

American Presbyterian Church
Ordination Examination Questions
2009

The purpose of the ordination examination is to gain an understanding of the candidate's knowledge and beliefs about God, the Bible, ministry, and the Christian life. The examination is also intended to give clear understanding as to the candidate's view of Scripture and source of authority for ministry. The ordination examination should be between 20-30 minutes in length.

A good theological examination should be stimulating and edifying to the whole court. It isn't really to put the person on the spot, but to give opportunity to demonstrate the fullness of his/her heart for the things of God. – Dr. Joseph A. Warner, APC Stated Clerk

These are the ordination questions that were asked of the newest candidates for ministry at the January 13, 2009 APC General Assembly. Ordination questions are by no means limited to these questions, but these should provide a good framework of the types of questions a candidate can expect.

The APC Ordination Examination consists of questions regarding the following areas:

- Bible Knowledge
- Doctrine & Theology
- Church History & Church Government
- The Sacraments

50 Questions for Ordination

Bible Knowledge

1. How many books are in the Bible?
2. What is the 19th book of the Old Testament?
3. What do you believe about Adam & Eve? Were they real people or not?
4. What was the fruit that Eve ate in the garden?
5. What do you believe about the Bible? How did the Bible come about?
6. What do we do with statements in the Bible such as, "The four corners of the earth" when we know that the earth is round?
7. What do you believe about "original sin?" What was the result of Adam & Eve's sin in the garden?
8. What is "the wages of sin?"
9. What happens to babies when they die? Do they go to heaven or hell?
10. When sin came into the world, did it affect all or parts of the will, emotion, and intellect?
11. What must the Holy Spirit do before we are saved?
12. What is the theological difference between the phrases "I've seen the light," "Born again," and "Regeneration?"
13. Who enables you to be "Born again?"
14. What is our authority for sharing the gospel with all people?

Doctrine & Theology

15. What does "theology" mean?
16. What are the other "- ogies"? (i.e. cosmology, etc)
17. What is your view of God?
18. Is God a single One or a united One?
19. What are the origins of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

20. Was “the Church” in existence in the Old Testament, as well as, in the New Testament?
21. What is “the Church?” How would you define it?
22. Does God have two different peoples (i.e. Israel and The Church) or one people throughout all of history?

Church History & Church Government

23. Why do we call ourselves Protestants?
24. What was protested against?
25. Is Christ’s sacrifice on the cross sufficient and once for all?
26. Is the word “Priest” sufficient to describe, in the New Testament, who we are as “ministers of the gospel?”
27. Can you name the first Protestant Reformer to not get burned at the stake?
28. Who is the Swiss theologian we credit with Reformed Theology?
29. What are the three forms of church government?
30. What is the difference between orthodoxy and neo-orthodoxy?
31. If you were to be listening to a minister preach and he said, “Listen FOR the word of God,” what would you interpret his words to mean?

The Sacraments

32. What is a Sacrament?
33. What are the two sacraments of the Christian Church?
34. Were there any Old Testament sacraments?
35. Do we keep the Old Testament sacraments today?
36. Why isn’t circumcision a sign & seal today?
37. What has replaced circumcision in the New Testament?
38. Do sacraments save us?
39. How would you define the term, “Means of Grace?”
40. What are the “Means of Grace?”
41. What constitutes a candidate for baptism?
42. Do the children of believing parents have the right to be baptized?
43. How much water is required for baptism?
44. What are the forms (i.e. modes) of baptism?
45. What is your baptism preference?
46. Should a person ever be re-baptized?
47. Is the mode of sprinkling enough water to constitute an official baptism?
48. Was there baptism in the Old Testament?
49. What was the form (i.e. mode) of baptism in the Old Testament?
50. In the Presbyterian Church, which forms (i.e. modes) of baptism are acceptable?

BONUS: Practical Ministry Questions

The following types of practical ministry questions are also possible questions for APC Candidates for Ordination.

1. Supposing a family in your congregation experienced a horrible tragedy in their lives (i.e. hurricane, death of a child, etc) and they came to you for counsel, and asked, "Where was God in this?" How would you respond?
2. Let's say you are counseling a husband who has come to you because he is not happy in his marriage and he wants a divorce. You have determined that he does not have biblical grounds for divorce. What are the Biblical grounds for divorce, and how would you counsel him?

3. You find yourself engaged in a friendly conversation with a neighbor about religion, and he comments that "I'm a good Christian person and believe in Jesus, but I think all religions point to God and as long as you believe in God and try to do the right thing, that's all that matters." How would you respond?
4. Can a person lose their salvation? Why or why not?
5. Let's imagine that you have a scenario of two persons, who (at some point in their lives) have professed their faith in Christ, are in good standing as members of a local church, and would say that they are Christians. One of these persons seems to be living a spiritually fruitful life and the other a seemingly unfruitful life? What might be the reasons for the difference? Can both persons have full assurance of salvation?
6. What about the person who has never heard about Christ?
7. If asked, how would you explain the doctrine of predestination to a new Christian?
8. Is the command to honor the Sabbath still relevant today? Why or why not?