

ELDER VISITS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

A Webinar presented by
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Part One: The Biblical Basis

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Malachi 3:13-18

(focus: Vs. 16a)

16 Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard.

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2 Corinthians 5:17 – 6:1

(focus 5:20; 6:1)

²⁰We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.

¹... we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain.

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Isaiah 42:1-4

(focus: vss. 2-3)

**²He will not shout or cry out,
or raise his voice in the streets.**

**³A bruised reed he will not break,
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff
out.**

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John 17:20-25

(focus: 21)

²¹that all of them may be one ...

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Observations from these texts:

- ❑ Elders visit people as Ambassadors of Jesus
- ❑ Elder visits are a unique type of visit
 - The visit is a time to talk together
 - The heart of the visit is gentle encouragement
 - The visit seeks to build unity

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The Purpose of the Elder Visit Is:

- To Identify
 - the spark of faith in the person(s) visited
 - the spark of faith in the church
- To Blow on the spark of faith gently

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The Goals of the Elder Visit Are:

- ❑ *To Listen to the heart of those visited*
- ❑ *To Pray over the heart of those visited*
- ❑ *To Comfort those visited in God's grace*
- ❑ *To Strengthen the bond between those visited and the congregation*

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Part Two: Getting Ready

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Three Vital Steps of Preparation:

Pray

Pray

Pray

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Getting Ready for the Visit

- ❑ Make the appointment
- ❑ Research the Visit
 - Know those you will visit
 - Know their dates
 - Know children's names
 - Know children's dates
- ❑ Select appropriate Scriptures

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Part Three: Personal Preparations

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Just Before the Visit:

- Pray
- Be aware of personal hygiene
- Review the information of those you will visit
- Review all selected Scriptures
- Identify Presenter and Observer

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Presenter

- ❑ Directs the visit
- ❑ Opens Visit with Scripture
- ❑ Identifies how God is gracing those visited
- ❑ Observes the home environment
- ❑ Keeps visual contact with observer

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Observer

- ❑ Prays for the visit during the visit
- ❑ Supports presenter in the conversation
- ❑ Offers prayer as asked
- ❑ Keeps an eye on time – Signals presenter

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- ❑ Observes non-verbal communication
- ❑ Observes presenter for later feedback
- ❑ Supports presenter during the visit

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Part Four: Arriving and Beginning

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- ❑ First few minutes set the tone - ***Establish Trust!***
- ❑ Don't pray in the car in the driveway
- ❑ Ask where those being visited are comfortable sitting
- ❑ Don't assume you can sit anywhere
- ❑ Observer should be able to see a clock – If possible

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- ❑ **Observer may offer beginning prayer**
- ❑ **Two key questions to ask early:**
 - **Are there any issues which you wanted to be sure to talk with us about in this visit?**
 - **Are there any matters which you would like to have us bring to the attention of the Elders or the Council on your behalf?**

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Part Five: Conducting the visit

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- ❑ Listen
- ❑ Focus on what God is doing in their story
- ❑ Ask “open-ended” questions
- ❑ Address comments/questions to each person present
- ❑ Note recent or upcoming birthdays or anniversaries
- ❑ Note church involvement with positive affirmation

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Part Six: Concluding the Visit

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- ❑ **Presenter ends the visit**
- ❑ **Presenter asks for permission to share the visit**
- ❑ **Observer leads in closing prayer**
- ❑ **Presenter expresses thanks for the visit**

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Part Seven: Follow Through

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- Review the visit for key prayer concerns
- Pray together for those visited
- Choose who will write a “Thank-you”
- Write a note of thanks
- Look those visited up the following Sunday

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Part Eight: Problem Solving

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- ❑ *“We don’t want a visit”*
- ❑ *“We don’t need a visit”*
- ❑ *“Bashing”*
- ❑ *“Partner joins in bashing”*
- ❑ *“Distractions”* (TV, Noisy Children, etc.)
- ❑ *“Major Issue Just As We’re Leaving”*

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Isaiah 42:3b

...a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.

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Questions & Answers