

# Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



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TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Dear Fellow Workers:

Need we say how very much you are appreciated by your brothers because of the good work you are doing in the congregations? As you preside in a fine way and work hard in speaking and teaching, the congregation responds by giving you “double honor.” This is certainly an encouragement for you to keep on working hard and you can be sure Jehovah will richly reward your efforts.—Heb. 6:10; 1 Tim. 5:17.

Being an overseer of God’s flock is a highly responsible office. (Isa. 32:1, 2) Jehovah expects us all to maintain his high standards. Reports reaching us reveal that there is an area all need to watch so that problems are not unnecessarily created. This has to do with the use of alcoholic beverages.

It has been observed that some elders go to the meetings smelling of alcohol. Although this is by far the minority we feel obliged to mention it at this time so that we do not become causes for stumbling for others (2 Cor. 6:3) and so that we can help one another if there is the need to do so.

We are not under the Mosaic law but there are valuable lessons we can derive from the principles Jehovah gave the Israelites. For example, in harmony with the dignity of the office of the priesthood there were certain regulations regarding the use of alcoholic beverages. At Leviticus 10:8-11 we are told: “And Jehovah proceeded to speak to Aaron, saying: ‘Do not drink wine or intoxicating liquor, you and your sons with you, when you come into the tent of meeting, that you may not die.’” Another reason given for this statute was so that the priest could “teach the sons of Israel all the regulations that Jehovah has spoken to them.” Elders too are teachers. So should we not be guided by God’s provisions for ancient Israel?

What example would the elder be setting if he came to the meeting, whether for field service or for studies, smelling of alcohol? He might not have been immoderate in the use of alcohol but would that not be the impression he would be giving others if he smelled of it? Also, does this reflect love of neighbor? Does it add luster to the Word of God or rather detract from its dignity? “You did not learn the Christ to be so.” (Eph. 4:20) Therefore none would be justified to engage in an act that would tear down rather than build up. Good health to you.

Your fellow elders,

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