her own merits as to the level of credentials to be granted. Such applicants shall be required to:

- 1) Conform to Assemblies of God criteria for recognition.
- 2) Complete an application for ministerial recognition.
- 3) Submit a letter of recommendation from a neighboring Assemblies of God minister or the sectional presbyter for the applicant's area.
- 4) Submit a recommendation from the body with which the minister was formerly affiliated. If such is not available, letters of recommendation should be sought from three reputable ordained ministers who are familiar with the applicant's ministry, two of whom should be with the applicant's former credentialing body.
- 5) Take the credential examination.
- 6) Complete such courses as may be prescribed by the General Presbytery for ministers transferring from other credentialing bodies.
- 7) Meet with the District Credentials Committee for an oral interview.
- 8) Be recommended by the District Credentials Committee for action by the General Council Credentials Committee.

All previously ordained ministers so approved shall receive recognition as ordained Assemblies of God ministers with the laying on of hands by the District Presbytery. All other applicants so approved shall receive the appropriate level of credential recognition.

Ministers who receive Assemblies of God recognition shall relinquish their ministerial credentials with any other organization, unless an exception is granted by the General Council Credentials Committee upon recommendation of the Nebraska District Council Credentials Committee for a minister serving as a missionary in this country who holds a credential with a member body of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship.

Section 3. Specific Qualifications

a. Residency requirements of applicants

Applicants for all credentials must be residents of or hold credentials in the Nebraska District and appear before its Credentials Committee.

b. Local church credential

A local church credential shall be administered by the local church pursuant to basic guidelines adopted by the General Presbytery and such additional guidelines adopted by the Nebraska District Council. It shall be non-transferable (limited to the issuing local church).

c. Certified minister

1) **General requirements:**

They shall show promise of usefulness in the gospel work. They shall devote a part of their time to Christian ministry and, at the discretion of the District Credentials Committee, may remain under the supervision of a pastor or a ministry coach or mentor. They shall show evidence of a divine call and be actively engaged in some aspect of ministry and the proclamation of the gospel, except in case of ill health or advanced age.

2) **Pastoral requirements:**

In the event a certified minister is serving in a position as the pastor, he or she shall be expected to advance to license within 2 years of acceptance of the pastorate. This shall not apply to any minister who has reached the age of 65 or older, or whose certificate has been issued on a provisional basis. Any exceptions shall be at the discretion of the District Credentials Committee.

3) **Exception for provisional issuance:**

A Certificate of Ministry may be issued on a provisional basis to a person who has not met all the credentialing requirements but who is deemed by the District Credentials Committee to be essential to the continuity of a church or a ministry. The reason for such a provisional issuance must be ministry driven, and the justification for its use is terminated when the minister ceases to be involved in the ministry for which it was initially granted unless the minister accepts another qualifying assignment. Other limitations are:

- a. The ministry certificate on a provisional basis will be issued for 1 year and shall not be renewed more than two times.
- b. A person who has been granted the Certificate of Ministry on a provisional basis must meet the qualifications for a ministry certificate within a 3-year period.

d. Licensed minister

Qualifications for license shall include clear evidence of a divine call, character and preparation suitable for that calling, practical ministry experience, and an evident purpose to devote one's life in service to the proclamation of the gospel.

e. Ordained minister

Qualifications for ordination are outlined in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:7-9). In addition:

- 1) Applicants must be 23 years of age or older.
- 2) They must have met all the requirements in making application and in completing the prescribed application form.
- 3) No person may be ordained to the ministry until he or she has shown evidence of a divine call and has held a ministry license and has been actively engaged in ministry and proclamation of the gospel for at least 2 full consecutive years immediately prior thereto.
- 4) Residency requirements of applicants:
Applicants must be residents of or hold credentials in the Nebraska District and appear before its Credentials Committee. The Nebraska District Council is required to refrain from approving any applicant for ordination who may have been licensed in another district, until such licensed minister shall have been a member of the Nebraska District at least 1 year. Applicants who have not been a member of the Nebraska District for 2 full consecutive years must meet the requirements and secure the endorsement of the officers of the district in which they were previously licensed, as well as the Nebraska District.
- 5) Exceptions to requirements:
The General Council Credentials Committee, upon request by the Nebraska District Credentials Committee and where exceptional circumstances exist, may waive the

requirements for an applicant holding a license to preach for 2 full consecutive years or being a member of the Nebraska District for at least 1 year.

- 6) In order to maintain active status, ordained ministers shall be engaged in viable ministry and proclamation of the gospel except for cases of disability, retirement, or other valid circumstances as determined by the general secretary.

Process for Obtaining Credentials

The following steps must be completed, in order, by the deadlines outlined on page 1 of this booklet. For the Certificate of Ministry and License credentials, there are two cycles: one completes in the spring, the other in the fall of each year. **PLEASE NOTE: We cannot progress to a particular step until the preceding step is completed in full.**

- 1) A person interested in credentials completes the education requirements for the level of credential (s)he is seeking. (See pages 25-28)
- 2) The person requests an application from the District Office by phone, letter, email or visit. Along with this request he/she will supply a copy of their educational transcripts and a recommendation from their pastor.
- 3) **(First-time applicants only)**
 - a. The District Office sends an Official Application to the applicant, along with Information Authorization and Release Forms.
 - b. The applicant returns the Official Application **and** an academic transcript from the school(s) or college(s) from which he received his religious education, in addition to the **\$120** application fee for Certified or **\$130** application fee for License and the notarized Information Authorization and Release Forms. **A current photograph must be attached or enclosed with this application along with a paper copy of their Social Security card.**
- 4) **(Current credential holders only)**
 - a. The District Office sends an Upgrade Application to the applicant, along with Information Authorization and Release Forms.
 - b. The applicant returns the Upgrade Application to the District Office, along with the **\$130** application fee for License or **\$140** for Ordination and the Information Authorization and Release Forms. **A current photograph must be attached or enclosed with this application along with a paper copy of their Social Security card.**
- 5) After conducting a General Council-mandated background check, the District Office sends the applicant:
 - a. The District Council Constitution and Bylaws
 - b. A link to the General Council Constitution and Bylaws and position papers
 - c. A pamphlet covering incorporation, tax status, legal liability, etc.
 - d. A synopsis of the exam for the credential being sought
- 6) The District Office sends reference forms to the eight persons listed by the applicant on his application.
- 7) Those completing reference forms return them to the District Office.
- 8) The District Superintendent or District Secretary checks the applicant's completed file and approves the applicant for the written exam, or stipulates what is needed for approval to take place.
- 9) The District Office notifies the applicant of his approval for the written exam, and sends the appropriate exam to the presbyter of the section where the applicant resides.
- 10) The applicant contacts his presbyter to make an appointment to take the written exam. A Bible may be used for the doctrine section of the exam; a Bible and the A/G Constitution and Bylaws may be

used for the rest of the exam.

- 11) After the exam is taken, the presbyter scores the exam and returns it to the District Office. If a passing score (70%) is not achieved, the applicant may request an opportunity to retake the exam within one month of the next cycle's written exam deadline.
- 12) If the applicant receives a passing score, the District Office notifies the applicant of the date, approximate time and location of his oral interview.
- 13) The applicant is interviewed by members of the Presbytery. If married, the spouse **must** appear with the applicant. Children should **not** attend.
- 14) The Presbytery approves/disapproves the applicant for recommendation to the General Council Credentials Committee. If not approved for credentials, the applicant may reapply within one month of the next cycle's application deadline.
- 15) If approved, the applicant is notified by the General and District Council Offices. Certificate of Ministry and License are immediately recognized, and their accompanying certificates and Fellowship cards are sent to the new minister. Recognition, certificates and Fellowship cards for Ordained candidates are only given at the Ordination Service at District Council each April. All new or upgraded ministers since the last District Council are recognized then as well.

Educational Requirements

General Guidelines

There are basically three ways to satisfy the educational requirements for ministerial credentials with the Assemblies of God:

Attend an Assemblies of God college, as a biblical studies major, ministerial studies major, or other church-related major.

Under this option, the requirements are as follows:

| | | |
|------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| For Certified Minister | → | Two full years completed |
| For Licensed Minister | → | Three full years completed |
| For Ordained Minister | → | Four full years completed |

Take the prescribed correspondence courses from Berean School of the Bible or Berean University for the level of credential you are seeking.

For the requirements under this option, see the following pages.

Attend any other college, university or institution. Under this option, Bible and ministry-related courses you have completed must be comparatively matched by the District Office against the Berean requirements on the following pages. Credit will be given for similar courses, if the level of study is at least as extensive as the Berean courses. Once course matching is complete, any unmatched courses from the Berean list must be taken to satisfy the education requirements. If the District Office is unfamiliar with the institution from which your transcript is received, you may be required to supply a catalogue with course descriptions from the institution so the District Office can make accurate evaluations of course content.

Berean Correspondence Requirements

Certificate of Ministry

| <u>Course Title</u> | <u>Course Number</u> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Christ in the Synoptic Gospels | BIB 114 |
| Introduction Hermeneutics | BIB 121 |
| New Testament Survey | BIB 212 |
| Old Testament Survey | BIB 214 |
| Intro to Hermeneutics | BIB 121 |
| A Spirit-Empowered Church | MIN 171 |
| Relationships & Ethics in Ministry | MIN 181 |
| Beginning Ministerial Internship | MIN 191 |
| The Local Church in Evangelism | MIN 123 |
| Introduction to Pentecostal Doctrine | THE 114 |
| AG History, Missions, & Governance | THE 142 |
| Introduction to Theology | THE 211 |

License

| <u>Course Title</u> | <u>Course Number</u> |
|--|----------------------|
| Acts: The Holy Spirit at Work in Believers | BIB 115 |
| Prison Epistles | BIB 117 |
| Romans: Justification by Faith | BIB 215 |
| The Local Church in Evangelism | MIN 123 |
| Introduction to Homiletics | MIN 223 |
| Effective Leadership | MIN 251 |
| Introduction to Assemblies of God Missions | MIN 261 |
| Conflict Management for Church Leadership | MIN 281 |
| Intermediate Ministerial Internship | MIN 291 |
| Eschatology: A Study of Things to Come | THE 245 |

Ordained

| <u>Course Title</u> | <u>Course Number</u> |
|---|----------------------|
| The Corinthian Correspondence | BIB 313 |
| The Pentateuch | BIB 318 |
| The Poetic Books | BIB 322 |
| Preaching in the Contemporary World | MIN 325 |
| Church Administration, Finance, and Law | MIN 327 |
| Pastoral Ministry | MIN 381 |
| Advanced Ministerial Internship | MIN 391 |
| Prayer and Worship | THE 311 |

For more information on Berean School of the Bible, or to receive a catalog, pricing and registration materials, call 1-800-443-1083 or go online at www.globaluniversity.edu.

Please note:

- 1) Regardless of where you receive your education, you must complete the Berean course "AG History, Mission and Governance," or one similar to it, before you will be allowed to continue the

credential process.

- 2) After you send in a completed application for credentials, you will be sent several publications covering legal and administrative issues in ministry and the church. These are to be considered required reading, as portions of them will be covered on your written exam, and possibly in your oral interview. They will also guide you when you are required to deal with such issues as a minister

Why Continue to Pursue Ordination?

Practically

Most professions have several levels of endorsement that must be completed before one is fully certified or qualified to work in a certain vocation. For example, someone wanting to make a life vocation of nursing would never seriously consider stopping at becoming a CNA. They would want to become a Registered Nurse. Some would want to go on to be a Nurse Practitioner. Ordination is the highest credential offered by the Assemblies of God. The goal of someone with a call of God to be a vocational minister would be to become Ordained, which is the highest level of endorsement.

Approval

The selection of ministry leaders in the early church was not lightly undertaken. It was a matter of careful and prayerful deliberation. The Pastoral letters include specific qualifications for elders/credentialed ministers. Along with qualifications having to do with spiritual maturity and godliness, there are also the more outward ones such as public credibility, a faithful marriage, a well-managed and respectful family, as well as character issues such as personal temperance and discipline, hospitality, and teaching ability (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9). Elders and overseers (essentially synonymous terms here) were to be godly leaders and examples. In the contemporary context, two aspects of these qualifications stand out. They must be respected by their community and they cannot be immature or unproven. Once a certain ministry knowledge level and the inner quality levels are achieved, the District Presbytery approves a person by ordaining them.

His Anointing

The selection of spiritual leaders throughout Scripture is normally recognized in a public way that signifies the person is being separated for a special assignment or calling. In the Old Testament, a God selected leader was formally anointed with oil, bringing with it the power of the Spirit. Jesus purposefully drew the 12 disciples aside and appointed them to be apostles (Mark 3:13-19). Judas' successor was prayerfully and publicly chosen (Acts 1:15-22). When the seven deacons were chosen, the apostles prayed and "laid their hands on them" (Acts 6:6). Similarly, the Spirit announced his choice of Paul and Barnabas for missionary service, a choice followed by fasting, prayer, and the laying on of hands (Acts 13:2-3). This is the only level of Assemblies of God credentials that includes 'the laying on of hands' to receive the fullness of God's anointing.

Responsibility

Perhaps the most critical reason for being Ordained is because of our fully committed love for our King. Those who serve as under shepherds of the King's flock must be equipped to serve in the best way possible. 2 Timothy 2:15 (ESV) says, *"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."* Becoming Ordained is one way to say to the King, 'I'm giving my very best to serve You'.

While there is no higher credential level offered, there is always more to learn, more skills to develop and more Christ-like character and behavior to develop. In that light each credentialed minister will

want to read books that provide more insights about our King, insights that help develop ministry skills, and insights into the culture. Those who do so will have more empathy and know better how to others live in the culture of our King.

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