

Consistent with Church policies concerning BIRTH CONTROL and ABORTION, leaders have advised its married members not to resort to any practices that destroy the power of having children. The FIRST PRESIDENCY has declared, "We seriously deplore the fact that members of the Church would voluntarily take measures to render themselves incapable of further procreation" (p. 11-5).

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STEWARDSHIP

"Stewardship" in LDS vocabulary is responsibility given through the Lord to act in behalf of others. It is based on the understanding that all things ultimately belong to the Lord, whether property, time, talents, families, or capacity for service within the Church organization. An individual acts in a Church CALLING as a trustee for the Lord, not out of personal ownership or privilege. Every position in the Church is received as a calling, a stewardship, from the Lord made through others who are responsible for the supervision of the position. Such stewardships are temporary responsibilities.

Because the stewardship of a lay leader is not a permanent calling, a member of the Church may hold a position of extensive responsibility at one time in life and one of lesser responsibility at another time. Each member given a stewardship is expected to sacrifice time and talent in the service of others, but at the completion of such callings, most report that they have personally grown and benefited. Every calling is important. As members bear one another's burdens, they build a sense of community. When all serve, all may partake of the blessings of service. The ideal attitude toward stewardship suggests that it is not the position held but how well the work is done that counts (*see* MAGNIFYING ONE'S CALLING).

Faithful stewards seek a thorough understanding of their responsibilities and a knowledge of the Lord's will concerning them and their callings. A person with a stewardship reports to an immediate superior in the Church. For example, a ward RELIEF SOCIETY president reports to the

BISHOP of her ward. A bishop reports to his STAKE PRESIDENT.

Stewards are accountable to and will be judged by the Lord (Luke 16:2; 19:17). To whom much is given, much is required (cf. Luke 12:48; D&C 82:3). The primary accounting is with the Lord. He knows a person's heart, intentions, and talents. The faithful and wise steward is rewarded; the unjust or slothful steward gains but little, and may even lose what he has (cf. Matt. 25:14-30; D&C 82:3, 11; 78:22).

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STICK OF JOSEPH

[For Latter-day Saints, the "Stick of Joseph" and the "Stick of Ephraim" refer to the Book of Mormon. Both phrases appear in the book of the prophet Ezekiel (37:16, 19). The view that the Stick of Joseph consists of a scriptural record receives support from the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants (1 Ne. 13:35-40; 2 Ne. 3:11-12, 18-21; D&C 27:5). Articles that deal with this subject are Book of Mormon, Biblical Prophecies about; Ezekiel, Prophecies of; Joseph of Egypt; Writings of Joseph; and "Voice from the Dust."]

STICK OF JUDAH

[In LDS terminology, the "Stick of Judah" refers to the Bible. The phrase appears in the book of the prophet Ezekiel (37:19). The belief that the Stick of Judah consists of a scriptural record is stated in the Book of Mormon (1 Ne. 3:9-12; 5:5-6, 10-13; 13:20-29; 2 Ne. 3:11-12; cf. D&C 27:5). Articles that discuss this subject are Book of Mormon, Biblical Prophecies about; and Ezekiel, Prophecies of.]