

# THE ELDERS AND STEWARDSHIP

*Volume 3*

*Section A*



*“Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.”*

*1 Timothy 4:13*



**Let us consider the role of the elders in regard to the Stewardship Department, their duties as stewards and their roles as leaders who must ensure the loyalty of their brethren.**



# I. Competent elders promote faithful stewardship



- Organize weeks of stewardship in the church.
- Every so often preach about this topic to the congregation.
- Are foremost, along with their families, in exemplifying loyalty, especially with regards to tithing.



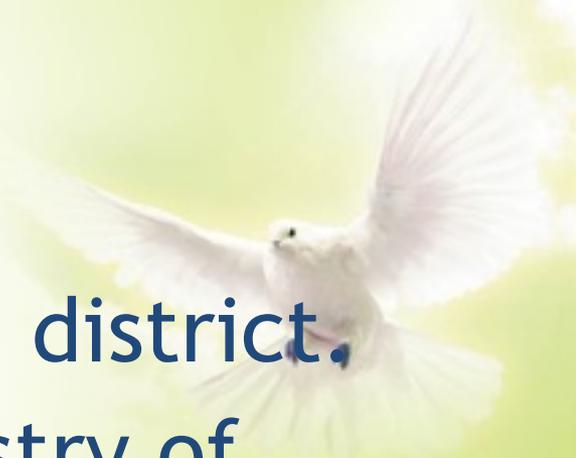
- Explain clearly to the church the principles of stewardship.
- Assume the stewardship responsibility in the church although this issue is solely the responsibility of the pastor.
- Do not yield to any misinterpretation about the issue of tithes and offerings.



- Are proactive in rendering to the church a monthly account of growth or decline in stewardship.
- Impart the idea that stewardship is a matter of life and death, not an optional topic.



- Promote attendance at stewardship conventions organized for the church district.
- Remain alert to the registry of tithes and offerings every Sabbath.
- Zealously guard the financial resources received by the church.



# Divine inspiration counsels the elders

*“There is great need of instruction concerning the obligations and duties to God, especially in regard to paying an honest tithe.”*

**CS 104**



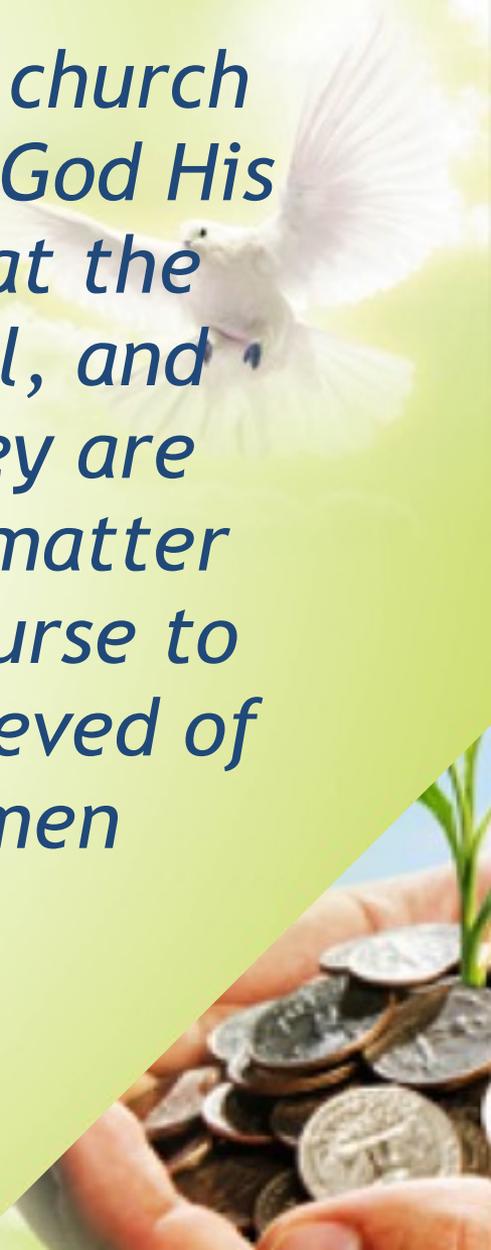
*“The overseer of the flock of God should faithfully discharge his duty. If he takes the position that because this is not pleasant to him, he will leave it for someone else to do, he is not a faithful worker.”*

**CS 104**



*“[I]f they fail to set before the church the importance of returning to God His own, if they do not see to it that the officers under them are faithful, and that the tithe is brought in, they are in peril. They are neglecting a matter which involves a blessing or a curse to the church. They should be relieved of their responsibility, and other men should be tested and tried.”*

**CS 106**





*“Let the elders and officers of the church... urge upon their members the necessity of faithfulness in the payment of pledges, tithes, and offerings.”*

**CS 106**



## **II. Competent elders instruct the church about the returning of tithes**



- Make sure new members correctly understand the importance of tithing.
- Instruct the church as to the manner in which the organization uses the tithes it receives.
- Teach the church the Biblical principles with respect to tithing.



- Do not allow for misappropriation of the tithes.
- By their messages and example banish selfishness from the church.
- Promote child stewardship in the congregation.
- Teach faithfulness both by counsel and by example.



*“It is the duty of the elders and officers of the church to instruct the people on this important matter, and to set things in order... Those who hold positions of trust in the church should not be negligent, but they should see that the members are faithful in performing this duty.”*

**CS 106**



*“Let the elders and officers of the church follow the direction of the Sacred Word, and urge upon their members the necessity of faithfulness in the payment of pledges, tithes, and offerings.”*

**CS 106**



# III. Competent elders promote offerings



- Elders shall ensure that the church takes up offerings.
- Will teach the church that true giving is measured not by tithes returned, but by the offerings brought into the church.
- Will teach the difference between **FAITHFULNESS AND GENEROSITY.**



- Our faithfulness is applied when we return what is not ours: tithes.
- Our benevolence is demonstrated when we willingly bring offerings to the Lord from the blessings He has given us.
- Will explain to the church what the term 60-20-20 means in relation to offerings (or any other distribution used by the local conference).



*“The offering from the heart that loves, God delights to honor, giving it highest efficiency in service for Him. If we have given our hearts to Jesus, we also shall bring our gifts to Him.”*

**CS 198**





*“Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the Lord your God has blessed you.”*

*Deuteronomy 16:17*



**IV. Competent elders  
admonish concerning  
the consequences of  
being a faithful or  
unfaithful steward**



# 1. We are to keep the promises we make to God

*“When you make a vow to God, do not delay to fulfill it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it.”*

*Ecclesiastes 5:4-5*



*“A church is responsible for the pledges of its individual members. If they see that there is a brother who is neglecting to fulfill his vows, they should labor with him kindly but plainly.”*



*If he is not in circumstances which render it possible for him to pay his vow, and he is a worthy member and has a willing heart, then let the church compassionately help him. Thus they can bridge over the difficulty, and receive a blessing themselves.”*

**CS 310**



*“The pledge is not made to man, but to God, and is as a written note given to a neighbor. No legal bond is more binding upon the Christian for the payment of money, than a pledge made to God.”*

**CS 315**



## II. Unfaithfulness yields death

- Consider the case of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1-11.
- They forgot that their promise was made to God and not to the apostles.
- They thought they could fool the disciples with their half-kept promise and still appear faithful before them.



- They thought the amount to give was more important than their loyalty.
- Not only were they prey to selfishness, but their deceit was premeditated.
- They wanted to render only partial obedience which is not acceptable to God.



*“When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened.”*

*Acts 5:5*



*“At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband.”*

*Acts 5:10*



### 3. Faithfulness yields life

Let us consider the case of the widow  
at Zarephath in 1 Kings 17:8-24

- She was going through difficult times.
- She was living during a crisis where her life was endangered by lack of water and food.



- She had very little food left in a jar.

*Vs. 12*

- She was convinced that the only thing that awaited her and her son was death because all they had was food for only one small meal.

*Ibid.*

- Drought was in full swing and there was no hope of rain.



# She received an invitation to give

- First of all, the prophet asked her for water, which was most scarce at the moment.

*Vs. 10*

- He asked her for bread to eat when all she had left was a handful of flour.

*Vs. 12*



- He asked her to make a small loaf of bread and bring it to him first.

*Vs. 13*

- And afterwards to then make something for herself and her son.

*Ibid.*



# She believed by faith what he promised

- The jug of flour would not be used up.  
*Vs. 14*
- The jug of oil would not run dry.  
*Ibid.*
- The Lord would send rain on the land.  
*Ibid.*



- *“She went away and did as Elijah had told her...”*

*Vs. 15*

- She showed that she was obedient.
- She showed that she wholly trusted in God.



- She accepted obedience and faithfulness above her own personal interests.
- She abandoned herself for the benefit of another.
- She gave for the cause of God first and took the leftover for herself.



# She beheld the results of unquestionable obedience

- The flour in the jug never ceased.  
*Vs. 16*
- The oil in the jar never dried.  
*Ibid.*
- She had food all through the crisis of the season.  
*Vs. 15*
- Her household also ate during all that time.
- Her faithfulness became a blessing to her family.  
*Ibid.*



# Yet a final trial still awaited her

- Her son became ill and died.  
*1 Kings 17:17-18*
- *“Now it happened after these things that the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. And his sickness was so serious that there was no breath left in him.”*  
*Vs. 17*



- The Lord, as a reward for her faithfulness and obedience, brought back her son to life by Elijah the prophet.

*1 Kings 17:19-24*



- *“‘Give me your son,’ Elijah replied. He took him from her arms, carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his bed.”*

*Vs. 19*



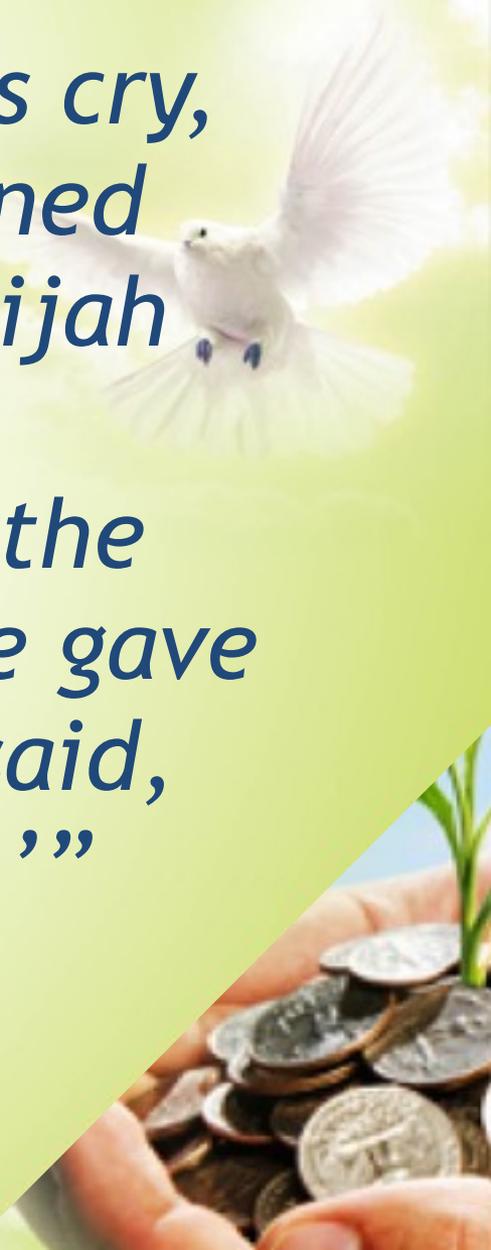
- *“Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and cried out to the Lord, ‘Lord my God, let this boy’s life return to him!’”*

*Vs. 21*



- *“The Lord heard Elijah’s cry, and the boy’s life returned to him, and he lived. Elijah picked up the child and carried him down from the room into the house. He gave him to his mother and said, ‘Look, your son is alive!’”*

*Vs. 22,23*



- *“Then the woman said to Elijah, ‘Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the Lord from your mouth is the truth.’”*

*Vs. 24*



- These two stories summarize the difference between humbly obeying God and wanting to do our own will.
- The disobedience of Ananias and Sapphira brought death.
- The humble obedience of the widow of Zarephath brought life.



# Recapitulating what we studied



1. Write down four ways in which elders can promote stewardship.
2. What should elders teach the church about tithing?
3. To encourage the congregation to give offerings, what should elders teach?
4. There is a great lesson to learn in the story of Ananias and Sapphira.
5. There is a great lesson to learn in the story of the widow of Zarephath and Elijah.



*“Those who hold positions of trust in the church should not be negligent, but they should see that the members are faithful in performing this duty...”*



*Let the elders and officers of the church follow the direction of the Sacred Word, and urge upon their members the necessity of faithfulness in the payment of pledges, tithes, and offerings.”*

**CS 106**

