Steeplechase: 20 Self-Assessment Questions

Use this self-assessment to clarify your values while evaluating and selecting a new church.

Part A - Bones: Considering structure, approach, finances, doctrine, and decision making

1. With what weekly church attendance and leadership structure am I most comfortable?

   ❑ **Small Group Church: 40 or fewer.** A church the size of a large small group focusing on member needs and primarily led by key influential volunteer leaders. Commitment and willingness outshine skill and polish. Everyone knows everyone intimately.

   ❑ **Small Church: 40 - 160.** A church led by official or unofficial key influencers, with a full-time pastor providing pastoral care and most of the teaching/preaching. Decisions occur relationally, influenced by key volunteer leaders. Everyone feels generally known by the pastor and other members, and a everyone is invited to participate by jumping in to help.

   ❑ **Transitional Church: 140-300.** A church led by a staff of 2-3 who make decisions and balance personally addressing member needs with developing other volunteers or ministry to meet those needs. Volunteering becomes more specialized, and incorporating new members is more intentional.

   ❑ **Medium Church: 250-500.** A church led by a staff of 2-5 who focus on creating inspiring services and developing volunteers to do ministry. Decision making happens through key committees and teams led by volunteer ministry leaders who rise up because of skills or giftedness rather than tenure. Members primarily connect through classes or serving in ministry groups.

   ❑ **Large Church: 450-850.** A church led by 3-9 generalized and specialized staff who make decisions, develop volunteers and ministry teams, provide quality and transcendent worship service experiences, and enact a distinct church vision. Members connect primarily through small interest or fellowship groups and may volunteer in larger ministries or departments.

   ❑ **Very Large Church: 800 or more.** A church led by a layered network of highly specialized staff who support the missional vision championed by the recognizable senior pastor, and function behind the scenes equipping volunteer leaders who oversee ministries. Decisions are made by individual staff and their leadership teams. The church provides diverse learning and worship style options, and a wide range of support systems and participation opportunities. Members connect primarily through well-run small groups providing pastor care and Bible study.

1 <— 2 <— 3 –> 4 –> 5   2. Do I prefer staff who are: 1) highly developed and dominant focal points who calls the shots, or 5) coaches who delegate decision-making and develop team members to lead?

1 <— 2 <— 3 –> 4 –> 5   3. How important are church financial issues to me (church debt, giving/budget ratio, maintenance/staffing costs, budgeting decision process, accountability)?
(1: unimportant, 5: vital)

1 <— 2 <— 3 –> 4 –> 5   4. How important to me are church beliefs like denominational affiliation and basic doctrine (view of the Bible, who God is, Jesus, Holy Spirit, salvation, sin, spiritual gifts, marriage, sexuality...)? (1: unimportant, 5: vital)

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **5.** How important is it that church leadership is knowledgeable, self-aware, and deliberate regarding strategic church growth? (1: unimportant, 5: vital)

Part B - Focus: Considering who the church is best equipped to impact

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **6.** Do I prefer the church to focus on 1) Outreach, missions, and evangelism, or 5) discipleship, equipping, and personal growth?

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **7.** Do I prefer a church where the majority of church activity takes place: 1) within the church walls, or 5) outside of the church walls?

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **8.** Do I prefer sermons focusing on: 1) informational preaching, or 5) teaching application?

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **9.** How important is it that the church's story suggests there is a history of what I'm hoping to experience? (1: unimportant, 5: vital)

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **10.** How important is it that I see evidence of growing unity and fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control)? (1: unimportant, 5: vital)

Part C - Opportunities: Considering participation expectations

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **11.** How important to me are the availability of additional services or ministries such as children's programming, visitation, etc...? (1: unimportant, 5: vital)

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **12.** Am I more interested in: 1) participating through attendance and receiving what the church provides for me, or 5) participating through volunteering and extending my resources (time, energy, finances...) to the church?

Part D - Connection: Considering opportunities for building relationships and church culture

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **13.** How important is it that the church provides opportunities for me to interact significantly with other people? (1: unimportant, 5: vital)

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **14.** When it comes to cultural diversity (age, ethnicity, trendiness, financial, political) do I prefer a church that is more: 1) different, or 5) more similar?

Part E - Style: Considering overall feel and atmosphere

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **15.** Do I prefer a worship environment that is: 1) structured and deliberate, or 5) informal and expressive?

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **16.** How important is it that church embraces technology and social media for communication, engagement, and expression? (1: unimportant, 5: vital)

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **17.** How important are the physical conditions (temperature, seats, access, bathrooms, hearing, worship postures like kneeling or standing)? (1: unimportant, 5: vital)

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **18.** Does it matter whether or not people look like they're glad to be together and excited about what's going on? (1: unimportant, 5: vital)

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **19.** How important is my comfort level to invite friends here? (1: unimportant, 5: vital)

`1 <- 2 <- 3 -> 4 -> 5`   **20.** How important to me is it as I pray, consider, or visit this church, that I sense strong direction from the Lord (even if I can't explain it)?