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September 2, 2025

The topic of ordination has come up several times recently. Mostly in a good way, as I have been involved in ordination councils and services. But sometimes the question is: "Why should our pastor be ordained by the FEBC? He can perform his duties without FEBC approval."

One benefit is that our ordination process forces your pastor to consider every area of doctrine and give an account for his beliefs. This can be important not only for your congregation, but for the pastor as he continues to develop in his understanding of God's Word. The process challenges and sharpens your pastor but also gives your elders and congregation confidence in his ability to handle Biblical truths. My FEBC ordination played a vital role in shaping my thinking and my studies, impacting my entire ministry.

I would also point to the premise of our Fellowship - which is that we are stronger together than we are apart. Our constitution says that we are "committed to working together" and lists our local churches as being "autonomous yet interdependent."

Interdependence involves not only mutual encouragement and support, but also mutual accountability. Submitting to the FEBC ordination process is an acknowledgement that you are accountable to your fellow churches, and that you trust them to help you fully vet pastoral candidates. In Acts 14 we find that Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in every church. In Titus 1, we learn that Paul left Titus in Crete to appoint elders in every town. These are Biblical examples of local churches submitting to the wisdom of Godly men outside their local fellowship. I would call that a Biblical model for interdependence and accountability when selecting church leaders.

Not very long ago we lost a church because their teaching had strayed from our doctrinal positions. The issue began when the church did not heed the concerns of our Commission on Churches regarding a pastoral candidate. Our churches must be vigilant if we are to maintain sound doctrine, and we stand ready to provide expert and unbiased assistance.

I encourage each church to ensure that all future candidates and current pastors submit to the FEBC credentialing process. This is just one way that we strengthen local churches, and it is one of many ways that your support for this Fellowship makes a difference across North America.

Thank you for your support, for your service, for your encouragement, and for your prayers!



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