



WATCHTOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.

CABLE WATCHTOWER

25 COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11201, U.S.A.

PHONE (718) 625-3600

February 9, 1990

TO ALL CONGREGATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND ITS TERRITORIES

Dear Brothers:

Our reigning King, Jesus, completed a remarkable ministry during the final three-and-a-half years of his earthly life. As the apostle John wrote, "the world itself could not contain the scrolls written" if all of what Jesus accomplished while on earth were recorded. (John 21:25) He was able to do so much because he gave theocratic interests the primary importance they deserved. As he said to his followers, "My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work."—John 4:34.

Putting theocratic interests first meant that Jesus had to set priorities. While visiting in the house of Mary and Martha, he counseled Martha because she gave undue attention to matters other than the spiritual food Jesus was dispensing. He told her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and disturbed about many things. A few things, though, are needed, or just one."—Luke 10:41, 42.

First century Christians followed Jesus' lead in this matter. The apostle Paul wrote, "And this is what I continue praying, that your love may abound yet more and more with accurate knowledge and full discernment; that you may make sure of the more important things, . . . and may be filled with righteous fruit, which is through Jesus Christ, to God's glory and praise."—Philippians 1:9-11.

In our day the 'faithful slave' is equally concerned with giving theocratic interests their rightful primary importance. So that this may be accomplished, the "slave" class has directed the implementation of many programs aimed at simplification. For example, in 1978 the Society standardized and simplified the district convention arrangements. This simplification did away with many job assignments and significantly reduced many of those that remained. As a result, all are now able to give primary attention to the rich spiritual food provided each year.

The August 1986 issue of *Our Kingdom Ministry* announced a simplification regarding the field service report of our regular pioneers. In September of 1987 further simplification led to adjustments for the circuit assembly programs, and special assembly days were inaugurated.

Jehovah has richly blessed these efforts to simplify. The work is continuing to grow worldwide

at a rapid pace. (Isaiah 60:22) Additionally, many have noted that secular authorities are increasingly viewing certain religious activities as commercial. As in the past, the Society continues to see the need to highlight the spiritual nature of our theocratic organization and to clearly distinguish our activities from those of Babylon the Great. To this end, the Society is pleased to announce that starting March 1, 1990, literature distribution procedures in the United States will be adjusted. From that date, all the Society's literature will be made available to publishers and to the interested public on a complete donation basis. This will emphasize our reliance on Jehovah's spirit while also simplifying certain operations both for the Society and for the congregations. Some may have questions regarding this new arrangement which we would now like to consider.

What is meant by complete donation basis?

This means that magazines and literature will be provided to publishers and to the interested public without asking or even suggesting that a specific contribution be made as a precondition to receiving an item. Voluntary contributions or donations will be accepted from publishers and such interested ones to continue the worldwide work of publishing the good news. It is important that all of you and the public understand that making a contribution or donation is not a precondition to receiving a publication. Naturally, this does not mean that literature should be given to those who do not appreciate it and who would not read it.—Compare Matthew 7:6.

How does the complete donation arrangement affect the distribution of literature at the Kingdom Hall?

When a publisher or interested person wishes to pick up literature or magazines at the Kingdom Hall, he may do so without having to 'pay for' the items requested. The Society will simply give the individual the literature requested. No money will be expected, requested, or collected at the magazine or literature counter. Those motivated to contribute to the publishing and distribution of the literature should put their donations in the boxes marked "Contributions for the Society's Worldwide Work."—Matthew 24:14."

How will literature be offered in the field?

When offering literature in our public ministry, we will give our witness as usual and offer the publications to interested persons to provide them further knowledge on the subject. The recipient should agree that he will read the literature, but we will not suggest a specific donation for it. However, after the person has agreed to read the publication, we may explain how the work is done voluntarily worldwide to help people learn the way to everlasting life. It is all supported by voluntary donations. Then you may ask the person if he would like to help the Society accomplish its work worldwide by making a small donation. If he wishes to make such a donation it will be appreciated.

Any who wish to make a donation to defray the expenses of our educational work may do so, but they may receive the literature whether or not a donation is made. At the next Service Meeting, special information will be presented to demonstrate this method of literature distribution. If you note any publishers not present today, please contact them and let them know of this special Service Meeting. This new field service arrangement will go into effect immediately following that meeting.

What about subscriptions to *The Watchtower, Awake!*, and cassettes?

Adjustments will take place in this area as well. Subscription service to *The Watchtower, Awake!*, and cassettes will be discontinued as such. All publishers should immediately turn over to the brother handling subscriptions any one-year or six-month subscriptions that have already been obtained and these should be mailed to the Society this week. As of the reading of this letter, no one should prepare requests for additional new or renewal subscriptions.

The Society will continue for now, however, to honor the subscriptions currently on file. Once your personal subscription expires you should obtain magazines and cassettes for your own personal use, as well as for use in the field ministry, from the local congregation.

For many years congregation publishers have been encouraged to have a magazine route. A magazine route will care for persons desiring to receive the magazines on a regular basis. These return visits will give publishers the opportunity to further cultivate interest shown by individuals and be a stimulus to starting new home Bible

studies. The service overseer will assist publishers in developing such routes.

How will the Society's worldwide work including the printing and distribution of its literature be financed?

Boxes labeled "Contributions for the Society's Worldwide Work.—Matthew 24:14" will be made available near the magazine and literature counters. The amounts received in these boxes will be sent monthly to the Society. These funds will be used to defray the cost of the Society's overall operations, as well as providing for needed worldwide expansion.

With what spirit should each one view the new arrangement?

Jehovah is progressively guiding his people through these critical times, giving them the wisdom from above, necessary to keep the preaching work moving speedily in the face of many snares laid by Satan. (Psalm 32:8; Isaiah 30:21) Under the leadership of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we have been conducted into the spiritual paradise in which we now carry on the holy work of the good news. We have tasted the joy of being part of Jehovah's spirit-filled organization.—Psalm 34:8.

To meet changing conditions, Jehovah's spirit guides his theocratic organization. While contributions have always been voluntary, the complete donation arrangement allows for individual initiative and conscientious attention to meet the expenses of Jehovah's spirit-directed organization. Now each of us has an increased moral responsibility and privilege to honor Jehovah with our valuable things. (Proverbs 3:9) How we respond to the leadings of Jehovah's spirit as we make our contributions will reflect our heightened awareness that Jehovah considers us trustworthy.—1 Corinthians 4:1, 2.

The Society sincerely appreciates the financial support and cooperation it has received from the worldwide brotherhood. All donations will continue to be used wisely to support Kingdom interests. We are confident that those who appreciate the priceless truth of God's Word and the value of all the Society's provisions, including the production of Bible-based publications, will continue to be motivated from the heart to contribute generously toward this work right up to the end of this old system. (2 Corinthians 9:6-14) We can place full trust in Jehovah knowing that he can "do more than superabundantly beyond all the things we ask or conceive."—Ephesians 3:20.

Your fellow proclaimers of the Good News,

Watchtower B. & F. Society

OF NEW YORK, INC.