



THE ELDERS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Volume 4

Section A



General Conference
Ministerial Association



“But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.





In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Timothy 6:11-14



The church elders should maintain and strengthen a close relationship with God, that their work may daily be directed to fulfill the divine will. What they are in their personal spiritual lives, will bear a greater influence than what they preach from the pulpit.





For that reason, they must commune with God daily, to receive from Him His blessings and render a service that meets with such high calling.



What should be the characteristics of the church elders who want to develop and carry out their duties in accordance with divine guidelines?





**I. Their lives must be
characterized by
prayer**





1. They will seek God in prayer every day, asking to be sustained in their spiritual lives.
2. They will pray daily for their families.
3. They will intercede in prayer for the church.



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4. They will cry out to God on behalf of the *sick*.
 5. *They will converse with God when preparing the messages which will feed the flock.*
 6. They will pray often and fervently before preaching from the *pulpit*.
 7. They will intercede for the persons visiting the church.





8. They will pray for the youth and children of the church.
9. They will ask God for the full outpouring of His Spirit.
10. They will pray to God asking for guidance in the programs that the church will implement.



11. For the faithful elders,
prayer is the takeoff
platform in all the
decisions and plans of
the churches they lead.





John Wesley said:

*“God does nothing
except in response to
believing prayer.”*





The great apostle Paul
counsels us:

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.”

Ephesians 6:18



Definitely, if there is something that the enemy fears the most, it is leaders and a church who pray.





In *The Signs of the Times*, October 27, 1881, we are reminded that:

“There is a mighty power in prayer. Our great adversary is constantly seeking to keep the troubled soul away from God. An appeal to Heaven by the humblest saint is more to be dreaded by Satan than the decrees of cabinets or the mandates of kings.”



- Church elders should not fear to ask God, in the presence of the church, for success in their work.
- God is a God of triumphs and He wants His leaders upon the earth to also be successful.
- We have Nehemiah as an example of when the Lord put in his heart to rebuild the wall. ***Nehemiah prayed thus to the Lord:***





“Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man.”

Nehemiah 1:11





The church elders must be men and women of faith and constant prayer. They should feel confident to ask God, Who called them, to guide and bless them in the plans they will implement on behalf of the church.





II. What will prayer do in the lives of the elders?





1. Will strengthen them when they feel sad, confused, discouraged or undecided.

“The prayers you offer in loneliness, in weariness, in trial, God answers, not always according to your expectations, but always for your good.”

MYP 250



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2. Will allow the elders to project themselves for success and not failure.

“It is our privilege to come to Him with holy boldness.”

Pr 15

3. Will allow them to depend on God, both in difficult times as well as in moments of success.
 4. Prayer transforms them into humble men and women.
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5. Prayer makes them more sensitive to the needs of others, especially those of the flock they tend.
 6. By means of prayer, their characters are transformed.
 7. Through prayer God turns their weaknesses into strengths.





8. Prayer is an opportunity to attribute to the Lord all glory and honor.
9. Prayer allows them to bring their needs to God.
10. Through prayer, the elders intercede before God for the church, just as Moses did for the people of Israel.



INSPIRED COUNSEL

“‘Come unto Me,’ is His invitation. Whatever your anxieties and trials, spread out your case before the Lord.”

DA 329



- *“Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven’s storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence?”*



*Without unceasing prayer
and diligent watching we
are in danger of growing
careless and of deviating
from the right path.”*

SC 94



- *“A night of prayer preceded the ordination of the apostles and the Sermon on the Mount, the transfiguration, the agony of the judgment hall and the cross, and the resurrection glory.”*

MH 509



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- *“Every saint who comes to God with a true heart, and sends his honest petitions to Him in faith, will have his prayers answered.”*

Pr 70



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- *“Our prayers are to be as earnest and persistent as was the petition of the needy friend who asked for the loaves at midnight.”*

Pr 71





III. They must be fervent students of the Bible





“You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me.”

John 5:39





Successful church elders will find in the Holy Scriptures their main source of *inspiration*. They will study it and scrutinize it in depth in order to *discover God's will* for their personal lives and for their church in particular.





1. For church elders the Bible will be:

- a. Their source of consultation.
- b. Their source for motivation and inspiration.
- c. Their spiritual compass which will guide them in their work as church leaders.





- d. The origin of all their sermons.
- e. Their chief storehouse of spiritual food for themselves and the church.
- f. The means God will use to strengthen their weaknesses.



2. They will use the Bible to:

- a. Feed the flock under their care.
- b. Strengthen the faith of their brethren.
- c. Encourage the believers in the church.
- d. Build up and not destroy.
- e. Give hope to those discouraged.



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- f. Exalt the Name of Jesus.
 - g. Lovingly admonish the sinner.
 - h. Present Jesus as the only hope for the sinner.
 - i. Instruct the church in the fulfillment of its mission.
 - j. Prepare the church to meet Jesus.





3. Will not use the Bible to:

- a. Hurt their brethren.
- b. Prove personal theories.
- c. Justify any inappropriate behavior of theirs.



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- d. Strive to win arguments and controversies that do not edify.
 - e. Show that they are the best preachers in the church.
 - f. Use their position to *grandstand* themselves.
 - g. Give their own interpretations as to what is right and just.



- h. Destroy what little hope there still is in the heart of a sinner.
- i. Speak more about the enemy than about Christ.
- j. Justify behavior that is not up to par with *Biblical principles*.



To church elders who want to labor for the glory of God, the *Bible* will be the supreme guide for their lives, and the driving force that will thrust them to offer with dignity the best of themselves in the high calling of their position.





Inspiration thus counsels us:

- *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

2 Timothy 3:16-17





- *“Your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light on my path.”*

Psalm 119:105

- *“Holy Bible, Book divine!
Precious treasure, thou art mine.
Mine to tell me whence I came;
Mine to teach me what I am.”*

Hymn: “Holy Bible, Book Divine”

Words by: John Burton (1773-1822)



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- *“There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of the Scriptures. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigor to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. If God’s word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose rarely seen in these times.”*

SC 90



Recapitulating what we studied



1. Elders will pray for: (State 5 reasons)

- a. Their families.
- b. Their church.
- c. Those in the church who are ill.
- d. The children and the youth of the church.
- e. The preparation of sermons.





2. What does prayer do in the lives of the elders? (4 qualities)

- a. Transforms their characters.
- b. Makes them humble.
- c. Qualifies them for Christian labor.
- d. Makes them dependent upon God.





3. Elders use the Bible to: (4 things)

- a. Feed the flock of God.
- b. Exalt Jesus.
- c. Edify the church.
- d. Strengthen and encourage.



4. Elders will not use the Bible to:

- a. Hurt the brethren.
- b. Engage in controversy.
- c. Impress others about themselves.
- d. Justify their behavior.

