

THE WORK OF THE ELDERS AND THEIR CARE OF THE CHURCH

Volume 2

Section A



General Conference
Ministerial Association



“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”

2 Timothy 2:15



In the above text, we can find the key elements needed to build the profile of what Paul considered to be true church elders, who take care of the flock of God.



I. Elders should be persons who are diligent



“*Do your best...*,”
thus declares the
Bible text.



The church elders must be diligent to:

- Take *utmost* care of the *sheep in the fold*.
- Nourish the flock with the *bread of heaven*.
- Quickly attend to the *call of the sheep, when the weak bleat of one of them* signals that it is in danger.



- Find the *lost sheep who have ceased coming to the fold.*
- Warn in advance when *impending danger threatens the fold.*
- Provide attentive care to the weak or diseased sheep.
- Tend to the *little lambs and spend time with them also.*



- Fulfill, comprehensively, the mission with which they have been entrusted.
- Search the Scriptures and find living bread for the flock.
- Pray and have communion with God, who is the only one that can equip and guide in this important work.



The Bible warns us against lack of diligence

- *“Laziness brings on deep sleep, and the shiftless go hungry.”*

Proverbs 19:15



- *“I went past the field of a sluggard, past the vineyard of someone who has no sense; thorns had come up everywhere, the ground was covered with weeds, and the stone wall was in ruins.”*

Proverbs 24:30-31



- *“Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.”*

Romans 12:11



**II. Elders are persons
who come daily
before God**



***“Be diligent in
presenting yourself
to God.”***

2 Timothy 2:15 (Paraphrased)



If elders are to be diligent in any way, it must be, first and foremost, in submitting themselves daily to God.



Elders present themselves to God daily in prayer, before they:

- Speak to their *family during morning worship.*
- Go to *work.*
- Participate in the church board.
- Admonish their *brethren who have erred.*
- *Anoint the sick.*



- Dedicate the children.
- Officiate at the communion table.
- Make missionary visits.
- Use the pulpit to preach.
- Assist in church by leading out in Sabbath activities.
- Fellowship with visitors who come to the church.



- Visit those who *mourn because they have lost a loved one.*
- Propose a new project to the church.
- *Make important decisions that affect the brethren in the church.*
- *Discipline a church member who has erred.*



**The church elders must
make their own the counsel
of the Psalmist:**

*“In the morning, Lord, you
hear my voice; in the morning
I lay my requests before
you and wait expectantly.”*

Psalm 5:3



Inspired counsel to never be forgotten

“Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, ‘Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.’



“This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate.”

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(NOTE: The entire group should recite this quote aloud and in unison.)



III. Elders should be persons approved of God



*“Be diligent in presenting
yourself to God **approved.**”*

2 Timothy 2:15 (Paraphrased)



Now we ask:
Approved by whom?



- By God, first and foremost.
- By their families.
- By their spouses.
- By their children.
- By their churches.



- By the children and *youth of the church.*
- By all the leaders of the church *who see them as called of God and leaders worthy of being imitated.*
- By the *community.*
- By their *neighbors.*
- By their *own conscience.*



Thus the Bible reminds us:

- *“He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him...”*

1 Timothy 3:4



- *“He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap.”*

1 Timothy 3:7



IV. Elders must be persons who have nothing for which to be ashamed



*“Be diligent in presenting yourself to God approved, as a worker who has nothing for which to be **ashamed.**”*

2 Timothy 2:15 (Paraphrased)



Genuine church elders:

- Are not ashamed to identify themselves as *Seventh-day Adventist*.
- Are not ashamed of *their families' testimony* or of *their own personal testimony*.
- Are not ashamed of their position as *elders and feel that, before God, being an SDA elder* is a great honor.



- Their lives are open books.
- They are known as authentic “*men of God.*”
- Their characters and personalities inspires *trust.*
- They generate *assurance in the church members.*
- By their conduct the *Presence of God in their lives* is obvious.



- *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.”*

Romans 1:16



**V. Elders are persons
who correctly handle
the Word of Truth**



- *“...a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who **correctly handles the word of truth.**”*

2 Timothy 2:15



- They understand that they must preach the Word of God and not their own theories.
- Will use the Bible as their source of inspiration to preach messages from the pulpit.
- Understand that the Spirit of Prophecy is inspired by God and will use it as a lesser light which leads to the Greater Light.



- Will not make use of their personal interpretation of Biblical counsel, but rather will yield to the counsel of the church.
- Will make use of the pulpit to exalt Jesus.
- Will study the Bible in a spirit of humility and prayer.



- Will promote the study of the Bible within the church.
- Will insure that each family is involved in family worship.
- Will be concerned that each church family has a Bible, a daily devotional, a quarterly, and appropriate materials for children and youth.



- Strive to diligently come before God approved, “*a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*”

2 Timothy 2:15



Recapitulating what we studied



1. Mention at least four aspects in which elders must be diligent

- a. Tend to the sheep.
- b. Feed the sheep.
- c. Seek out the lost sheep.
- d. Be alert to impending danger.



2. Elders must first seek God before presenting themselves to:

- a. Their families.
- b. Their church board.
- c. The pulpit.
- d. Anoint the sick.
- e. Admonish one who has erred.



3. Elders must be persons approved by:

- a. Their spouses.
- b. Their children.
- c. Their neighbors.
- d. Their churches.
- e. God.



4. Elders should not be ashamed of:

- a. Being Seventh-day Adventists.
- b. Their testimonies.
- c. Their office as elders.
- d. The testimony of their families.



5. Elders will use the Word of Truth to:

- a. Preach from the pulpit.
- b. Exalt Jesus.
- c. Encourage the church in the study of the Bible.
- d. Conduct family worship.

