



WATCHTOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.

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TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Dear Brothers:

Occasionally we receive inquiries as to what elders should do when a person deliberately attempts to disrupt a congregation meeting. This does not surprise us because as the "last days" of Satan's world reach a climax we can expect increasing opposition. (2 Timothy 3:1-5, 8, 9) Consequently it seems good to provide some general guidelines so you will know how to handle such situations should they arise.

First, we remind you of the position that we have taken regarding disfellowshipped or disassociated persons who attend congregation meetings. If such a person comes into a Kingdom Hall to attend a congregation meeting that is open to the general public, such as a Public Meeting, a Watchtower Study or a Service Meeting, even participating in singing, he may be admitted as long as he conducts himself properly. Of course, in harmony with the Scriptures, none will greet him and he may not attend a Congregation Book Study held in a private home.--1 Corinthians 5:11; 2 John 9-11.

What should be done if an opposer of Jehovah's Witnesses in attendance at a meeting creates a disturbance? Trivial disturbance should be ignored. But if he persists and is distracting others, you should ask the disruptive one to leave. If he or she refuses, then you should call the police and have them deal with the matter. Wisely avoid being provoked into physically removing such persons from the Kingdom Hall as such ones may be attempting to create a cause for legal action. You should avoid violence and should not try to forcibly remove one from the hall. Rather, call the police. You may then inform the police officers that this individual is causing a disturbance, that his implied invitation to attend the meeting has been revoked, and that if the person makes future attempts to disrupt meetings you will press trespassing charges. If a situation of this kind arises and you feel the need for further advice, please contact the Society.

In the event a disturber physically attacks a member of the congregation, that one has the right to defend himself from harm. In such an instance, care should be taken not to be aggressive.

Be assured of our prayers in your behalf as we work together in maintaining the peace, good order, and spiritual health of the congregation. We send our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society

OF NEW YORK, INC.