



KINGDOM MINISTRY SCHOOL COURSE



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Society of Pennsylvania

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This book is the property of the Kingdom Ministry School. Please do not mark or make notes in it, as other students will use it later.

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Explanation of Kingdom Ministry School Course

The Kingdom Ministry School Course has been arranged by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society to help overseers become better equipped to shepherd the flock of God. The School is dedicated to Jehovah God and the advancement of his Kingdom interests.

This textbook does not present any new instructions or information, but it does provide a careful compilation of material printed in the Society's publications and presented at assemblies in recent years. The Society feels that this information, with suggestions on how to apply it, will be especially helpful to overseers in caring for the flock of God. Your study of the material should deepen your appreciation of the responsibility that rests upon you as an overseer and at the same time help you to feel better equipped to fulfill that responsibility as you deal with the brothers in Christian love.

There is no need for anxiety regardless of your education or your ability. You will find that the course has been prepared so that you can benefit fully and without any embarrassment. It is the desire of the instructor to help you get the sense of the material and to assist you to see how you will be able to use it later to aid the brothers in the congregation in which you are an overseer.

Your schedule for activity Monday through Friday will be as follows: In the morning after breakfast you will be assigned to care for certain work for about one hour. The first lesson of the day will be considered from 9:10 to 10:30. After a ten-minute recess the class will resume for the second lesson from 10:40 to 12:00, after which will be an hour for the noon meal, relaxation and study. In the afternoon you will be asked to help with the work for an hour after the noon meal; then there will be a lecture for 45 minutes, from 2:10 to 2:55. The two lessons for the afternoon will be discussed from 3:00 to 4:20 and from 4:30 to 5:50, with a ten-minute recess in between. At some schools the students will also be asked to help with some chores after the evening meal. Saturday morning after breakfast the students will help with the work for an hour and then will meet at 9:10 for a lecture and class discussion until 10:30. After a ten-minute break there will be another lecture and class discussion from 10:40 to 12:00.

Homework: The Sunday you arrive at the School you should read through the five lessons to be considered on the first Monday and try to get the main points in mind. Thereafter each evening your homework will consist of reading through the five lessons to be considered the following day in class. It is expected that each student will take up to three hours an evening to read this material. First (1) note the main head-

ings for the lesson you are considering. Then (2) read the material carefully so that you feel you understand it. Then (3) look at the main headings again to be sure you have the main outline of the material in mind. Note the main point of the material as set out at the end of the lesson, also consider briefly which points especially need to be applied in your congregation. To complete the five studies within three hours will mean spending not more than 35 minutes on each, so you will have little time for looking up any more than an occasional scripture. The other scriptures as well as additional points from the source material that the instructor wishes to call to your attention will be considered in class. *It is not wise to stay up late to study and then be tired in class the next day.* Do not spend too much time on any one lesson, but try to apportion your time to read the entire assignment before class the next day.

Notes: No marks or notes should be made in this textbook. If you wish to make personal notes from your studies you may do so, but please do not endeavor to copy out passages from the textbook. In discussing this material later with other brothers, you will want to rely on the Bible and other Society publications to establish the points under discussion rather than on a quotation from this textbook, which will not then be available to you or to them. We feel that your time would be better spent getting the material in mind and making a few brief notes, if desired, of information that will be especially helpful to your congregation. There is no need to try to outline in your notes any more than a few key points at the most, as your study time will not permit it. The time you are here at school can be spent more profitably in getting the sense of the material and the Scriptural reasons for what is said, considering how you can put such to practical use, thus helping to fix the material in your mind. Students are asked not to take recordings of class or dining-room discussions or lectures, or to take pictures during school sessions.

Meetings: You will be invited to attend the regular *Watchtower* study, Theocratic Ministry School and service meeting of a congregation convenient to the Kingdom Ministry School during the two weeks you are with the School. If possible, it is best to attend these meetings on Friday and Sunday, as the study schedule is lighter for Saturday morning and there is ample time to attend on Sunday. Perhaps some of the material scheduled for study on Friday night can be studied the night before, or before or after the meeting, so that you will be prepared for class the following day.

Work Assignments and Other Information: In most places where the Kingdom Ministry School is held it will be possible for the students to spend

about two hours a day helping with the work, either in connection with preparing for or cleaning up after meals, or assisting with other assignments. When your assignment is finished, if your supervisor has nothing more for you to do, you may have a little time left for further study. Additional information will be given you as necessary about rooming accommodations, arrangements for meals, laundry, etc. Some students will find they have time to enjoy field service with the local congregation on the weekend they will be attending the School, or they may wish to review the material already considered or prepare for the following week.

To the Instructor: If more than one class of students is enrolled at one time, then arrangements should be made for the instructors to alternate classes, teaching one group in the morning and the other in the afternoon, if that seems best, so that the students will get the benefit of having two instructors. You may wish to teach the same material to both groups. Where well-qualified local brothers are available who are good teachers, they may be invited to share in the course by delivering certain lectures or even handling an occasional class session.

On Saturdays the lectures may be accompanied by class discussion if desired, time may be taken to consider questions submitted by students or you may review highlights of the week's study.

It is felt that the students will have plenty to do reading through the material for consideration without giving them additional homework to prepare that will appreciably cut into their study period. However, for variety certain assignments may be made. The instructor may wish to consider giving such assignments to students who are able to cover the assignment without difficulty. Written reviews are not scheduled for this course as there is so much valuable material to be discussed. Any reviews of key points of the material may be handled orally toward the close of the class sessions. To give the students more time to concentrate on the material scheduled for this course, they are not being asked to develop their own Theocratic Ministry School or service meeting, but rather are invited to attend the one arranged by the local congregation.

Try to impress the material on the minds of the students, so that when they complete a class they have the main point well in mind, or the principal points of the outline, rather than trying to remember a wide variety of minor or technical points. This may call for repetition, special emphasis of principal ideas or use of verbal illustrations. Avoid cluttering up the course with a variety of charts and diagrams, as the students may become so interested in copying these that they miss much of the valuable material under discussion. Jesus used illustrations, but they were verbal ones, easily understood. Help the students to see the practicality of the course, how the material applies

to them as overseers and how they can use it in their own congregation.

Instructors may want to vary the method of handling material in class. Here are a few basic suggestions: (1) Much of the material can be considered by class discussion, with the instructor leading the thinking of the class by questions on the material and then having the students read and discuss key scriptures. (2) It will stimulate thinking on the part of the students with a view to local application of the material if they are asked to comment how they personally handle certain matters in their congregations. (3) At times, you may wish to ask certain students to prepare a brief oral report for the class on a certain portion or aspect of the material. Following some reports, you may invite the class to ask questions of the speaker or to comment on points of special value. However, do not ask the whole class to prepare reports that they will never personally give, thus diverting their time from studying the material to concentrating on a small item that will take only a few minutes in class. (4) You may wish to assign certain ones in the class to prepare to ask questions on the material under one heading of the outline, with another portion of the class preparing questions on other material. (5) Or you could have certain ones serve as a panel and prepare to answer questions by the others. (6) To be sure to get to the main point of certain material, you may wish to interview students who have prepared certain material for class, rather than have them give a report. (7) To a limited extent, students may be asked to handle certain portions of the material, being assigned in advance to cover a given part of the outline. If necessary, they may be given time to do the necessary preparation during the time that other students are caring for other work assignments.

Some teaching suggestions are being incorporated in the material, but other items may be posted by the instructor on the information board or assigned in class for preparation by the students. Variety in handling the material is good, but do not unduly burden the students with special assignments to prepare for class as a regular thing, especially if they have difficulty reading through their assignment of homework.

In some classes, if the instructor observes that certain brothers have difficulty in reading the homework assignment due to language or educational difficulties, he may wish to arrange for several brothers who are good readers to work with such ones, reading the material aloud and briefly discussing it, so all will be well prepared for class.

In some lands, due to differing religious viewpoints of the people or difficulties in connection with the ministry, arrangements for meetings or the manner of carrying on the field ministry may be slightly different than what is outlined in this course, and in such cases the instructor should

make appropriate adjustments in discussing the material with the brothers so as to be in harmony with local arrangements. This textbook is not intended to provide rules for our ministry, but it should be adapted to meet local needs in accomplishing our goal of worshiping Jehovah and making disciples.

If questions arise to which you do not know the answer, do not guess. Simply say you do not know. Get the information later on if you can. When problems are presented that involve judging the rightness of action of others, such as disfellowshipping actions, etc., do not pass judgment on them. At best you are hearing only one side of the story and, as a consequence, you do not have a full picture of the matter. You may draw attention to the principles that would govern a decision in such matters, but it is not up to you to apply them.

During classroom sessions both the instructor and the students should be addressed as Brother with their last name.

Counsel should be given in a kindly way, taking

into consideration the abilities of the one being counseled so that he feels helped, not reprimanded. Never belittle the efforts of a student, but show loving interest in each one.

Advance preparation each day is important to conduct effective classroom sessions, even though you have conducted the course many times. When discussing Lesson No. 46 it will be helpful to have some forms provided by the Society available for use in the class discussion. If you plan to refer to a certain textbook in class, be sure to ask the students to bring it beforehand.

The instructor should keep in mind that the purpose of the course is not to provide a set of rules for the brothers, but rather to direct them to the Bible as our guide in life and in dealing with the problems that the brothers encounter in the congregations. As elders, the students will want to use this material to strengthen the brothers they are associated with as they participate zealously in the work God has given us to do now, and as they prepare for life in Jehovah's new system.

ABBREVIATIONS OF PUBLICATION TITLES

Symbols	Titles
<i>ad</i>	<i>-Aid to Bible Understanding</i>
<i>fr</i>	<i>-Defending and Legally Establishing the Good News</i>
<i>g</i>	<i>-Awake!</i>
<i>im</i>	<i>-“Things in Which It Is Impossible for God to Lie”</i>
<i>is</i>	<i>-Is the Bible Really the Word of God?</i>
<i>jp</i>	<i>-Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose</i>
<i>kj</i>	<i>-“The Nations Shall Know that I Am Jehovah”—How?</i>
<i>li</i>	<i>-Life Everlasting—in Freedom of the Sons of God</i>
<i>mn</i>	<i>-“Look! I Am Making All Things New”</i>
<i>ms</i>	<i>-“Make Sure of All Things; Hold Fast to What Is Fine”</i>
<i>or</i>	<i>-Organization for Kingdom-preaching and Disciple-making</i>
<i>pm</i>	<i>-Paradise Restored to Mankind—By Theocracy!</i>
<i>qm</i>	<i>-Qualified to Be Ministers (Revised)</i>
<i>sg</i>	<i>-Theocratic Ministry School Guidebook</i>
<i>si</i>	<i>-“All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial”</i>
<i>tr</i>	<i>-The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life</i>
<i>w</i>	<i>-The Watchtower</i>
<i>yb</i>	<i>-Yearbook</i>

TABLE OF CONTENTS AND SCHEDULE FOR STUDY

FIRST WEEK

Lesson	Scheduled for	Subject
1	Mon. 9:10	Jehovah God, His Qualities and Dealings
2	" 10:40	Our Relationship with Jehovah
3	" 2:10	Recognizing Jehovah's Organization
4	" 3:00	Origin and Authenticity of the Bible
5	" 4:30	What Makes Good Overseers
6	Tues. 9:10	Jesus Christ—His Place in God's Purpose
7	" 10:40	Responsibilities of Members of the Congregation
8	" 2:10	Improving Speaking and Teaching Ability
9	" 3:00	God's Government—A Reality
10	" 4:30	Studying the Bible with Benefit
11	Wed. 9:10	How the Elders Work Together as a Body
12	" 10:40	Giving Counsel to Individuals
13	" 2:10	House-to-House Ministry
14	" 3:00	Showing Full Appreciation for Jehovah's Temple
15	" 4:30	Preaching from House to House
16	Thurs. 9:10	Building Up Spirituality in the Congregation
17	" 10:40	Reaching All Who Will Hear
18	" 2:10	Making Return Visits
19	" 3:00	Responsibilities of Overseers
20	" 4:30	Visiting Those Showing Interest
21	Fri. 9:10	Life, Marvelous Gift of God
22	" 10:40	The Watchtower and Congregation Book Studies
23	" 2:10	Home Bible Study Ministry
24	" 3:00	Whole-Souled Service to Jehovah
25	" 4:30	Conducting Home Bible Studies
26	Sat. 9:10	Operations of the Holy Spirit
27	" 10:40	How Bible Laws Are Administered

SECOND WEEK

Lesson	Scheduled for	Subject
28	Mon. 9:10	Helping Men in the Congregation
29	" 10:40	The Service Meeting
30	" 2:10	Jehovah's Progressive Organization
31	" 3:00	Importance of the Shepherding Work
32	" 4:30	Readjusting Your Erring Brother
33	Tues. 9:10	Helping Women in the Congregation
34	" 10:40	The Theocratic Ministry School and Public Meetings
35	" 2:10	Our Responsibility to God and Caesar
36	" 3:00	The Issue of Sovereignty—How It Affects Us
37	" 4:30	Preparation for Baptism and Field Ministry
38	Wed. 9:10	Family Training for Life
39	" 10:40	Christian Conscience and Spiritual Maturity
40	" 2:10	Kingdom Hall—Center of Pure Worship
41	" 3:00	Worldwide Organization to Praise Jehovah
42	" 4:30	Marriage, Separation and Divorce
43	Thurs. 9:10	Pursuing the Way of Love
44	" 10:40	Safeguarding the Cleanness of the Congregation, Part 1
45	" 2:10	Helping Others to Make Advancement
46	" 3:00	Handling Congregation Records and Correspondence
47	" 4:30	Accurately Teaching the Way of Truth
48	Fri. 9:10	Safeguarding the Cleanness of the Congregation, Part 2
49	" 10:40	How to Aid Those with Marital Problems
50	" 2:10	Resurrection Magnifies God's Power and Love
51	" 3:00	Legal Rights and Difficult Times
52	" 4:30	The Value of Discipline and Counsel from Jehovah
53	Sat. 9:10	Endurance That Results in Divine Approval
54	" 10:40	"An Interchange of Encouragement"

Jehovah God, His Qualities and Dealings

HOW WE CAN COME TO KNOW JEHOVAH

In order to know Jehovah, we must communicate with him

He speaks to us through his Word, which is his revelation to us about himself and his purposes (2 Pet. 1:20, 21; Isa. 46:8-13; Rom. 16:25, 26)

We must diligently search his Word to get the knowledge and understanding of him and his ways, which mean everlasting life (Prov. 2:1-9; John 17:3)

We must approach him constantly by means of prayer, through his Son, Jesus Christ (Jas. 1:5, 6; Heb. 7:25; 11:6)

To come to know Jehovah, we must meditate upon him, letting our thoughts dwell appreciatively on him and his ways (Ps. 143:5)

Jehovah's wonderful works of creation help us to come to know him as he reveals himself through them (Rom. 1:19, 20; Rev. 4:11)

We also come to know Jehovah as we personally yield to his direction and experience fulfillment of his promises (Prov. 3:6; Ps. 34:8)

WHAT WE LEARN ABOUT JEHOVAH

He is the Sovereign Ruler of the universe, and rightly so, because he is the Creator, the Source of life, the All-wise, Almighty and Eternal One (Ps. 36:9; 90:1, 2; Rom. 11:33-36; Rev. 1:8)

Jehovah is the Great Provider for man and the universe

He is capable of satisfying the needs of all mankind, both spiritually and materially (Gen. 2:8, 9; Ps. 145:15, 16)

He provided hope for mankind in the ransom (Gen. 3:15; John 3:16)

He has made himself known by his personal name, Jehovah, as represented by the Hebrew Tetragrammaton (YHWH) (Gen. 2:4)

The meaning of his name ("He Causes to Become") indicates that he fulfills his purposes (Ex. 3:13-16; Ezek. 36:20-23; Ps. 83:18; ad 888)

QUALITIES OF JEHOVAH TO IMITATE

Jehovah is a God of love and kindness (1 John 4:8; Ex. 34:6)

He created man in His image and likeness, also variety in plants, animals, food, association, etc., for man to enjoy (Gen. 1:26-31; 2:18)

The greatest manifestation of his love was the giving of his own faithful only-begotten Son as a redeemer for mankind (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8)

Jehovah's dealings with man are expressions of his "loving-kindnesses" and "undeserved kindness" (Ps. 25:6; Rom. 3:23, 24)

Nothing can separate us from God's love if we serve him faithfully (Rom. 8:38, 39)

Our imitating God's love and kindness recommends us as true worshipers (John 13:35; 2 Cor. 6:4, 6)

Jehovah is loyal (Jer. 3:12)

He is devoted to righteousness and truthfulness (Rev. 15:3, 4; 16:5)

Because of his loyalty, he can be depended on to direct the way of his people, guarding their lives or souls (Prov. 2:7, 8; Ps. 97:10)

Loyalty (to Jehovah, to his kingdom, to the congregation and to our brothers) is a facet of the new personality that we must put on (Eph. 4:24)

He is holy, righteous and just

The quality of holiness belongs to Jehovah (Ex. 39:30; Zech. 14:20)

The Israelites were constantly reminded that he is the Source of all holiness (Ex. 28:36, 37)

Jesus Christ addressed him as "Holy Father" (John 17:11)

Cleanness (holiness) in the superlative degree is attributed to Jehovah by those in the heavens (Isa. 6:3; Rev. 4:8)

He can be worshiped only in holiness; one practicing wickedness is disgusting in his sight (Prov. 21:27)

Jehovah is called the "abiding place of righteousness" (Jer. 50:7)

He abides by his own standard of righteousness without deviation; we can have utmost confidence in him (Ps. 89:14)

His specific commands may vary toward individuals and times, but he remains ever constant in righteous judgments (Deut. 32:4; Ps. 92:15; Ezek. 33:17-20)

To prove ourselves to be children of God, we must practice righteousness (1 John 3:10)

As Supreme Judge and Statute-giver, he is a "lover of . . . justice" (Isa. 33:22; Ps. 33:5; Job 37:23)

He shows no partiality in dealing with his creatures (Acts 10:34, 35)

His judgments are administered according to facts (Rom. 2:5-11; Heb. 4:13)

The exercise of justice according to God's standards is not a burden; man's happiness actually depends on it (Ps. 106:3; Isa. 56:1, 2)

When you act as judges, you must exercise justice (Mic. 6:8)

The wisdom of God is unsearchable (Rom. 11:33-36)

His wisdom is absolute; there is nothing beyond his understanding (Isa. 40:13, 14; Job 12:13)

His wisdom is evident in the creation; entire universe functions marvelously, demonstrates order (1 Cor. 14:33)

His wise moral standards are vital for stability, sound judgment and successful human living (Deut. 32:4-6)

He will give us "wisdom from above" if we ask for it in faith (Jas. 1:5; 3:17)

Jehovah uses his power with patience and long-suffering

Being almighty, God has the power and authority to deal as he wishes (Isa. 40:25, 26; Jer. 32:17)

Jehovah has demonstrated his patience and long-suffering from the beginning of man's history (2 Pet. 3:9)

Could have justly executed Adam and Eve in Eden, but displayed long-suffering for the sake of unborn descendants (Rom. 8:20, 21)

God is long-suffering only as long as this is in harmony with justice, righteousness and wisdom; his patience does not continue forever (Gen. 6:3; Isa. 63:10)

Patience and long-suffering on our part recommend us as God's ministers (2 Cor. 6:4, 6; Jas. 5:7, 10, 11)

He is a God of mercy

Mercy is a characteristic of God's personality, his normal way of reacting toward those in need (2 Cor. 1:3)

As a merciful God, he desires that all gain life (2 Pet. 3:9)

His mercy is never out of balance with his justice (Ezek. 33:14-16)

Unrepentant ones, deserving of punishment, cannot presume on God's mercy; his mercy has limits (Isa. 9:17; 63:7-10)

There is forgiveness for repentant ones (Isa. 55:7)

He does not abandon them, but mercifully supplies aid and direction (Jas. 5:13-16)

When we manifest mercy, we properly reflect the personality of our heavenly Father (Luke 6:36)

LEARNING FROM JEHOVAH'S DEALINGS WITH MANKIND

In his dealing with the rebellion in Eden, Jehovah demonstrated his wisdom, justice, love and power

He outlined a provision for fulfilling his divine purpose, following up that provision by his covenants and promises (Gen. 3:15; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:8-11; Luke 22:29)

His justice did not condone unrighteousness but declared punishment for wrongdoers (Gen. 3:14-19)

He displayed love toward the descendants of Adam by providing a ransom, repurchase price (1 John 4:10)

His power was used to execute judgment against wicked ones

When handling judicial matters in your congregation, imitate Jehovah; be firm in upholding his law, yet merciful toward repentant ones (Jas. 3:17)

Jehovah's love, patience and long-suffering, as well as his justice, are outstanding facets of his personality revealed in his dealings with fleshly Israel (Ex. 34:4-9; Neh. 9:16, 17)

Though executing the instigators of rebellion and pronouncing judgment against disobedient ones, Jehovah continued to put up with the murmuring and complaining of the Israelites and did not cease providing for them (Num. 14:2-12, 29; 16:1-3, 32, 33, 41-49; Rom. 10:21)

Even after his own Son was slain due to their rejection of him, He continued to favor them for a period of three and a half years

As a result, repentant thousands accepted the provision of salvation through his Son (Acts 2:14-41)

As an imitator of God, exercise restraint in dealing with wrongdoers, not approving their wrong conduct, but helping them to change their course through repeated admonition (1 Thess. 5:14, 15)

Jehovah's dealings with individuals such as David and Peter reflect his marvelous qualities

Even though labeled "a man agreeable to my heart" by Jehovah, David committed a grave sin against Him and His law (2 Sam. 11:1-27)

Jehovah did not permit close relationship, sentimentality or partiality to keep him from punishing David (2 Sam. 12:1-23)

But for all his faults and gross sins, David always showed the right heart condition by repenting and begging Jehovah's forgiveness, thus warranting Jehovah's continued mercy (Ps. 32:3, 5, 7)

Jehovah's dealings with the apostle Peter show his love, compassion and undeserved kindness. Peter's impetuous acts and finally his denial of Jesus three times were forgiven by Jehovah; Peter's attitude called for Jehovah's compassion (Matt. 26:51, 52, 69-75)

Jehovah blessed the later ministry of Peter due to his faith and fine works (Luke 22:32; John 21:15-17; Acts 2:14-41)

These examples should encourage us personally not to reject the discipline of Jehovah and not to fail to seek Jehovah's forgiveness for our transgressions (Heb. 12:5, 6)

Jehovah's will to carry out his purposes is magnified by his dealings

His chief purpose is the sanctification and vindication of his name and sovereignty (Ps. 83:18; Rom. 9:17)

Jehovah has not changed regarding his promises and purpose (Mal. 3:6; Jas. 1:17)

His judgment of Adam has not changed, although the offspring of Adam are being reconciled to God (Rom. 5:10, 11, 14-16)

He will judge those not keeping his regulations (Isa. 24:5, 6)

He refines and purifies his people, using his Word to accomplish this (Ps. 17:3; Mal. 3:3)

He wants mankind to return to him (Jer. 18:7-11; 2 Cor. 5:18-20)

His original purpose toward the earth will be fulfilled

He will remove those ruining the earth (Rev. 11:18)

He will bless those who will survive to inhabit the earth (Rev. 7:9-17)

God's original purpose fulfilled due to his loyalty, justice and power, bringing about the vindication of his name, Jehovah, "He Causes to Become" (Rev. 15:3, 4)

MAIN POINT: It is important for us to appreciate the qualities of Jehovah and to see how we, in a limited way, can be imitators of Jehovah in dealing with our brothers

SOURCES: ad 780, 888-894, 984, 993-995, 1045, 1073, 1080, 1082-1084, 1139, 1140, 1202, 1411, 1660; ms 264-269; tr 17-26

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Class discussion, with questions by instructor and comments by students

No. 2 - First Monday, 10:40

Our Relationship with Jehovah

JEHOVAH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSONAGE IN THE UNIVERSE

One of our responsibilities as elders is to help others appreciate our position as humans in relation to God

A key point to bear in mind in considering our relationship with Jehovah is this: "By him [Jehovah] we have life and move and exist" (Acts 17:28)

As the Creator, Jehovah is the One to whom we are indebted for life and everything that sustains it (Gen. 1:27, 28; Ps. 104:14)

Since all of us are so completely dependent on God, if we are to have a favorable relationship with him we must recognize his position and our relationship to him

Jehovah is the Superior One, the Potter, and we are the inferior ones, the clay (Isa. 64:8; Jer. 18:6)

Jehovah is the Source of all true wisdom; his wisdom far exceeds that of any creature (Rom. 16:27; Jer. 10:12)

It does not "belong" to man to direct his steps; not that man cannot try to do it, but he is not equipped to do it successfully apart from the direction that God provides (Jer. 10:23; Prov. 12:15)

To enjoy a good relationship with Jehovah we must listen to all that he says and conform to his will; he will guide us in ways that are for our own lasting good (Ps. 16:11; Prov. 3:5-7)

His greatness is enhanced by his love, which should instill in us confidence and draw us to him with a desire to do his will (1 John 4:16-19)

COMING INTO A RELATIONSHIP WITH JEHOVAH

Newly interested ones, and those preparing for baptism, need our help to grasp fully what is involved in entering into a relationship with Jehovah

We are not born as persons who are approved by God; rather we are alienated from him because of sin and imperfection (Ps. 51:5; Col. 1:21)

One needs to meet certain qualifications in order to come into relationship with Jehovah; such relationship is not forced on anyone, but Jehovah offers us that opportunity because of his undeserved kindness (Titus 3:4-7)

First, one must take in accurate knowledge of God and exercise faith in him and in his provision for salvation through Jesus Christ (Heb. 11:6; John 17:3)

Then repentance over one's sins is necessary, since we are all descendants of the sinner Adam and we have all misused our life by failing to do the will of our Creator (Acts 17:30; Rev. 4:11)

Repentance is a feeling of "regret, contrition, or compunction, for what one has done or omitted to do"

Repentance marks a halt in one's wrong course, a desisting from a course based on one's own standards of right and wrong (Prov. 3:7; Acts 3:19)

It includes abandoning such things as fornication and adultery, homosexuality, drunkenness, thievery, murder, greed, reviling, extortion, lying and coveting (1 Cor. 6:9-11)

It requires that one withdraw from participation in all activities, organizations and movements that are in opposition to God; must be "no part of the world" (John 15:19; Jas. 4:4; 1 John 2:15, 16)

Next, one must turn around or be converted; he not only must feel sorry over the past misuse of his life but also must turn to doing the will of God; there must be "works that befit repentance" (Acts 26:20; Rom. 6:11)

Should seek out and actively associate with true worshipers (Ps. 119:63)

Should do the work assigned to Christians, namely, preach the good news and make disciples (Mark 13:10; Matt. 28:19)

Should reflect godly qualities in dealings with others (Luke 6:35, 36; Gal. 5:22, 23; 6:10)

Further, the one who has repented and converted must "disown himself," disclaiming ownership of himself and, instead, freely committing the guidance of his life course to Jehovah God, acknowledging Jesus Christ as his exemplar (Matt. 16:24; 1 Pet. 2:21)

This is what we call "dedication"

'Disowning oneself' does not mean that one must cease all secular work, though the kind of work one does and the amount should be governed by God's Word (Eph. 4:28; Matt. 6:24)

'Disowning oneself' certainly does not mean that family responsibilities may now be ignored in order to share in other activities (Matt. 15:5, 6; 1 Tim. 5:8)

Rather, in everything we do we must be guided by the words of the One whom we have acknowledged as Lord (Col. 3:15-24), and we should zealously share in the special work of Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making that has been entrusted to Christians

Finally, one 'makes request to God for a good conscience' by being baptized; thus symbolizing one's full dedication to Jehovah (1 Pet. 3:21)

Coming into a relationship with Jehovah requires more than desire on our part; it is possible only on God's terms, and only for those who conform to His requirements; it is God who lovingly makes such an arrangement possible

MAINTAINING A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH JEHOVAH

Personally we must maintain a good relationship with Jehovah, and, as elders, it is our responsibility to help every individual in the congregation to do the same

In Revelation 2:4, a very searching statement is made to the congregation in Ephesus: "Nevertheless, I hold this against you, that you have left the love you had at first."

To maintain relationship with Jehovah one must not lose the intense initial love for the truth. Recall the joy, satisfaction, peace of mind and contentment the truth first brought you. That same love must continue if you are to please Jehovah

Jehovah's blessing must continue if one is to have joy and satisfaction in life (Prov. 10:22)

Time does not tarnish goldlike qualities of our faith and belief in God's Word and promises. We believe just as firmly now in what God says as when we first embraced the truth, and do not want to be like those Paul wrote about at Galatians 5:7 (1 Pet. 1:7)

This requires that we pay attention to ourselves and our teaching

Need to examine our way of life constantly (1 Tim. 4:16; Heb. 2:1)

Ways to maintain constancy in our relationship with Jehovah:

Personal study necessary (2 Tim. 2:15)

More than just reading involved here; meditation necessary (Ps. 77:11, 12; Prov. 15:28; 1 Tim. 4:15)

This means not just studying or reading to cover material, but to get the sense of it

Must respect what we read of Jehovah's commands; let them govern not only in big things, but in every facet of our life

Apply the counsel to ourselves and make necessary changes

Association also of great value (Heb. 10:24, 25)
Bad associations spoil useful habits (1 Cor. 15:33)

Converse of this is true: good associates will aid us to keep useful habits

Can associate with Jehovah by reviewing his Word and by prayer

Good association helps one to maintain a right attitude and motivation for worship (Deut. 31:12)

Regular participation in the *field ministry* a vital factor to keep a good relationship with Jehovah

At various times Jehovah gives his servants special work to perform. In these critical last days it is a twofold one: that of proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom; secondly, of teaching those who respond to the Kingdom message

This work being done in limited time so our maintaining a right relationship with Jehovah depends in large measure on whether we zealously publicize God's kingdom or show indifference; whether we advocate it or are silent about it

Devoting time to this work is important, but our service to Jehovah involves more. Our attitude, our desire to share the good news with others, our way of life and our daily conduct have much to do with whether we enjoy Jehovah's favor or not

Prayer is also important in maintaining a right relationship with Jehovah

For prayer to reach Jehovah we must sincerely live in harmony with the righteous principles of his Word (Prov. 15:29; 1 Pet. 3:7)

Prayer should show our interest in our brothers and sisters (Note Lord's Prayer: "Our Father . . .", "give us today our bread . . .", "forgive us . . .") This includes fleshly relatives and all seeking to please God and do his will (Matt. 6:9-13; Jas. 5:16)

Prayer shows a frank recognition of our complete dependence on God for everything; this cements a relationship with Jehovah that brings joy to us

We pray to thank and praise Jehovah, also, in connection with our dedication, at mealtimes, to ask forgiveness, during temptations, during physical or spiritual difficulties, during persecution, to make right decisions, in handling problems involving the brothers, on behalf of brothers who are in difficulty or danger, etc.

We want to handle matters as Jehovah would want, so must always seek his guidance

Maintain a *good conscience*, one trained in righteousness. Do not violate your conscience, even though others may be offended. Your good

conscience gained by making major changes in your life. Do not allow self to violate good principles you have now begun following (1 Pet. 3:16; Acts 23:1)

Do not let someone else's conscience be your guide; to thrust aside your own good conscience may result in shipwreck to your soul (1 Tim. 1:18-20)

RECOGNIZING HOW JEHOVAH DEALS WITH US THROUGH AN EARTHLY ORGANIZATION

Jehovah is not dealing with persons individually apart from the Christian congregation (Matt. 24:45-47; Eph. 4:11-14)

Not many roads to follow for favored relationship with God; the Bible refers to one as "The Way" (Acts 9:2; 19:9)

Under Christ's headship, the "faithful and discreet slave" helps to guide us in this "Way" so we maintain a good relationship with Jehovah

This "Way" includes: Love among ourselves; respect for God's Word; sanctifying God's name; proclaiming the kingdom of God as man's true hope; keeping separate from the world and its affairs

Thus it is evident that superficial identification with the Christian congregation is no guarantee of God's approval; we must walk in "The Way"

We must maintain the right attitude toward Jehovah's earthly organization to have the right relationship with him

The organization is fallible, subject to making mistakes; this requires us to show loyalty and to wait upon Jehovah to correct any defects (Matt. 7:9-11; Heb. 13:17)

One maintaining a good relationship with Jehovah does not run ahead on his own if he feels a Scriptural point is misunderstood; he waits upon Jehovah, knowing that "food at the proper time" will be forthcoming (Prov. 4:18; Matt. 24:45)

Jehovah is infallible as our Grand Instructor (Isa. 30:20, 21)

He knows when we need certain truths and that we cannot absorb everything at one time (Ps. 143:10; John 16:12)

In maintaining our relationship with Jehovah we must watch that we do not become easily stumbled, or seek a way out of our responsibilities to Jehovah

Follow the advice of James 1:5, 6 as you seek for wisdom, remembering to keep on asking in faith, "not doubting at all"

HELPING OTHERS INTO A RELATIONSHIP WITH JEHOVAH

Once we know his requirements and have established our relationship with Jehovah, our duty as shepherds and teachers is to aid others into this blessed relationship

Show others the importance of a right mental attitude; none can *assume* relationship with Jehovah, but we must *seek* to know him and his will for us, then *do* it with a whole heart (Matt. 7:7)

God is not forcing anyone into a relationship with him; but it must be entered by us willingly

To all in the congregation it is vital to stress this need of continually maintaining a close relationship with Jehovah

As opportunity affords in handling parts on meetings, in commenting at such, in visiting brothers in their homes, in all ways of life, speak of Jehovah and the need of establishing and maintaining a relationship with him. It brings eternal benefits to those who do

MAIN POINT: The big responsibility of elders is to help brothers appreciate and strengthen their relationship with Jehovah by fully submitting themselves to the doing of His will

SOURCES: or 13-18; im 399-407; tr 14-16, 123-129, 151-156, 187-189; ad 1385-1388

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Instructor leads class in discussion of material, having students look up and discuss key scriptures

No. 3 - First Monday, 2:10

Recognizing Jehovah's Organization

JEHOVAH IS HEAD OF GRAND HEAVENLY ORGANIZATION

Heavenly creatures are organized into an efficient and orderly arrangement for our benefit

God's first creation a "master worker"; also cherubs, seraphs and millions of other angels serve under God's direction (Prov. 8:30; Ps. 99:1; Isa. 6:1-7)

Bible describes the angels as organized into "thrones, lordships, governments, authorities" (Col. 1:16)

All angels are accountable to Jehovah for duties performed (Dan. 7:9, 10; Job 1:6; 2:1)

Do we appreciate this heavenly organization? All should recognize its power and services in our behalf (2 Ki. 6:15-17; Ps. 34:7; Heb. 1:14)

Jesus recognized this heavenly organization, and its power to back up God's earthly servants (Matt. 26:53)

JEHOVAH HAS VISIBLE ORGANIZATION; RECOGNITION DUE ITS REPRESENTATIVES

Moses was sent by God to deliver Israelites who became His select nation or organization; Aaron was spokesman for Moses

God's backing of Moses and Aaron evidenced by signs—rod to serpent; leprous hand; water to blood (Ex. 4:2-9, 30, 31)

At Mount Sinai Jehovah spoke to Moses, and the people heard His voice; they saw that Moses was his special representative (Ex. 19:9)

If you were there, would you have recognized God's arrangement, submitting to directions and laws given through Moses?

Some failed to recognize God's representatives, Moses and Aaron

Korah, Dathan and Abiram did not recognize God's representatives, with disastrous results to themselves and their thousands of supporters (Num. 16:1-50)

Even Miriam and Aaron had difficulty recognizing the organizational arrangement with Moses their brother as God's appointed servant, and suffered rebuke (Num. 12:1-16)

As we look back, do we wonder how Israelites could be so blind as not to recognize God's visible representatives? Could they not see that Moses and Aaron were God's representatives? Yes, but they failed to apply in their lives what they knew

JEHOVAH ESTABLISHED CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION; NEED TO RECOGNIZE IT

In time, God sent his only-begotten Son to earth to lay the foundation for the Christian congregation; events at his birth and baptism prove God sent him (Luke 2:10, 11; Matt. 3:16, 17)

Jesus identified a special work for God's new Christian congregation, that of preaching God's kingdom and making disciples (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20)

Christian congregation was established with outpouring of holy spirit on day of Pentecost 33 C.E. after Jesus' ascension to heaven

Organization established by God, not men

God chose Christ to be head of the congregation, and he purchased the congregation with blood of his Son (Eph. 1:22, 23; Acts 20:28)

God also chooses the members of the congregation, setting each one in place as it pleases him; complete number 144,000 (1 Cor. 12:18, 27, 28; Rev. 14:1-4; 20:4-6)

First members of congregation anointed on Pentecost 33 C.E.; holy spirit there stimulated the activity resulting in 3,000 being added to the congregation of about 120 (Acts 1:15; 2:1-4, 41)

Holy spirit moved Peter to preach to Cornelius, the first noncircumcised Gentile member of the congregation; it was not something initiated by Peter (Acts 10:44-48)

Jehovah caused the Bible to be written to govern his congregation; it unites the organization earth wide and takes precedence over

anything humans say (1 Pet. 1:24, 25; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21)

The evidence is clear that the first-century Christian congregation was established by God

Christian congregation is God's "servant," his "faithful and discreet slave," that he entrusts with weighty responsibility of providing "food at the proper time" (Matt. 24:45-47; compare Isaiah 43:10)

From the time of outpouring of spirit at Pentecost 33 C.E., "slave" class proceeded to take care of its appointed responsibility (Luke 12:42-44)

Not all members of "slave" wrote counsel to congregations, or gave admonition in public discourses (1 Tim. 2:12)

But every member of "slave" class shared in imparting spiritual food to new believers; all in various ways contributed to upbuilding individual congregation members, the "domestics" (Eph. 4:16)

From among "slave" certain ones served as visible governing body; first-century governing body was made up of the apostles and other "older men" in Jerusalem (Acts 15:2, 6, 23)

Under the direction of the governing body, "older men" or "overseers" and "ministerial servants" were appointed in congregations (Acts 14:23; 20:28)

IDENTIFYING MODERN "SLAVE" CLASS

The question of Matthew 24:45 is vital: 'Who really is that slave today?'

In identifying the "slave," Matthew 24:46 is noteworthy, for it says that on the Master's return the "slave" would be found providing food

Evidence of history is clear that when Christ put in second appearance at end of "appointed times of the nations" in 1914 only one organization was feeding people spiritual "food at the proper time"

Credentials of that organization are strong, even as it is clear that Moses, Christ and first-century Christian organization were God's representatives

Can we help others appreciate that the organization with which we are serving is God's, that it is the one being supplied with spiritual food by his "slave"? Are we convinced of it ourselves?

No one person among Jehovah's witnesses is the "slave," but, rather, the remaining members of spirit-begotten ones on earth as a class at any given time, constitute the "slave" class "Slave" class provides food for individual members described as "domestics"

Now "slave" enjoys a new position, being appointed over all Christ's earthly "belongings" (Matt. 24:47)

Since 1935, in particular, "slave" has been caring for the "great crowd" of "other sheep" gathered into God's organization

As in first century, certain members of "slave" class are selected to be the governing body, which, directed by holy spirit, makes appointment of overseers and ministerial servants "Slave" class has organized legal corporations, such as Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania and others, in order that preaching work may be most effectively accomplished under present-day conditions

Governing body does not handle all correspondence with congregations, but works through the legal corporations and elders who have been appointed to work in branch offices and in congregations

We are put to a test: Do we see the hand of God in these organizational arrangements? Are we deeply convinced this is Jehovah's organization? Or is it only that Jehovah's witnesses seem to have the best religion we have found? Also, do we truly appreciate that Christ, and no man, is head of the congregation? Do our actions show it?

Our acceptability to God depends on our willingness to serve along with other imperfect men, overlooking their shortcomings, treating "slave" as Christ's brothers (Matt. 25:31-46)

RECOGNITION OF ORGANIZATION SHOWN BY IMITATING THE HUMILITY OF CHRIST

Jesus, although chosen head of the congregation, served as minister of all (Matt. 20:26-28; Phil. 2:5-8)

Speaking to those who were to become elders and members of the governing body, Jesus on the last evening with them emphasized the need for them to minister to others and not seek prominence

Apostles had manifested worldly spirit, being concerned as to who was the greatest (Luke 22:24)

This dispute arose at least twice in the same year (Mark 9:33-37; Matt. 20:20-28)

On his final night as a human, Jesus used the occasion to teach humility by serving as a slave to his apostles, washing their feet (John 13:4-15)

In modern history of God's organization, some elective elders in 1920's and 1930's had a proud, independent spirit, and some rejected what was said in the *Watchtower* magazine and put forth their own ideas

Elders today should properly have humble spirit, looking for guidance from the "slave" and its appointed representatives

Elders should not permit greater control they have now of congregational activities to cause them to become proud, independent (Rom. 12:3)

At the same time, elders must, in imitation of Jesus, stand firm for righteous Bible standards, hating what is bad, working to keep the organization clean (Heb. 1:9)

RECOGNITION OF ORGANIZATION SHOWN BY EMULATING JEHOVAH'S LOVING WAYS

Jehovah is a compassionate overseer, tenderly leading his people, feeding them and protecting them (Isa. 40:10, 11; Ps. 103:13, 14)

Elders, who serve as undershepherds of God and Christ, should deal the same way with the flock Mothers with children may find it hard to do everything—getting them all ready for meetings—and so may be late. Are you glad to see them when they finally get there?

Jehovah shows consideration for the young and weak, so overseers who recognize God's organization will also

Others in the congregation are old; they may have limitations and shortcomings. How do you deal with them? (Lev. 19:32; Prov. 20:29; 1 Tim. 5:1)

Failure to show patience with limitations of aged, perhaps their slowness, could lead to our losing God's favor

Recognizing Jehovah's organization requires that we recognize not just those "above" us, but all our brothers as Jehovah's people

BENEFITS OF RECOGNIZING JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION

Close relationship with Jehovah; we will be in harmony with him and his ways

Fine relationship with brothers and sisters. As they love Jehovah, so they will love us because we are copying Him

We will realize that we are not carrying load ourselves, but that the vast heavenly and earthly organization is backing us up

Happy prospect is that all—the entire congregation—will survive the "great tribulation" and continue to serve as part of Jehovah's grand organization forever

MAIN POINT: By our being humble and imitating Jehovah's loving ways, we imitate Christ the Head of the congregation and show that we truly recognize this is God's organization

SOURCES: or 7-12; qm 376-383

TEACHING SUGGESTION: To be given as a lecture

Origin and Authenticity of the Bible

LOGICAL THAT GOD WOULD PROVIDE A RELIABLE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Study of the universe, including life on earth, testifies to the existence of a Creator, Life-giver (Rom. 1:20; Ps. 139:14)

Only a permanent written record could answer questions succeeding generations ask

What is origin of universe and mankind? Why are we plagued with sickness and death? What does the future hold? More importantly: What does the Creator approve, disapprove and require of us? How can we fit into His purposes?

Written record not as liable to corruption as oral tradition

Bible has not been influenced by legends; has been widely circulated in accurate form

Some 16,000 handwritten copies of the Bible (or parts) are available, some dating back to second century before Christ

Our personal experience with human fathers assures us that the universal God would provide man with such important information

On matters of highest importance, especially when many persons are involved, exact written records are necessary

Material universe shows God excels in loving interest; this argues that he would provide a guide for mankind

GOD USED MEN TO WRITE, BUT BIBLE IS HIS OWN INSPIRED WORD

Bible began to be written in 1513 B.C.E., about 1,000 years before Buddha and Confucius

Twenty-two of Bible's writers were finished before Confucius, Buddha and Lao-tzu (founder of Taoism) were born. Entire Bible written before the birth of Mohammed (mn 5-10)

The Bible does not claim merely to be *about* God, but *produced* at God's direction

Contrary to human inclination, men who wrote Bible books did not claim personal credit, but credited God (Isa. 20:2; Jer. 1:9)

Even Jesus, recognized as the outstanding teacher of Bible record, testified that his information was from God (John 14:10)

Bible writers agreed that God provided the material for them (Acts 1:16; 3:21)

Jehovah inspired devoted men to write accurately His messages

"All Scripture is *inspired of God*" (2 Tim. 3:16); uses Greek word *the-o-pneu-stos*, meaning literally "God-breathed"

Was not mere human "inspiration," stimulating mind or emotions

Spirit of God operated on (breathed on) writers, empowering them to write unerring messages (2 Pet. 1:20, 21; 2 Sam. 23:2)

It is reasonable that God could thus communicate with men

Astronauts in space or on moon broadcast messages and pictures back to earth; can be recorded with precision

Man's Creator has far greater capacity (Isa. 40:26)

Various means of inspiration used, but results always accurate

Sometimes men simply wrote God's words verbatim, as human secretaries (Ex. 34:27)

Dreams and visions conveyed divine messages, and as pictures or messages superimposed on the mind, were recorded permanently in the Bible (Gen. 15:12-16; 1 Ki. 3:5)

Visions impressed a revelation on conscious mind or on mind of one in a trance (Ezek. 1:1; Acts 10:9-17)

Writers often used their own mental faculties in selecting words, providing diversity of style (Eccl. 12:10)

Yet, were still guided and controlled by spirit, so end product was inerrant

Though various methods used, all of Bible is equally inspired

BIBLE ABOUNDS IN CLEAR EVIDENCE OF AUTHENTICITY

Accurate, reliable facts in Bible manifest its authenticity

It is *historically sound*, in contrast to other ancient accounts

Scholars recognize that ancient Egyptian, Assyrian, Persian and Babylonian accounts are full of exaggeration, myths and lies

Important historical persons and events, previously known only from the Bible and doubted by critics, have been confirmed by archaeology

Cuneiform tablets mention Jehoiachin; confirm 2 Kings 25:27-30 (is 46)

Bible gives specific names and datable information as in 1 Kings 14:25; Jeremiah 27:20; Luke 2:1, 2; 3:1, 2; Acts 18:12

W. M. Ramsey wrote: "Luke is a historian of the first rank"—*The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament*

Writers consulted and cited then-existing historical annals and documents (Num. 21:14; 1 Ki. 11:41; 14:19)

Bible's *geographical accuracy* proves it is reliable

Leader of a geological expedition in Sinai Peninsula said: "Where the Bible and the maps are at odds, we opt for The Book"—*The Sun*, San Bernardino, Calif., Oct. 19, 1967

Its *chronology* marks the Bible as authentic and reliable

Gives precise, believable chronological information (Ex. 12:40, 41; 1 Ki. 6:1) in contrast to gross distortions of other ancient accounts ("The Sumerian King List" lists eight kings whose rules totaled 241,000 years) (is 47, 48)

Archaeology corroborates many Biblical details
Babylonian fight against Lachish (Jer. 34:6, 7)
borne out by "Lachish Letters" (on pottery)
unearthed in 1935

Jerusalem's "water tunnel" (2 Sam. 5:8) discovered in 1867 revealing how David likely captured Jebusite city

These evidences confirm historical or factual accuracy, support the genuineness, but do not themselves prove that the Bible was inspired by God (is 45-47; *ad* 112)

Numerous lines of evidence combine to demonstrate undeniably that the Bible was inspired by Jehovah; cannot be a human product

Internal harmony of a book so long in writing points to the inspiration of the Bible

Written by some forty men during a period of 1,600 years (1513 B.C.E. to 98 C.E.), so no collusion possible

From first to last it highlights the theme of the Messianic kingdom to vindicate God's name; details often given that became meaningful only with future unfolding of God's purpose (Gen. 3:15; Rev. 12:1-12)

Scientific accuracy and knowledge indicate a divine source

Contrary to ancient myths, the Bible gave shape of the earth and the fact that it hangs on nothing (Job 26:7; Isa. 40:18, 22)

Accurately describes origin of the earth and of life-forms (Gen. 1:1 to 2:3)

Geologist W. E. Pratt said as to explaining these concepts in basic language: "I could hardly do better than follow rather closely much of the language of the first chapter of Genesis."—*The Lamp*, Fall 1971, p. 14

Scientists support the Bible's account of all men coming from a common ancestor and languages diverging from Shinar (is 48, 49)

Dietary and sanitary regulations of Mosaic law reflect a source of knowledge beyond what was then current (Lev. 11:1-38; 15:16-33; Num. 19:11-16; *ad* 579, 580)

Candor and style of Bible writers bear out inspiration

Frankly reported on personal and national sins and errors (Num. 20:9-12; Jonah 1:1-3; Matt. 26:31-56)

Directed glory, not to selves or men, but to God (Ps. 113:3-5)

Free from influence of ancient myths and folklore

Preservation and accurate transmission of text indicate that Jehovah is protecting this book as his production, not man's

Its preservation in face of every conceivable effort to destroy it proves it is Jehovah's Book (1 Pet. 1:25)

Manuscript discoveries, such as Dead Sea Scrolls, confirm basic textual purity; most variations are trivial

Prophecy is the foremost proof of the Bible's inspiration

No recorded prophecy from other nations; what their oracles said had no permanent value
Bible tells both origin and future of mankind
Jehovah has the unique ability to prophesy (Isa. 46:9, 10)

Bible prophecy is specific, not merely general forecasts of what might occur (Isa. 45:1, 2; 2 Ki. 19:5-7)

Fulfillment of some prophecies recorded right in the Bible (Gen. 9:25 = 1 Ki. 9:20, 21; Josh. 6:26 = 1 Ki. 16:34)

Long-range nature and fact that fulfillment was beyond the control of the writer prove prophecies were of divine source (Dan. 12:8, 9)

When Isaiah foretold that Babylon would overrun and desolate Judah, Babylon was merely a satellite of Assyria (Isa. 39:3-7); yet history proves it came true

Daniel chapter 8 gave advance facts about the defeat of Medo-Persia by Alexander and the division of his empire

Three decades in advance, Jesus foretold destruction of Jerusalem; same prophecies have larger fulfillment today

Symbolic language of Revelation 6:1-8 (war, food shortage, pestilence) combines with Matthew 24 in pointing beyond the first century

Such prophecies are not just a vindication of men who wrote them, but they prove undeniable authenticity of the Bible (is 104-134; *ad* 231, 232)

Evidence of the Bible's authenticity confirms (1) that it is accurate and reliable in detail, and (2) that it is inspired of God

BIBLE'S EFFECTS IN OUR LIVES AND CONGREGATION SUPPORT INSPIRATION

We daily see examples of the Bible's practicality and inspiration

The fine results produced by following its practical moral standards and righteous principles testify to its value and origin

It helps one in earning a living and finding satisfaction in work

Encourages industriousness, opposes laziness (2 Thess. 3:10-12)

By condemning drunkenness and gambling it aids one to avoid squandering earnings (Eph. 5:18; Isa. 65:11)

When its counsel is applied in the family, the home is more pleasant and there is more success in rearing children (Eph. 5:22-6:4)

Husband and wife are drawn together by love, not driven apart by suspicion, jealousy or competition; divorces are avoided

Parents clearly see their responsibilities toward their children, and youths are helped to benefit from Bible training

While still being imperfect, those applying Bible counsel gain improved health and better mental condition (Prov. 14:30)

With Bible's counsel on things needful and having a sure hope for the future, one can avoid many common frustrations and anxieties (Matt. 6:25-34; 1 Tim. 6:8-10)

Racial and national prejudices are dispelled (Acts 10:34, 35)

Young people gain proper respect for adults, especially elderly

Highest principles from God contained in the Bible, not just human theories; *they work* (1 Thess. 2:13; Matt. 22:37-39)

BIBLE'S PERFECTION IS SEEN IN ITS APPEAL TO GOOD HEARTS

Scriptures constitute perfect, refined message (Ps. 12:6; 119:140)

Bible's perfection is displayed in its ability to discern and reveal thoughts and intentions of the heart (Heb. 4:12, 13)

Gaining of understanding and pleasing God depend on heart

Easy to find excuses for rejecting the Bible if one lacks a good heart

Persons not desiring to humble themselves before God, admitting need for His help, haughtily reject the Bible (1 Cor. 1:26-29)

They seize upon seeming contradictions; demand that God provide the information they want, not what God decides

Testifies to accuracy of statement that "faith" is essential (Heb. 11:1, 6); even this reflects authenticity and origin of Bible

Purity, simplicity and reasonableness of the Bible's message appeal to humble ones who see their need for God and for God's Word

MAIN POINT: When with your Christian brothers, encourage discussion of reasons why we believe the Bible is God's Word and help them to appreciate that the Bible does not agree with what every pagan historian wrote or with every theory of men of science, but what the Bible says is truthful in every detail

SOURCES: *is* 30, 45-56, 104-108, 122-128, 136-146, 150-153; *ad* 112, 231, 232, 323, 579, 580; *ms* 45-48, 394-402; *mn* 5-10; *im* 20-24, 44; *sg* 14-19

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Invite class to comment on one evidence of inspiration of the Bible that they feel is outstanding and tell why (Emphasize fulfillment of prophecy; see *ms* 394-402.)

Ask class for experiences if any have had opportunity to speak on or defend inspiration of Bible before school or church groups

No. 5 - First Monday, 4:30

What Makes Good Overseers

JEHOVAH PROVIDES THE OVERSEERS

Jehovah, as the Great Overseer, is the owner of the flock (Acts 20:28)

He is the Overseer of our souls (1 Pet. 2:25)

Jehovah has appointed overseers

He has made Jesus the principal overseer of his flock

Jesus gave "gifts in men"; at the first the apostles evidently took the lead as ones 'given' by Christ (Eph. 4:8, 11, 12)

As new congregations grew, elders or "older men" were appointed to serve in each congregation

You are such elders; you have measured up to the Scriptural qualifications written under inspiration, have been recommended after careful consideration and prayer, and through the governing body the holy spirit has appointed you to serve as overseers

Your position is Scripturally referred to in three ways: elders, overseers, shepherds, all referring to the same position but from different viewpoints

Elder is the basic designation (Greek, *presby'te-*

ros) and refers to certain of your qualities as well as your position

Being an elder or older man is associated with having experience in dealing with life's problems; such a one has greater understanding, wisdom and judgment than a young person. In a spiritual sense you are like the elders of a community who can be looked to for sound counsel and guidance; others can bring problems to you for advice or judgment

Overseer (Greek, *epi'sko-pos*) describes the fundamental character of your work in behalf of the congregation

The term carries the thought of one who watches over, inspects, a guardian or superintendent, a shepherd of the flock

Protective care is a basic idea inherent in the Greek word

Oversight involves visiting, being concerned about or caring for something; visiting includes going to homes

Successful oversight requires being approachable, willing to listen to problems of brothers, kindly dealing with them in a refreshing way, not acting as if you are superior to the brothers (Matt. 20:25-28)

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OVERSEERS AND MINISTERIAL SERVANTS

Standards are not so high that they cannot be met, but they require real love for Jehovah and a willingness to be used by him

Such standards assure all that those appointed as elders will be good examples in the congregation

Evidence is looked for that the individual conscientiously applies the counsel from the Bible in all affairs of life

These are not mere boys or newly converted men, but individuals who are experienced in Christian living, who have a broad knowledge of the Bible, a deep understanding of it, and a genuine love for the congregation; individuals who have the courage to speak up when wrongdoing exists and to take the needed action to correct it and thus protect the flock

The privilege of being an elder is open to any qualified brother who desires to share in the fine work of Christian oversight

The number of appointed ones in a congregation depends on how many qualify; it is not limited in number

The Scriptures indicate that it is the responsibility of ministerial servants to care for non-shepherding work, enabling you overseers to concentrate your time and attention on teaching and shepherding

Physical age is a factor in qualifying to be either an elder or a ministerial servant, as a person should be old enough to be married and have children; however, spiritual qualifications are the main factors, as requirements show (1 Cor. 14:20)

How do the qualifications for elders and ministerial servants compare? See page 20.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF OVERSEERS

Overseers have *responsibilities to selves and their family* and so need a balanced personal schedule

Allow time for personal and family study, as you have to keep up to date with the truth and be guided by Scriptural principles

You need accurate knowledge to lead the "sheep," so you should regularly read the Bible as well as new magazines and other publications

Meeting attendance is essential for you to remain qualified

It is necessary that you pay attention while at meetings, not being sidetracked or distracted by other things

Keep secular work in its place so it does not interfere with field service and meetings

Live within your means and avoid heavy debts (Rom. 13:8)

Be balanced in entertainment, avoiding unnecessary association with worldly people. Seek upbuilding entertainment, setting a good example for the flock

Be selective in your reading, with emphasis on spiritual matters

Your children should be believing, that is, submit to your direction, including religious matters (Titus 1:6)

They should be in subjection with seriousness appropriate to their age

The response you get from your children should recommend you as one who can aid others in the congregation (1 Tim. 3:4; w72 126)

Your children should not have a bad reputation in the community

Your wife's conduct reflects on you even if she is not a believer

As long as you are controlling her conduct to the extent the law permits, you would not be disqualified from serving

A believing man should set a fine example, not contributing toward the wayward conduct of his unbelieving wife

Does not excuse own wife and children from observing things required of others in congregation

In resolving any problems in connection with recommendations for elders and ministerial servants, the local body of elders must bear the responsibility

Overseers have *responsibilities toward the congregation*

You are to be a teacher at the meetings, preparing your parts well; help brothers to see the value of the information in their own lives

Appreciate the importance of training others for future responsibilities, assigning minor duties to prospective ministerial servants

Do not try to do everything, but request the cooperation of others

Get to know the "sheep" well, their problems, and how you can assist them (John 10:14)

When people are guilty of wrongdoing, correct, reprove, reprimand with mildness or severity as situation requires

Endeavor to take a zealous lead in the field ministry, showing you appreciate the urgency of the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work, training others in this work

In your conversations you can stimulate appreciation for this privilege

Do not make rules as to how much individuals should do or when, but rather cultivate appreciation so those in the flock will respond willingly out of love

Private lives of overseers are to be an example, too, manifesting the wisdom from above

Overseers are to be chaste (above reproach in all association with persons of opposite sex), peaceable (in dealings with family members, relatives, neighbors, at secular work), reasonable (willing to reason with others; not stubbornly opinionated), ready to obey (not delay-

ing in applying in their own life the instructions of Jehovah and his organization), full of mercy and good fruits (reflecting the qualities of Jehovah), not making partial distinctions (not showing favoritism), not hypocritical (practicing what they preach) (Jas. 3:17)

Do not become proud but depend on Jehovah and pray for his guidance (Prov. 3:5-7; Jas. 1:5, 6) Remember you are entrusted with Jehovah's flock, which is precious in his sight, purchased with the blood of his Son (Hag. 2:7; Acts 20:28; Matt. 18:12-14)

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OVERSEERS OR ELDERS		MINISTERIAL SERVANTS	COMMENTS
(1 Tim. 3:1-7)	(Titus 1:5-9)	(1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12, 13)	
irreprehensible	free from accusation	free from accusation	blameless; of good reputation
husband of one wife	husband of one wife	husband of one wife	not a polygamist; good morals
not a drunken brawler	not a drunken brawler	not given to a lot of wine	no reputation for immoderate use of alcoholic beverages
not a lover of money	not greedy of dishonest gain	not greedy of dishonest gain	not materialistic; not dishonest
presiding over household in fine manner, having children in subjection	having believing children not under charge of debauchery nor unruly	presiding in fine manner over children and own households	exercising headship in a fine manner; training children properly even if wife not in truth; but his qualifications cannot be judged altogether by response of other family members; old enough to be a family head
not newly converted		tested as to fitness	proved devotion and reliability over a period of time
		serious	dependable, not taking responsibilities lightly; serious-minded
		not double-tongued	keeps his word; not hypocritical
		clean conscience	conscientiously adheres to and upholds right principles
(Additional qualifications for older men)			
moderate in habits	self-controlled		not eccentric; not going to extremes; balanced in his way of life
sound in mind	sound in mind		balanced thinking based on Bible; healthful outlook
orderly			does things in an orderly manner; recognizes theocratic order and instructions
hospitable	hospitable		lover of strangers, taking interest in others
qualified to teach	holding to the word in art of teaching; able to exhort and reprove		has background of Bible knowledge and Christian experience; ability to convey ideas so they reach hearts and minds of others; adheres to Bible, not advocating personal theories; willing to give needed correction and able to discern what is needed
not a smiter	not a smiter		not a fighter with words; not harsh, browbeating others; not physically striking his brothers
reasonable	not self-willed		not opinionated; willing to reason with others and to respect the conscience of others
not belligerent	not prone to wrath		not hot-tempered; patient
fine testimony from outside			reputation for practicing in daily life what he teaches others
	lover of goodness		motivated by wholesome concern for others and by love for what is morally upright
	righteous		conforms his life to God's standard of what is right; just; impartial
	loyal		faithful to God and to his congregation; manifesting unbreakable devotion

MANIFEST QUALITIES LIKE THOSE OF PAUL, AN IMPERFECT MAN BUT A GOOD OVERSEER

Paul was a dedicated servant of God; he believed the Bible and was active in sharing his belief with others

He relied on Jehovah's spirit (1 Cor. 2:1-5)

He practiced what he preached and set an example to be copied (Phil. 3:17)

Paul was respectful of Jehovah's arrangements. On one occasion he took a problem to the governing body (Acts 15:1, 2)

He worked hard at keeping the congregation clean (1 Cor. 5:11-13)

He showed great love for the congregation (1 Thess. 2:6-12)

Good overseers treat flock with tenderness (Acts 20:29)

He was not a financial burden on the congregation nor did he ask to be waited on; he kept balanced in connection with secular work (Acts 18:1-4)

He was always willing to take time to help others (Acts 19:9, 10)

GOOD OVERSEERS ARE APPRECIATED BY THE CONGREGATION

Brothers appreciate your hard work and are motivated to copy your faith (Heb. 13:7)

They desire to be submissive to overseers as you are to Jehovah; this makes it easier for you to work with them (Heb. 13:17)

To have a proper relationship with the brothers you must realize your appointment is from Jehovah and that you are a servant of Jehovah first

Have confidence in Jehovah's arrangement and backing, and the brothers will have confidence in you

When you deal with others in loving concern, you gain the love, respect and cooperation of the congregation

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU IN THIS KINGDOM MINISTRY SCHOOL COURSE

You have now seen how the first day went

To prepare for classroom activities read over the outlines of material to be considered the next day; three hours should be ample time to spend on preparation for the next day's activities, including any assignments for class discussions

Keep in mind that here at school you are interested, not in the impression you make, but rather in what you learn in order to be more effective in caring for the flock of Jehovah entrusted to your care

MAIN POINT: To continue to be good overseers you have to rely on Jehovah, work at maintaining the high standard you met when you were appointed and continue to work hard as shepherds in aiding the flock of Jehovah in your care

SOURCES: *ad* 1260; *or* 53-63; *w72* 126; *qm* 227-230

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS: In discussing the qualifications of elders and ministerial servants, compare these with what is set out at Galatians 5:19-26. After class discussion of material, consider with class the factors that elders might wish to review in deciding whether or not to recommend certain persons for appointment as elders or ministerial servants in the following cases: (1) One child of brother is baptized but another does not appear to be accepting the truth. (2) Brother once confessed to drinking too much with a friend. (3) Brother confessed to loose conduct with his wife before marriage. (4) One confided in a brother recently that his young child took some money from home that was not his. (5) Wife not a believer. (6) Brother usually runs overtime on parts assigned. (Note: the information given is not sufficient in any of these cases to determine whether or not the person should be recommended.)

No. 6 - First Tuesday, 9:10

Jesus Christ—His Place in God's Purpose

JESUS' ROLE A VITAL ONE IN GOD'S PURPOSE

He is the central figure in the outworking of all of Jehovah's purposes

All the problems that Satan's rebellion raised find their solution in Christ Jesus

Bible prophecy pointed forward to and emphasized Jesus' key place in God's purpose

The works and qualities displayed in his human life leave an example for all Christians, particularly overseers, to follow

He is the foundation upon which God is building arrangements for the eternal good of his universal family in heaven and earth

CENTRAL FIGURE IN THE OUTWORKING OF ALL OF JEHOVAH'S PURPOSES

He is the "beginning of the creation by God" and "the firstborn of all creation" (Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:15)

As firstborn spirit Son, in his prehuman existence, he was used by his Father in the creation of all other things (John 1:3; Col. 1:16, 17)

Logically, it was to this firstborn Son that Jehovah said: "Let us make man . . ." (Gen. 1:26)

He was used by Jehovah as a Master Worker in the creation of the earth and man, yet never claimed the rank of co-Creator (Gen. 1:1-31; Matt. 19:4-6; Prov. 8:30)

Jesus was identified by the prehuman name (or title) "the Word" or, in the Greek, "Logos"

This denoted his position as Spokesman, to communicate to and instruct others of Jehovah's spirit sons and eventually to deliver His messages to man on earth (John 1:1; 7:16, 17)

To Jesus was extended the privilege to be used to settle the issue of universal sovereignty and to be the "Chief Agent of life" for mankind (Heb. 2:5-9, 14, 15; 1 John 3:8; Acts 3:15)

In God's purpose, Jesus became Head of the Christian congregation, through which Jehovah would communicate and deal with the human family (1 Tim. 2:5; Col. 1:18-20; 2:8, 9)

ALL PROBLEMS THAT SATAN'S REBELLION RAISED FIND THEIR SOLUTION IN JESUS

With the rebellion of Satan the Devil, an issue was raised regarding Jehovah's sovereignty and the integrity of his creatures, and the human family was led into sin and death

As chief one of Jehovah's spirit sons, and next to God in the universe, the Logos was chosen to serve for the primary settlement of the issue regarding the worthiness and righteousness of Jehovah's sovereignty

His prehuman name bears upon the situation, as his name Michael means "Who is like God?"

At Jehovah's appointed time, in the year 2 B.C.E., Jesus was born on earth as a perfect human, not an incarnation (John 1:14; Matt. 1:18; Luke 2:1-52)

The outpouring of holy spirit at the time of Jesus' baptism marked the time of his becoming the Messiah or Christ, God's "Anointed One," when he was "about thirty years old," in the year 29 C.E. (Luke 3:21-23)

By maintaining complete integrity to Jehovah down to his death, Jesus proved the Devil a liar in his claim that all God's creatures serve only for selfish gain and not out of love for God

At the same time Jehovah provided the means for redeeming obedient mankind from sin and death through the ransom sacrifice of his human Son (Gal. 4:4, 5; 1 Tim. 3:16; Matt. 20:28)

Everlasting salvation is possible only through Jesus, whose name means, "Salvation of Jehovah" (Acts 4:12; Heb. 5:8, 9)

Jesus has been made the "resurrection and the life"; on the basis of his sacrifice he can resurrect the dead, both the righteous and the unrighteous (John 11:25; 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15)

Jesus is God's High Priest who can effect full cleansing from sin and liberation from sin's death-dealing effects (Heb. 4:14, 15; 7:23-25)

Jesus Christ has been appointed the Messianic "King of kings" and, by eventually destroying

the Devil and all who do his will, He will settle the issue of sovereignty raised in the rebellion (1 Cor. 15:25-28; Rev. 19:16; 20:10)

JESUS CHRIST IS THE FOCAL POINT OF BIBLE PROPHECY

The first prophecy made in Eden pointed to a "seed" of God's universal "woman"; Jesus proved to be that "seed" (Gen. 3:15)

The covenant made with Abraham shed further light on God's purpose concerning his "seed" (Gen. 22:15-18; Gal. 3:16)

God's purpose, as revealed in the prophecies concerning Christ Jesus, remained a "sacred secret . . . kept in silence for long-lasting times" (Rom. 16:25-27; Col. 2:2, 3)

Bible prophecies find their fulfillment in Christ Jesus as High Priest and King of Jehovah's Messianic kingdom, the finished "mystery" (AS) or "sacred secret" (Rev. 10:7; 19:10)

JESUS' WORKS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES SERVE AS AN EXAMPLE

His ministry was that of bearing witness to the truth (John 18:37)

To uphold the truth of his Father's prophetic Word and promises, Jesus had to live in such a way as to make that truth become a reality, thus, he had to be the truth (John 14:6; Eph. 4:21)

He had to get out among the people to let them hear him, see his works and qualities

The whole career of Jesus Christ was therefore a 'bearing witness to the truth'; he did not hold back from declaring his place in God's purpose

He talked to people on lakeshores and hillsides, in cities and villages, synagogues and temple, marketplaces, streets and houses, addressing large crowds and individuals, men and women, old and young, rich and poor

The main theme of his preaching involved the "good news of the kingdom" (Matt. 4:23)

Jesus set a hard-working example for his disciples, rising early, serving on into the night (Mark 1:32, 35; Luke 6:12; 21:37, 38)

His privacy was often interrupted by crowds, yet he always displayed a kind attitude (Luke 9:10-17; Mark 6:31-34)

He became tired, thirsty and hungry, at times forgoing food to speak with others (Matt. 21:18; John 4:6, 7, 31-34)

Though placing prime emphasis on spiritual things, Jesus was not an ascetic (Luke 7:33, 34)

He accepted invitations to meals and banquets, evidently possessed a quality garment and appreciated good things done for him (Luke 5:29; 14:1; John 19:23, 24; 12:2-8)

He was never overly concerned with material things but put spiritual things in first place,

even as he counseled others to do (Matt. 6: 24-33; Luke 10:38-42)

Great courage, manliness and strength are evident throughout his ministry (John 2:13-17; 18:3-11, 36, 37; Luke 4:28-30)

He proved himself to be a courageous liberator by waging warfare against demons, exposing hypocritical religious leaders and always upholding truth (Luke 4:16-36; Matt. 15:12-14; 22:15-46)

Jesus was also a man of great feeling and warmth, showing empathy and interest in others

He was never aloof, arrogant or overbearing, but spoke the truth clearly to all (Matt. 9:10-13; Luke 7:36-48)

Children felt at ease with him (Mark 10:13-16) He proved himself a real friend and companion to his followers (John 15:11-15)

Authority did not make him demanding; he was mild-tempered and displayed compassion (Matt. 9:36; 11:28-30)

He proved himself to be a Master Teacher (Matt. 7:28, 29; John 7:45, 46)

He presented matters of great weight and depth with simplicity, brevity and clarity, using illustrations easily understood by listeners (Matt. 13:34, 35, 45-48; John 10:1-17)

He aimed his message not merely at men's minds, causing them to think and reason, but primarily at their hearts (Matt. 16:15, 16; Luke 10:25-37)

He never 'watered down' God's message in an effort to gain popularity; he was straightforward, even sharp at times (Matt. 5:37; John 8:46, 47)

Jesus proved himself to be the promised "Wonderful Counselor" by his application of God's Word, his understanding of human nature, his ability to get to the heart of questions, and showing the solution to problems of daily living (Isa. 9:6; Mark 12:15-17)

Jesus demonstrated his qualifications as a "leader and commander to the national groups" (Isa. 55:3, 4)

He fully accepted the responsibility given him by God, taking the lead among his disciples (Matt. 23:10)

His loving oversight proved he qualified as "the fine shepherd" (John 10:11)

The steady, helpful training he gave his disciples

was extremely effective in preparing them to continue in the ministry (Mark 6:7-13)

The dominant quality in Jesus' life and ministry was love (John 13:34, 35; 15:13, 14)

His love was not sentimentality; he was always guided by right principle (Heb. 1:9)

He proved his love for God by keeping His commandments (John 8:29; 1 John 5:3)

His heartwarming example of humility, kindness and love, coupled with strength for righteousness and justice, exemplifies the perfect standard for all his disciples (Matt. 20:25-28; 1 Pet. 2:21-24)

JESUS CHRIST IS THE FOUNDATION UPON WHICH GOD'S FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR HIS CREATURES ARE BUILT

He is the "Foundation," also the "Head" of the Christian congregation (Eph. 1:22, 23; 2:19-22)

He mediated the new covenant between God and those taken into the congregation of spiritual Israel (Heb. 8:10-13; 12:24)

They are "bought from among mankind" to carry out a special ministry here on earth and then to be with Christ in heaven to rule as kings and priests forever (Rev. 14:1-5; 20:4-6)

Jesus, as Head, will administer the benefits of his ransom sacrifice through these associate king-priests, providing education for life and true worship of Jehovah God

Jesus Christ is the King of Jehovah's Messianic kingdom (Dan. 7:13, 14)

His kingdom will settle the issue of universal sovereignty (Dan. 2:44)

As Executioner of God's purpose, he is the one used to destroy wickedness, including the Devil, from the universe (Rev. 12:1-12; 19:11-20:10)

His kingdom will bring everlasting life and blessings to mankind (Rev. 21:1-7)

That kingdom will be the capital organization of all the universe and by means of it 'all things in the heavens and on the earth' will be gathered together, to the glory of Jehovah God (Eph. 1:9, 10)

MAIN POINT: Jesus' position and example should influence the lives of all Christians, and overseers should strive to apply his qualities in their service

SOURCES: ad 917-933; ms 282-288; tr 46-54

Responsibilities of Members of the Congregation

NEED TO RECOGNIZE THE TRUE "CONGREGATION OF GOD"

Jehovah is the Great Congregator of his people. He dealt with Israel as a congregation; those serving him faithfully were spoken of as "congregation of loyal ones" or "congregation of the holy ones" (Ps. 149:1; 89:5).

The faithful followers of Jesus Christ are called the "congregation of God" (Acts 20:28).

Satan has also congregated people for his purposes, promoting false worship (2 Cor. 11:14, 15; Matt. 7:21; Rev. 18:4).

Essential for us to recognize and support the true "congregation of God"

THE SCRIPTURAL MEANING OF "CONGREGATION"

A congregation is a group of people gathered together for a particular purpose or activity. The Hebrew word for congregation comes from a root word meaning "assemble together".

In the Greek Scriptures the word *ek-kle-si'a*, translated "church" or "congregation," literally means "that which is called out," referring to a group of persons called out or called together for a particular purpose.

The word "congregation," as used in the Greek Scriptures, often refers to the 144,000 spirit-anointed followers of Jesus, his "body," who will associate with him in his heavenly kingdom (Eph. 5:24).

✓ The word "congregation" can also refer to the Christians living at any particular time (and these now include those of the "other sheep"), or to a local assembly of Christians (1 Cor. 10:32; 11:16; Rom. 16:3, 4).

Use of the word "church" can be misleading because some think of a building rather than a congregation engaged in worship.

ISRAEL AS A CONGREGATION FROM THE TIME OF MOSES

Israel was called the "congregation of the true God," "congregation of Jehovah" (Neh. 13:1; Deut. 23:2).

Israel was called out of Egypt, then brought into covenant relationship with Jehovah at Mount Sinai.

As a congregation of God they must 'strictly obey God's voice'; they declared their willingness to accept this responsibility (Ex. 19:3-9). They were ruled theocratically by Jehovah (Isa. 33:22).

Hebrew population actually made up the congregation, but in an extended sense the alien residents who had declared themselves worshipers of Jehovah were included (Num. 15:14-16; Ex. 12:19).

Moses shared responsibility for oversight with others—priests, judges, older men.

Men in positions of oversight had responsibilities to shepherd the flock of Israel, judging, teaching, feeding them spiritually, aiding the spiritually weak ones and keeping them together within Jehovah's arrangement for his people (Ezek. 34:1-6; Deut. 17:8, 9).

They had to answer to God for the way they discharged their responsibilities (Lev. 10:1-3; Num. 20:9-12; Ezek. 34:10).

Only those meeting Jehovah's standards were eligible as members of the congregation.

To continue to be members they had to 'strictly obey God's voice'; failure to do so on the part of individuals led to their being "cut off".

Some were excluded from the congregation for refusing to purify themselves, eating holy things while unclean, working on sabbath, giving offspring to Molech, turning to spirit mediums and foretellers of events, sexual immorality (Num. 19:20; Lev. 18:29).

Members of congregation were shown mercy for unintentional wrongdoing, but not if deliberate (Num. 15:27-31).

Case of Achan illustrates responsibility of each individual toward congregation and the effect the wrongdoing of one can have on the congregation as a whole (Josh. 7:1-26).

On the other hand, divinely approved standing of a few may bring blessings to others (Jer. 5:1; Gen. 18:31, 32; Num. 25:6-11; Matt. 24:22; Acts 27:24, 37).

Jewish congregation organized under Moses foreshadowed the Christian congregation under Christ; it provided a prophetic pattern of greater things to come (Heb. 10:1; Col. 2:16, 17).

The Jewish congregation had Moses as mediator and leader; the Christian congregation has Jesus as Mediator and Leader.

There were twelve tribes of natural Israel, and there are symbolically twelve tribes of spiritual Israel (Rev. 7:4-8).

The Jews were organized under the Law covenant; the Christian congregation under the new covenant.

The Jews had the priestly house of Aaron of the tribe of Levi; Christ is now great High Priest and has with him a royal priesthood (Heb. 7:11-17).

Israel had animal sacrifices; Christian congregation has sacrifice of Jesus once for all time (Heb. 8:1-13; 9:12).

Jewish nation with its temple for worship was cast off from Jehovah's favor due to their rejecting his Son and continuing to violate his law (Matt. 21:42, 43).

This was a failure to 'obey God's voice' when he spoke to them through the Great Prophet that he had sent as spokesman, his Son (Deut. 18: 18, 19)

Requirements of the Law covenant were fulfilled by Christ; Law was taken out of the way (Rom. 10:4; Eph. 2:15)

From the time of Pentecost, 33 C.E., the Christian congregation was the one recognized by God To show all that this was true, apostles and others were granted gifts of spirit to perform miraculous works

Thereafter all who received favor from God were required to come to and work with the Christian congregation

EARLY CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION

Appropriately referred to as "the congregation of God" (Acts 20:28)

Members of Christian congregation were selected by Jehovah (John 17:6)

Invitation originally extended to Jews, then to Gentiles (Rom. 1:16; 11:25)

Christ, as the Foundation and the Head of the congregation, was designated by Jehovah (1 Pet. 2:4-6; Col. 1:17-19)

Governing body, comprised of apostles and older men of Jerusalem congregation, set lead in preaching work and directed work of the early congregations

Directed by spirit, they handled decisions on doctrinal and organizational matters, delivering them to the congregations by traveling representatives (Acts 6:1-6; 15:22-31; 16:4, 5)

They supervised appointments of older men in the congregations, defended good news before courts of the land, directed relief work to help needy brothers and safeguarded cleanness of the organization (Acts 5:29; 2 Cor. 9:1-5; 1 Cor. 6:9-13)

Organization of the early Christian congregations similar to the congregation of Israel with its older men, judges and officers

Appointed older men acted representatively for congregation in judicial matters (1 Cor. 6:2-4; Deut. 16:18)

Variety of "gifts in men" served in congregations with view to readjustment of the holy ones, also for ministerial work and for building up in faith and accurate knowledge (1 Cor. 12:27-30; Eph. 4:11-14)

Meetings for worship and Scriptural study followed pattern of the Hebrew congregation (Heb. 10:24, 25; Deut. 31:12)

THE CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION BELONGS TO GOD

Congregation is not ours; it *belongs to God*; he is the one who stipulates the purpose of the congregation and the responsibilities of those associated

Reason for existence of the congregation is di-

rectly tied to Jehovah's foremost purpose, the sanctifying of his name

Members of the congregation are a people for God's name; they are to make known the excellencies of Jehovah, to honor his name by speech and conduct (1 Pet. 2:9; Acts 15:14)

With thousands of congregations on earth, only small number of anointed representatives of heavenly congregation with us

Situation similar to Hebrew congregation with alien residents; "other sheep" today give full support to anointed representatives of "congregation of God" (Matt. 25:34-40)

God has entrusted responsibilities of oversight to some; they are not heads of local congregations, but shepherds under Christ

Since it is Jehovah's congregation, we need to show honor and respect for those taking oversight, whether they are of "little flock" or "other sheep" (Heb. 13:17; 1 Tim. 5:17)

They have responsibility to take lead in the field ministry, keep congregation well fed spiritually, protected from wrong influences, spiritually and morally clean and operating in harmony with Scriptural pattern

Elders too must show respect for Jehovah's representatives, applying recommendations from governing body

By so doing they show submission to the One to whom the congregation belongs and honor his Name

Overseers have responsibility to deal with congregation as Jesus did, recognizing that "sheep" belong to Jehovah (Eph. 5:25)

Do not make mistake Moses did; honor Jehovah in all you do (Num. 20:12)

Jehovah has restored congregations gradually since 1919 to high theocratic standard found in days of apostles (Isa. 1:26; 60:17)

UPHOLDING THE PURPOSE OF THE CONGREGATION IN OUR TIME

Privileged to take up work assigned by Jesus as Head of the congregation, share in proclaiming Kingdom good news, make disciples (Matt. 13: 8; 28:19, 20)

Congregations organized to build up spirituality of Jehovah's servants and to cooperate in work of proclaiming Jehovah's name and kingdom Preaching work intensified now since 'hour of judgment' has arrived and people of all nations are being separated; we have a responsibility to warn those inside and outside the congregation (Acts 18:6; 20:26, 27; compare Ezekiel 33:6)

God's angels have a share in directing this work We should want to have as large a share as possible, encourage others (1 Cor. 9:16)

What we do in field ministry and our support of congregation depend on what is in our hearts; God's name and honor are involved

OTHER WAYS WE CAN SUPPORT THE CONGREGATION OF GOD

We bear responsibility toward one another in the congregation

Jesus stressed showing love for our brothers and fellow workers in the congregation (John 13:34, 35)

Assistance can be given those spiritually weak, missing meetings, not sharing regularly in field service, having bad associations or questionable conduct (Gal. 6:1; Jude 22, 23)

We can help some in getting to meetings and visit infirm

Help those desiring assistance to prepare presentations or Theocratic Ministry School parts; invite them to go in field service with you

Appropriate at times for congregation to give material assistance to deserving worthy ones, helping in personal way if economic difficulties arise, natural catastrophe or war destroys housing, etc.

All contributes to building up congregation in love (Gal. 6:10; Eph. 4:16)

Can honor Jehovah and show support for congregation by our conduct and speech

By our manifesting fruits of the spirit, we avoid hindering the free flow of Jehovah's spirit in the congregation (Gal. 5:16-26; Matt. 5:43-48; 1 Pet. 2:12)

Can contribute to unity of congregation by avoiding gossip, speaking what is upbuilding (Eph. 4:25-5:20)

Show loyalty to Jehovah's arrangement by supporting disfellowshipping actions, not covering

over wickedness, cooperating with all overseers, not coveting service privileges of others (Rev. 2:6, 14, 15, 20; Num. 16:8-11, 32, 33)

Can show support for congregational arrangement by use of time, energy and material things, not putting personal interests first (Hag. 1:2-4; Phil. 2:3, 4)

Encourage brothers to make themselves available for service, suggesting pioneer ministry, Bethel, Gilead, serving where need is greater; full-time activity builds up the congregation

All can support congregation by being dependable when assigned a part on the meeting, being willing to share duties at Kingdom Hall and to help in keeping it clean

(Ask for comments as to how young ones have been aided to share in caring for things at the Kingdom Hall)

All individuals associated with the congregation of God's name people have a responsibility before Jehovah to live according to the truth and to share it with others, thus showing that it truly is the "congregation of God"

MAIN POINT: There are many similarities between the congregation of Israel and the modern Christian congregation; we can show appreciation for the congregation today by giving it our full support

SOURCE: ad 369-372

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Arrange for two three- to five-minute reports on "Ways We Can Support the Congregation of God," or other features of the material

No. 8 - First Tuesday, 2:10

Improving Speaking and Teaching Ability

MAKE EARNEST EFFORT TO IMPROVE YOUR SPEAKING AND TEACHING ABILITY

Must frequently appear before congregation to give talks, so you should want to do so in a helpful, effective way (1 Tim. 4:12, 13)

Direct attention to Jehovah God and to Jesus Christ

Endeavor to develop in others a warm appreciation for these truly Great Teachers (Ps. 143:10; Matt. 7:28, 29)

Being alert to improve in speaking and teaching ability will help make meetings more interesting and instructive

Even announcements and reports should be made interesting

Not to be delivered in a perfunctory manner, but presented in such a clear and impressive way that they will be remembered and with such appeal that everyone will be moved to share, if possible, in the activity announced

Monthly service report can also be made interesting; not given in a dry, mechanical, spiritless manner, but should warm the hearts of those who hear it

No matter how small a report may be, it represents labors of love and is not to be viewed disparagingly

Any comments on service reports should be positive and encouraging

Financial report too should not be read in casual manner; make figures speak of loving self-denial and sacrifice

Jesus laid emphasis on spirit with which contributions were made rather than the amount (Luke 21:1-4)

Conclusion of service meetings should be motivating and spiritual

Assist ministerial servants who handle parts on meetings to improve in speaking and teaching ability

May be times when situations arise in a congregation that call for strong counsel

When giving counsel, should be done in kindness and with Scriptural basis, never harshly or in anger or to "bawl out" congregation; the flock is God's, not yours (1 Pet. 5:2, 3; 2 Tim. 2:24, 25)

When you are going to give counsel, carefully plan your remarks; weigh your words

Never give congregation impression that you are speaking out of anger

Always show them the Scriptural basis for counsel given; they will not be offended but will be glad to cooperate (2 Tim. 4:2)

Speak to brothers in warm, friendly and conversational manner

When speaking with a brother individually, you talk simply and expressively; same manner should be used when speaking to brothers in congregation meetings

If you have a harsh voice, or a gruff, severe manner of expression, make earnest effort to improve; may not be your attitude; may only be the way your voice sounds to others

If some misunderstand or are hurt or offended by it, try to learn to speak differently, kindly

Should not feel that brothers should conform to your ways; more can be accomplished by kindness than by harshness or an imperative, commanding manner

In his manner of speaking, no overseer is to 'lord it over the flock'; for then could not truly encourage, upbuild (1 Pet. 5:3)

TO IMPROVE SPEAKING ABILITY, CONSIDER ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE SPEECH

Observation and discernment necessary to speak effectively to your audience

Get a correct estimation of your audience; they are not critics but friends who are there to listen and learn

Enthusiasm one of most important qualities, yet one most often neglected

You have heard public talks in which speaker spoke clearly, conversationally, had good thoughts, yet you found it hard to stay alert; problem was that speaker lacked enthusiasm

Enthusiasm makes a talk interesting, lively

Though conversational delivery is desirable in public talks, this does not mean delivery without life, sparkle, enthusiasm, vigor

Without enthusiasm you will find it hard to hold audience regardless of how excellent your material; without it a conversational talk can put whole audience to sleep

If you put your heart into talk, then a live, enthusiastic delivery will capture the audience; they will sit up and listen

Speak out of the abundance of your heart and be aglow with God's spirit or "enthusiastic in spirit" (Rom. 12:11, *Byington*)

Do not feel that it is beneath your dignity to manifest enthusiasm; you owe it to your audience

Modulation is also vital; teaching your audience requires holding their interest from beginning to end of talk

Modulation is colorful variety and contrast, changing pitch, pace and power in accord with what is said

Emphasis is essential to get ideas across

Stress should be placed only on key thoughts; amount of emphasis depends on the weight of a talk

Lack of emphasis renders a talk lifeless and unimpressive, whereas overemphasis distorts meaning of the material

Placing same degree of emphasis on everything renders a talk meaningless; if same degree of emphasis is given to each idea, your audience will be unable to determine what is important

Much effectiveness of teaching at a meeting can be lost unless each speaker uses appropriate volume or loudness and distinctness so all can hear without straining

If worth saying, it is worth hearing (Isa. 58:1; 1 Cor. 14:8, 9)

Distinctness is essential if congregation is to hear clearly and act upon the instructions given at meeting

Avoid dropping final syllables of words, running words together, or letting them fade out

Opening the mouth avoids muffled speech

Practice resonance so your voice will carry with sufficient loudness to all parts of your audience

Pausing is essential for comprehension; it helps listeners to follow, creates expectation, lets weighty thoughts sink in, thus emphasizing most effectively

Be conscious of this in giving detailed instructions, assembly preparations and other details

A pause before an important announcement will build up interest and expectation for it

TO IMPROVE TEACHING ABILITY, CONSIDER JESUS' EXAMPLE AND BASICS OF ART OF TEACHING

Imitate Jesus' example as a teacher, especially his reliance upon the Word of God (Matt. 4:4; John 7:16)

Jesus referred to God's Word, quoting from or alluding to about half of the books in the Hebrew Scriptures in recorded conversations

So, like Jesus, rely on God's Word of truth; get your answers from it (Matt. 19:3-6)

When answering questions, turn to the Scriptures; help brothers see that answers are not personal philosophy but God's will

In talks ask audience to look up key scriptures and follow along as they are read, reasoning on them, elaborating on them and highlighting main thoughts

Provide specific material; talk dealing in generalities lacks weight and authority, is vague
 If ideas are to be remembered, must be specific, exact; you must know your subject well
 Not enough to state certain truths; show *why* they are true and why they are of value to know

If giving instruction, explain *how* a thing is to be done

Logical development is important in effective teaching too

Accuracy of statement is very important; be absolutely accurate in every detail at all times
 Wrong statements delivered to an audience may be repeated and error magnified

If inaccuracies are recognized by new ones in audience, raises questions as to authority of speaker on other points, perhaps even calling in question truth of message itself

Avoid presenting too much material; no more material should be introduced than can be clearly developed in the allotted time; no more should be expressed than can be reasonably absorbed by your audience

Allow time to repeat main points; meetings should be instructive and interesting

Rhetorical questions (in which no answers are expected from the audience but you sometimes supply the answers yourself) help to stimulate thinking (Luke 12:49-51)

At times you may wish to use a series of questions, not giving an answer until you get to the concluding one

Kind of questions you ask depends on your audience and what you are teaching

Illustrations formed important feature of Jesus' teaching and can help you to be effective (Matt. 13:34, 35)

Work to make illustrations simple; complex ones may be difficult to follow or even detract from your arguments

Letter of James contains many simple illustrations from common things of life (waves of sea, rudder of ship, bridle of horse, a mirror, and so forth)

A string of humorous stories or illustrations may detract from the objective of your talk; no need to entertain

APPEAL TO THE HEARTS AS WELL AS THE MINDS OF AUDIENCE

Heart is involved in motivation and is the principal seat of one's affections (Ps. 119:11)

Mind recommends certain decisions on issues important to a person, but heart exercises strongest force for final decisions

Needs to be a willing heart to motivate one to action (Ex. 35:5, 21, 22)

No reason to try to get brothers out in field service by exerting pressure on them in talks; however, encouragement is proper

Endeavor to stimulate a *desire* on their part to serve Jehovah whole-souled and to have as full a share as possible (Mark 12:30)

Whole-souled devotion is greatest commandment of Mosaic law; no less is required of us as disciples of Jesus Christ (Matt. 22:36-40)

In talks, do not speak as if you expect all publishers to be doing same amount; all are different, with different conditions of health, circumstances; we can render whole-souled devotion, whether producing thirtyfold, sixtyfold or a hundredfold (Matt. 13:23)

Help them appreciate that participation in sharing the good news is a sacred duty, a requirement on which our life depends (1 Cor. 9:16; Rom. 10:10)

Help brothers see how our work relates to the supreme issue over righteousness of Jehovah's sovereignty; then their hearts will move them to zealous service (Luke 6:45)

Help them see that our response to Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making shows how much God's kingdom really means to us individually

To reach hearts, appeal to the urgency of our work; show that lives are at stake, that we are doing a work never to be repeated, that none of our work is in vain, that the reward for endurance in our ministry is certain (1 Cor. 15:58)

Having plenty to do in Jehovah's work keeps us awake; then the destruction that comes "instantly" when they are saying "Peace and security!" will not overtake us (1 Thess. 5:3-6)

Keeping Jesus' fine example before the brothers aids in appealing to hearts (John 8:29; Rom. 15:3-6)

Paying attention to your speaking and teaching, you will "save both yourself and those who listen to you" (1 Tim. 4:16)

MAIN POINT: Overseers need to pay constant attention to improving their teaching and speaking, applying all the essential qualities of speaking and following the teaching style of the Lord Jesus

SOURCES: *sg* 49-54, 73-78, 108-113, 158-171; *qm* 40-44

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture; at conclusion, review qualities of effective speaking and teaching, with students supplying answers

God's Government—A Reality

GOD'S KINGDOM, FROM SHADOW TO REALITY

For millenniums God gave prophetic indications to his servants that he would establish a Kingdom government over earth

God has always been sovereign ruler (Ps. 103:19), but after man rebelled He purposed a *new expression* of his rulership, a "seed" to crush all rebels (Gen. 3:15)

Progressive revelation of his purpose showed that this would involve the formation of a subsidiary government with kingly ruler

Faithful patriarchs did not join with man-made kingdoms; they awaited heavenly governmental arrangement (Heb. 11:13-16)

Even in dealings with nation of Israel, which had kings and priests, God pointed to a different governmental arrangement in the future—a whole "kingdom of priests" (Ex. 19:5, 6)

God's covenant with David gave hope of permanent Kingdom ruler from his line (1 Chron. 17:11-14)

Visions in book of Daniel assured that no human government would defeat that kingdom (Dan. 2:20, 21, 44; 4:34, 35; 7:14)

This government took on real substance in the first century C.E.

John the Baptist prepared people for its king (Matt. 3:1, 2)

When Jesus was baptized and anointed, the king-designate was in their midst; no longer a distant hope (Luke 17:21)

His miraculous works—healing, raising dead, casting out demons—proved Kingdom had overtaken his listeners (Matt. 12:25-29)

Now Kingdom was attainable goal toward which men could press, but attaining it was not easy; it took much effort, forceful endeavor, as if storming a city (Matt. 11:12)

While believing reality of Kingdom, for a while disciples misunderstood its reach, limited it to the earth (Acts 1:6)

From Pentecost 33 C.E., Kingdom ruled over the Christian congregation, but did not exercise rule over all mankind (Col. 1:13)

New covenant became operative in 33 C.E.; the anointed became nucleus of nation of king-priests (1 Pet. 2:9, 10)

Reality of Kingdom rule over congregation seen in that the resurrected Jesus protected his disciples, supervised the expansion of their work (Matt. 28:20)

That persecution occurred does not disprove this; it had good effect of spreading preachers who were proclaiming and upholding Kingdom (Acts 8:1; 11:19-21)

Would have perished if not protected (Acts 5:38, 39)

Congregation experienced divine intervention to direct the expansion (Acts 9:6, 15, 16; 13:2-5; 16:9, 10)

Kingdom rule in this sense did not affect 'Gentile Times,' for human kingdoms continued ruling without interference

Kingdom is even greater reality today, for Christ was enthroned in 1914 C.E. to rule heaven and earth

Ceased sitting at God's right hand; given authority to extend Kingdom rule throughout universe in God's due time (Ps. 110:1, 2)

Took action in heaven to defeat Satan; that He could accomplish this proves Kingdom is a reality (Rev. 12:7-10)

As ruler of "kingdom of the world" (all mankind), he could begin to divest earthly governments of authority and power in his due time; they could no longer count on ruling without Kingdom interference (Rev. 11:15)

That the nations were not destroyed immediately proves that Kingdom authority is currently exercised with forbearance as God and Christ wish

Since they had power to defeat Satan and demons, could easily have defeated nations immediately if they had wanted to

They did not do so, in order to give persons opportunity to face the issue, to choose whether to support Kingdom (2 Pet. 3:9, 15)

EVIDENCE ABOUNDS TODAY THAT THE KINGDOM IS A REALITY

Some persons do not believe Kingdom is a real government because the kind of evidence they expect does not seem to exist

Such persons who disbelieve reality of God's kingdom overlook the abundant evidence that there is

An outstanding evidence of a real government is *loyal subjects*

Without loyal subjects, kingship is meaningless (Prov. 14:28)

Unlike many human governments, God's government has *loyal* support of a multitude of people, and the number is on the increase

Few people are personally interested in their human government—ridicule policies and leaders, cheat on taxes

Yet, over 1½ million persons earth wide voluntarily and enthusiastically support Jehovah's kingdom

Though living in over 200 lands, they support it (Ps. 72:8)

Marcus Bach observed in *Adult Student* (Nov. 1956):

"In the ranks of Jehovah's witnesses are people of every class and culture; but they all hold one element in common: allegiance to Jehovah"

Not only do they believe it is the best government; they also freely spend their time teaching millions of others about it

This real heavenly government has written laws that are enforced

These are not dead, unenforced laws; they are current and workable, for both their source, Jehovah, and those living by them are alive and active (Isa. 33:22)

Biblical laws applying to Kingdom's subjects take into consideration that Christians live under laws of nations

Supporting God's heavenly government is not seditious to human government where one lives; Christians are not advocating any rival human government

Christians are to obey all secular laws that do not conflict with Biblical laws (Mark 12:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-17)

This is a practical and wise arrangement; seen by fact that Christians are often among a nation's best citizens

Commendation of Witnesses was included in U.S. Congressional Record: "An asset to the community." South African publication *Personality* observed: "Jehovah's Witnesses seem to be bursting with good qualities and to be almost free from the bad." (Nov. 21, 1968, p. 176)

God's laws are already being enforced

In each congregation there is a judicial committee authorized to handle cases of wrongdoing. Willful law violators can be expelled from the congregation

Enforcement protects others from contamination and harm

Final punishment of unrepentant lawbreakers is from God; it is eternal destruction (Rev. 21:8; 2 Thess. 1:6-9)

Existence of these enforced laws proves reality of Kingdom

Its educational system testifies to Kingdom's reality (Isa. 54:13)

A basic responsibility of a real government is education; God's heavenly government has extensive system of schooling

Gilead School has trained over 5,000 ministers to serve as educators throughout the earth. Kingdom Ministry School provides advanced training for men who are administrators and educators in congregations

Theocratic Ministry School operates in over 27,000 congregations; is available to all desiring its free education

Specializes in education in God's laws and matters related to theocracy, to God rule

Textbooks for this education are readily available

Bible is basic textbook; is most widely distributed book

Other textbooks printed in millions of copies; as of 1971, among ten all-time best sellers, six were such theocratic textbooks (*tr*, *lg*, *pa*, *ev*, *is*, *im*)

Educational program carried even to persons not yet subjects

Free, private instruction provided right in homes of persons interested in laws and blessings of God's government

Protection and blessing from God's government prove it is real

Nations opposed to Kingdom-preaching work cannot stop it

Both Nazis and Communists have tried to stop Witnesses, but without lasting success

Though thousands were put in German concentration camps, Witnesses were more numerous after World War II than before

In *The Kremlin's Human Dilemma* Maurice Hindus writes about Witnesses in Russia: "There is no stopping them. Suppressed in one place, they bob up in another, now in European Russia, now in Siberia. . . . They appear as indestructible as the Soviet police that is determined to sweep them off the Soviet scene."—p. 304

While churches and seminaries are closing, hundreds of thousands are taking up true worship as supporters of the Kingdom

Indicates God is blessing his worshipers (Acts 9:31)

AS AN ELDER, YOU SERVE WITH QUALIFIED RULERS OF GOD'S KINGDOM

God's government has the best of rulers; they are alive and real

Quality of life possible in a kingdom is often related to the quality of the ruler or rulers (Prov. 29:2)

Some human rulers do not even have legal right to rule; they seize power or get it by use of dishonest politics

Jehovah is supreme and rightful ruler (Ps. 145:11-13)

Jesus is God's chosen ruler of Kingdom; eminently qualified (Isa. 11:1-5)

By legal action in heavenly Court, power was conferred on him; gives Kingdom legal basis (Dan. 7:10-14; Ezek. 21:27)

Since he took up ruling power over mankind all other governments lack legal right to continue (Eph. 1:10)

His qualifications excel those of any human ruler

Shared in making man; long interested in us (Prov. 8:31)

When on earth he adhered to righteous principles, showed compassion for the sick, taught followers ways of peace, out of love gave his life for believing mankind (Matt. 9:35, 36; 11:28-30; John 15:13)

Anointed 144,000 to share as corulers in heaven with Christ (Dan. 7:27; Luke 22:28-30; Eph. 1:11; Rev. 5:10; 22:5)

Christians on earth will benefit from their vast experience

Individual elders in congregation serve as princes, administering earthly affairs of God's heavenly government (Isa. 32:1, 2)

This does not conflict with human governments, for you promote no political nation of today, but the existing heavenly Kingdom

You are in a sense part of the Kingdom's judiciary when you handle problems involving infractions of God's law

Though spoken of prophetically as "princes," you are actually servants of your brothers (Matt. 20:26-28)

To be otherwise, would be in stark contrast to Jesus

To fit the description of Isaiah 32:2, you must be a source of comfort, protection and help to your brothers

This will help to make the Kingdom more of a reality to them; will help them to see type of administration Kingdom is

LET REALITY OF KINGDOM INFLUENCE YOUR WORSHIP OF GOD

When faced with temptations, realize that at issue is whether God's law or law of sin actually controls in your life

Because of human imperfection law of sin is present in us all, but it does not have to get mastery over us (Rom. 7:21-23)

When you, as an elder, resist pressure toward wrongdoing you help yourself and others to show allegiance to God's law

The more you choose God's law as preferable, the more closely you become aligned to rulership that will last forever

Brothers observing you will be helped, for they will see that we *can* live by God's law, that it brings happiness

By increasing amount you personally speak and think about the Kingdom as a reality, you will find it increasingly easy to obey its law

Temptation to immorality, lying, cheating, jealousy, wrath, envies will be more easily rejected

Do not chafe at limitations imposed by God's Word, but look at them as for your good; Christianity is best way of life

If you as an elder were to show resentment over restrictions involved in Christian way of life, "sheep" in the congregation would be torn down

Believing that the Kingdom is a reality, give of yourself in serving your brothers, thus advancing its interests

Do not view additional assignments as just "more work"

Take the lead in field ministry; you thus locate prospective subjects of the Kingdom and share in its educational program

Manifest that you willingly submit to God's rulership

Jehovah wants only *willing* subjects, persons who both recognize and appreciate his ways and their rightness (Ps. 110:3)

MAIN POINT: As the evidence proves, the kingdom of God is a real, functioning government today; elders work along with that government in serving their brothers

SOURCES: *ad* 1002-1005; *ms* 300-306; *tr* 82-113

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Have three students as a committee prepared to use points from material in demonstration. A brother has sinned, been disciplined, and restrictions have been explained to him. Now have an upbuilding conversation about the reality of the Kingdom, designed to help him become firm on its side and to uphold its law

No. 10 - First Tuesday, 4:30

Studying the Bible with Benefit

THE PURPOSE OF OUR STUDY

Real reason for study of the Bible should be to acquaint ourselves better with Jehovah, to know him—his personality, his will and purposes as Sovereign Ruler—and to improve our relationship with him

We should desire more than just acquaintanceship

It would take countless years of living to know a person as well as the Bible reveals Jehovah to us

Bible relates his dealings, attitudes, reactions to circumstances over thousands of years in dealing with millions of persons (Ex. 33:13)

Besides knowing him as a person, knowing God also means to act in harmony with what you know (Jer. 22:16)

First John 3:6 says: "No one that practices sin has . . . come to know him," that is, Christ; the same is true as to knowing his Father (John 14:9, 10; 16:2, 3)

One who does not know God thinks God will not act according to his Word, or that God will continue to deal with him even though practicing sin

John 17:3 means more than taking information into head; means getting it into heart, living in accord with it

When reading any portion of the Bible, it is good to analyze how it should affect our lives

Motivation for studying the Bible should be two-fold: (1) to equip us to know and serve God now, and aid others to do the same (2) to prepare us for life in God's new order

STUDYING THE BIBLE IN ORDER TO BECOME BETTER SHEPHERDS AND TEACHERS

Elders should be especially concerned about knowing well Jehovah's ways and viewpoints on matters (Ps. 86:11)

Members of the congregation look to them as examples in imitating Jehovah and his Son (1 Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:1; Heb. 13:7)

The better elders know Jehovah, the better they will be able to imitate him

When studying the Bible, elders should consider what applies to them, what aspects of Jehovah's personality, ways and viewpoint of matters are revealed in a particular passage of Scripture and how *they can imitate him* in these respects

Members of the congregation need help in imitating Jehovah

Elders, when studying the Bible, do well to keep in mind congregation's needs

They could make note of points that would be especially helpful in giving counsel and encouragement, whether privately or from the platform

When problems arise, elders should search for Bible principles in order to find the solution

Usually careful and prayerful consideration of Bible with aid of Society's publications leads to finding solution

(Instructor should discuss and illustrate effective use of *Publications Index* or have students demonstrate this)

Effort should be made to provide answers in congregation without relying constantly on inquiries written to the Society

WATCH TOWER PUBLICATIONS HELP IN STUDY OF THE BIBLE ITSELF

Scriptural discussions in Watch Tower publications are based on the Bible, with additional clarifying details supplied from ancient or modern history, or from practices common in the past or at present

When it comes to statements strictly based on the Bible, elders could beneficially make it a point to cite God's Word as the authority and not merely the publication that is based thereon

To this end, elders, after completing a study of certain material in one of the Society's publications, could check whether they can explain from the Bible alone what they have considered

Some, after reviewing what they have studied, may find it helpful to make brief notes in the margin of their Bible

If extra-Biblical information is needed to clarify a particular passage of Scripture, a brief note in the margin of the Bible, accompanied by a reference to a source where more details can be found, is very helpful

When elders emphasize the Bible in their reviews at congregation meetings, all will be helped to appreciate that they are studying the Bible

A good way to do this is to have those in attendance open the Bible to scriptures that were considered and then ask questions based thereon

Reviews based on the Bible will aid brothers to think Scripturally, to cite the Bible as their authority in teaching others and in helping their families, and to appreciate more fully that they are really being "taught by Jehovah" (Isa. 54:13)

SUGGESTIONS FOR EFFECTIVE BIBLE STUDY

Methods of study are helpful but vary from person to person

Good to schedule time every day; with a specific time it is easier to keep regular

Make it fit your particular routine and life pattern; may be before retiring or first thing in the morning, etc.

Only ten or fifteen minutes a day regularly will give encouraging results

Good surroundings helpful, but many must read on public transportation, during lunch breaks at work, etc., learning to shut out distractions

Reading out loud or in an undertone can aid comprehension and memory (Ps. 1:2)

Thoughtful meditation on material read impresses information on the mind and heart (Ps. 143:5; Prov. 15:28)

When your reading of a Bible account gives rise to questions, seek to get accurate answers

Cross-references and concordances aid one to locate explanatory scriptures and other helpful material

(Ask class to find answer to a Scriptural question by use of Bible concordance or cross-references)

If other Bible translations are available, one could compare renderings and check any marginal notes or footnotes

Explanations of scriptures can be located by consulting Society's *Publications Index*; this aid to study should be used fully

Research may have to be governed by available time, need for information and circumstances of the one doing the studying

Ones new in the truth may not understand much of certain sections of the Bible

Better for newer ones to get overall picture first and not try to look up everything they do not understand; but they could make note of certain points and do some research later

If they stop too often to look up things, they may get discouraged because of not being able to cover much material, and may miss the overall picture

Brothers in the truth longer, especially elders, should have in mind getting more of the details and understanding

When time is limited, one may need to determine which points are vital to understanding, giving attention to these and not losing time on less important details

Purpose for which information is desired may limit extent to which other details are explored

DISCERNING THE CORRECT APPLICATION OF SCRIPTURES

Always consider the context: To whom was the information directed?

What was its purpose? How would it have been understood by those hearing or reading it back then?

The Bible contains many basic truths or principles that can be applied to a variety of circumstances without doing any violence to the context

But elders should be especially careful that they do not force an application that is contrary to the context

When drawing an extended application or principle from a certain text, one can fortify it by showing the contextual meaning

We should not construe scriptures in such a way as to make them state twentieth-century concepts that would not have been understood by people living before

A case in point is Amos 9:2, where the reference is to 'going up to heaven' to escape divine judgment

Some might say this specifically refers to going up in rockets

People living in the time of Amos, however, would have understood this to mean going up to the mountains, for high mountains were often concealed at the summit by clouds

Amos 9:3 draws a similar comparison, pointing out that those hiding atop Mount Carmel would not escape Jehovah's judgment

The principle to be learned from Amos 9:1-3 is the same today as it was anciently—no place, regardless of how high or how low, will provide safety for lawless persons at the time Jehovah's judgment is executed; even should some today try to escape in rockets, they will not succeed

Keeping a Middle Eastern setting in mind will prevent one from drawing wrong conclusions

In Israel and Judah of ancient times, lions roamed the Jordan thickets and, as today, grapes and figs were widely cultivated

For this reason restoration prophecies speak of each one of God's people as 'sitting under his vine and under his fig tree' and of 'the lion eating straw' and allowing himself to be 'led by a little boy' (Isa. 11:6, 7; 65:21, 25; Mic. 4:4)

Such prophecies had a past fulfillment and also point forward to the time when peaceful, prosperous and secure conditions will prevail on earth after the "great tribulation"

They should not be interpreted to mean that lions will begin roaming the entire earth so that each child can have a lion as a pet,

nor should one think that, regardless of climatic conditions, grapes and figs will flourish everywhere

One also needs to use good sense and reason when reading Bible accounts

Often details are not supplied in the immediate passage

One example is Jehovah's supplying water for the Israelites in the wilderness (Ex. 17:6)

Had this been merely a trickle comparable to a modern water fountain, it would have been impossible for some three million people and their domestic animals to get enough water to supply their needs if they had to stand in line

Jehovah must have provided an entire stream of water from the rock, and this is confirmed at Psalm 105:41

Remembering that what is recorded in the Bible was usually of significance to people then living, will prevent one from drawing wrong conclusions

Psalm 37:10, for example, points to the time when the wicked will be no more

This does not mean that the application of this text is limited to the time after the "great tribulation"

David, under inspiration, based his statement on things he had personally seen in his life while Israel was under theocratic rule and used this point to show that there was no reason to get disturbed when the wicked seemed to flourish for a while (Ps. 37:1, 2; compare verses 35, 36)

Since 'Jehovah does not change,' we have confidence in the fulfillment of David's words in our day, when the wicked will be destroyed in the "great tribulation" (Mal. 3:6)

Appreciating that Psalm 37:10 is not just a promise that has never been fulfilled, we can point to its future fulfillment with greater confidence

One who knows the correct application of scriptures is in a better position to imitate Jehovah and to help others increase in accurate knowledge of God—this should be our goal when studying the Bible

MAIN POINT: Study with a purpose in view: Bible study helps to acquaint us better with Jehovah, to get his viewpoint and the correct understanding of his Word

SOURCES: w72 498-505; sg 33-38

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Using last Sunday's *Watchtower* lesson as a basis, point out how it helped you to understand some portion of the Bible itself or helped you to use the Bible more effectively

How the Elders Work Together as a Body

THE "BODY OF ELDERS" SERVE UNDER THE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST

Jehovah is the "shepherd and overseer" of our souls; he has made his Son the "chief shepherd" of His flock (1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4)

When the Christian congregation came into existence at Pentecost, Jesus Christ was its appointed Head (Matt. 28:18-20; Eph. 1:22, 23)

Appointed elders today recognize their responsibility to "shepherd the flock of God" under the direction of the "fine shepherd," Christ (1 Pet. 5:2; John 10:11)

Elders are not to be viewed either individually or collectively as the head of any congregation (Matt. 23:9-11)

Elders must be broad and deep in knowledge and understanding of God's Word, manifesting genuine love for the congregation

Such qualities, not merely their age, inspire confidence and respect, promoting the smooth operation of the congregation (Job 32:9)

They are to be like the older men in Israel to whom people could look for counsel

The services of the elders should result in refreshment for those in congregation, as indicated by Jesus (Matt. 11:28-30)

POSITION OF ELDERS FROM APOSTOLIC TIMES

Bible shows that all elders in any one congregation have equal authority, though not necessarily equal ability

Some may be more highly esteemed in congregation due to years of service and spiritual qualifications

None of Paul's writings single out any man as the overseer or even address any individual as such

Although Peter presided at early meetings of the congregation in Jerusalem, James is later found holding this responsibility (Acts 1:15-22; 2:1-14; 5:1-11; 15:13-21; 21:18; Gal. 2:12)

Paul related that there were "outstanding men" among the elders at Jerusalem and named Peter and John as ones who "seemed to be pillars," though no official rank or station is implied (Gal. 2:2, 9)

Though Peter was a 'man of prominence' like other older men, he was not infallible and was later corrected by Paul (Gal. 2:11-14)

On one occasion Paul reported to older men at Jerusalem, received counsel from them and followed it (Acts 21:15-26)

Model meeting of governing body recorded at Acts 15:6-29

Issue of circumcision was discussed, with credit

given to holy spirit for the fine decision that was reached so that congregations were "made firm" (Acts 16:5)

MODERN-DAY MEETINGS OF ELDERS

Regular meetings, held at beginning of September, December, March and June to discuss work, are recommended, but others may be convened whenever necessary

Chairman presides over regular discussions of activities; it is beneficial for him to plan in advance a program or agenda, scheduling time for each subject (Rom. 12:8; 1 Cor. 14:40)

Prayer is offered, seeking guidance of holy spirit and understanding of appropriate Bible principles (Acts 1:24, 25; 6:5, 6; 20:17, 36)

Chairman may request one elder to make brief notes of decisions made and date of meeting for congregation files

Chairman may call on certain elders to make initial presentation of subject; others are free to bring up matters needing attention as appropriate, contributing as fellow elders (or 65)

All can help to keep discussion Scriptural, applying Bible counsel

Principal topics for discussion might include:

Shepherding (starting new study groups; encouraging and counseling when appropriate at Kingdom Hall; arrangements to visit at homes; trying to interest unbelieving mates; strengthening the family study arrangement; giving assistance where needed to some in field ministry, in developing Theocratic Ministry School talks, in commenting at meetings, etc.)

Improving the teaching at meetings and their quality (teaching methods used by elders in giving talks; rehearsing demonstrations; who might be used in demonstrations so as many as feasible are involved in meetings; showing application of material in lives of brothers; timing of program; varieties of presentations; highlighting aspects of material that pertain to congregation)

Plans for public meetings (consider what subjects might be especially helpful to congregation, also special topics that might be developed in response to viewpoints of people in that area)

Public talks and instruction talks the elders will deliver (as their time and ability permit them to prepare these; also considering who might be especially qualified to cover certain subjects)

Matters needing special attention on the service meeting (such as common objections in field service; encouraging return visits and starting Bible studies; problems confronted by young

publishers at school that would be appropriate for congregational discussion; problems such as gossip, faultfinding, etc.) (At this point instructor may ask students what subject they think would be beneficial for the elders in their home congregation to discuss and why. After getting several suggestions, instructor may select a few matters that would be appropriate for such a meeting and that have the widest interest among the brothers present, and then get comments from the class on how some have handled the matters locally or what they would suggest)

Early in September determine whether any brothers now qualify as ministerial servants and whether any ministerial servants now meet the qualifications for elders

Also determine whether any elders or ministerial servants need to be removed

Send this information to the branch office along with the full name, complete mailing address and telephone number (if they have such) of those who will serve as the presiding overseer, field overseer and Bible study overseer for the coming year

Rotation takes place, the regular order being with Theocratic Ministry School overseer becoming *Watchtower* study conductor, who in turn becomes Bible study overseer, who then serves as field overseer, who becomes the new presiding overseer

The present presiding overseer moves to any open position, such as book study conductor

If someone cannot take the next position in rotation, elders will decide on adjustments, recognizing the rotation arrangement

Review duties of ministerial servants and make adjustments where beneficial

If a brother who was an elder or ministerial servant elsewhere moves into a congregation, the elders may want to discuss whether it would be appropriate before September to make a recommendation for his appointment so they can benefit from his services (or 66)

In December review work of pioneers and send reports to branch office for those who might qualify for service elsewhere

Problems involving pioneers may be reviewed at any time, however, and the elders have the responsibility to remove any pioneers who no longer meet the qualifications and notify the branch office of such action

CONGREGATION COMMITTEE

The presiding overseer, field overseer and Bible study overseer have special responsibilities as a service committee

These include checking all regular pioneer applications and recommending qualified ones to the branch office; making appointments of temporary pioneers; handling territory adjustments with other congregations, etc.

If all service committee members are elders they will serve as a judicial committee when necessary

Usually not necessary to consult Society in handling problems, as local committee is qualified to take action

Committee has weighty responsibility to preserve cleanness of congregation

WORKING TOGETHER IN A SPIRIT OF COOPERATION

Christian congregation likened to a body that, by being "harmoniously joined together and being made to cooperate through every joint that gives what is needed, according to the functioning of each respective member in due measure, makes for the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16)

Are you 'giving what is needed' by your cooperation and support of the various brothers who have been appointed to serve?

Paul advises that "God makes all his works cooperate together for the good of those who love God" (Rom. 8:28)

Essential for elders to cooperate together as a body for building up of the congregation in love

This requires continuing cooperation and support from overseers previously holding certain positions, not just for one month at start of year, but at all times

It means making available the information, experience, correspondence from the Society, etc., that would be helpful

It means not finding fault with the efforts of brothers while they learn what has to be done, but recognizing that they, too, are appointed and serve under direction of holy spirit

While Scriptures show that elders are equal in authority in the congregation, one serves as chairman, another one rotating into that position each year

Where there are differences in personal viewpoints, will you show humility by cooperating closely with what the body of elders as a whole feel to be in the interests of the congregation? (Prov. 15:33; 1 Tim. 5:21)

Will the presiding overseer in turn show humility by consulting fellow elders and showing willingness to draw on their years of experience?

Be sure decisions of the body are based on God's Word (2 Tim. 3:16, 17)

WORKING TOGETHER AS A BODY UNDER THE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST

Ephesians 5:24 reminds us that "the congregation is in subjection to the Christ"

This is true both of the spiritual congregation of 144,000 as well as of each congregation of Christians throughout the earth whose body of elders recognize that they are in the right

hand or under the control of Christ (Rev. 1:16-2:1)

Christ in turn accepts his direction from Jehovah (1 Cor. 11:3)

It was not always easy for him to follow such direction, yet he did so faithfully (Matt. 26:39, 42)

Will you as an elder in the congregation show the same attitude in recognizing Jehovah's arrangement, cooperating with the entire body of elders and with the presiding overseer? (Rom. 12:10; 1 Tim. 5:17)

Working together as a body does not mean all directly share in performing each task or making each decision

The human body, though having many members, carries out certain functions without consultation (1 Cor. 12:12-31)

While not all members may participate in all decisions, all do cooperate for common goals of the body

Each elder does well from time to time to reflect on his oversight, examining his ministry and motives, then making whatever adjustments are necessary to be an even greater source of blessing, assistance and encouragement to his brothers (Rom. 15:1, 2)

As entire congregation works together, it is strengthened, built up in loving unity, and brought closer to Jehovah God and Christ Jesus (Phil. 2:9-11)

MAIN POINT: Each elder should balance responsibility with humility, thus becoming a blessing in the body of elders and in the congregation

SOURCES: *ad* 1162, 1163, 1260, 1261; *or* 60-70, 78, 151-153; *yb* (1972) 29-33

No. 12 - First Wednesday, 10:40

Giving Counsel to Individuals

ALL OF US NEED COUNSEL

No man is able successfully to direct his own steps (Jer. 10:23)

No matter how many years we have lived, we are still children in the eyes of the Eternal God From Jehovah's viewpoint of 1,000 years being as one day, a man of 100 years has lived only two hours and twenty-four minutes (2 Pet. 3:8)

Can anyone become so wise in this short time that he does not need counsel from his Eternal Father?

From the time of Adam, men continued to do foolish things against their best interests

It is with good reason God's Word says: "Listen to counsel . . ." (Prov. 19:20)

Some in the congregation more frequently encounter circumstances where counsel is necessary to keep them in the right way

Lacking in spiritual growth and maturity, they react spiritually as a child

MEANS BY WHICH COUNSEL IS GIVEN

Jehovah gives us much counsel through his written Word the Bible

Although many of his instructions were directed to the nation of Israel, they are for our benefit too (Rom. 15:4)

God gave Israel practical counsel as to worship, exacting exclusive devotion; the same counsel will preserve our relationship to God

He gave counsel as to personal conduct, warning against murder, stealing, sexual immorality, bearing false witness and many other things; benefits to us and the community in which we live through heeding this counsel are clearly evident

Personal Bible counsel to individuals also instructs us

As with Saul, personal sacrifices without obedience mean nothing (1 Sam. 15:22, 23; Heb. 13:15)

Counsel about the danger in the love of money is as beneficial to us as it was to Timothy (1 Tim. 6:10, 11)

Husbands and wives today can benefit from counsel given to the Colossians (Col. 3:18-21)

Jehovah uses the "faithful and discreet slave" class to provide us with good counsel

Under its direction, Bible-based publications of Watch Tower Society counsel on personal conduct, marriage, keeping of integrity to God, our relationship with political rulers, etc.

Through congregation meetings, counsel from "slave" given on mental attitude toward our field ministry, spiritual maturity, etc.

Husbands and fathers have responsibility to counsel wives and children, and mothers share in counseling children (Eph. 5:22, 23; 6:4; Prov. 29:15)

Older men in the congregations must shoulder responsibility of giving counsel when needed This is an obligation that comes with appointment as an elder (Titus 1:9)

Not difficult to use the Bible to exhort the brothers to continued faithful service

When difficulties arise, must also handle these (2 Tim. 4:1, 2)

Must be willing and able to administer needed reproof

Though not always appreciated by the wrongdoer, it is a blessing to the congregation and will be to the wrongdoer who heeds it (Prov. 6:23; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Heb. 12:11)

Elders must have fortitude to reprove wrongdoers when necessary

Cannot hold back because some individual may refuse reproof, or because of relationship with the individual or because a former close associate (Prov. 27:5, 6; 29:1)

Overseer with spiritual qualifications will act out of concern for the spiritual condition of the congregation as a whole (1 Tim. 5:20)

For an overseer there is no room for compromise Paul was moved by God's spirit to forewarn us of some who would want to serve God in their own way (2 Tim. 4:3, 4)

Elders must be watchful enough to follow Paul's advice in dealing with those who contradict (Titus 3:10; 1 Cor. 5:11, 13)

Problems will arise in the congregation just as foretold; elders are necessary to shepherd the flock and keep the congregation clean (Acts 20:28-30, 35)

APPROPRIATE AND EFFECTIVE COUNSEL

Counsel is usually given in one of two different situations

Either when approached by one seeking it, or after seeking out one who needs counsel

The effectiveness of counsel can often be determined by the results it gets

If counsel accomplishes its intended purpose, improvement should be forthcoming

The only exception would be when the one counseled is beyond assistance

When response is not evident, it should not always be assumed that fault for this failure lies with the one counseled

Effort should be made to determine if counsel was ineffective by analyzing the counsel

Counsel may accomplish three things: Offer commendation, give something to work on, and offer suggestions or remedies

Commendation should be a sincere expression in recognition of a right course

It is constructive, strengthening and encouraging (Rev. 2:1-4)

It can be designed to identify the advantages or rightness of a course, being given as encouragement to continue following this course

Giving something to work on offers opportunity to make further progress even in fields he may not be aware are open to him

Often it can call attention to an error with the intent to correct it (1 Thess. 5:14)

Suggestions that are practical will help a person see how he can improve his relations with his brothers, advance in the ministry, etc. (Phil. 3:13-16)

Remedies offered where errors are being made will aid one in correcting them (Heb. 12:12, 13)

Care should be exercised not to get unnecessarily involved in handling matters that are Scripturally the prerogative of someone else, unless

gross sin is committed or the circumstances affect the congregation itself

Parents should take the responsibility over their minor children but may seek help from the elders

Married couples should settle their differences but may request the elders to give counsel

MANNER OF GIVING COUNSEL

No rules or set pattern for giving counsel, since circumstances and individuals vary; but some basic guidelines are helpful

Keep in mind that the person is one of Jehovah's "sheep"

Prayerfully seek Jehovah's direction

Treat the individual with loving concern; show by attitude a desire to help and concern for the individual

All counsel should be given in a loving way

Simply showing sufficient concern to give counsel is loving, but tone of voice and manner of approach are important (Eph. 4:32)

Base counsel on God's Word

Avoid giving personal opinions

Have attitude of Solomon in seeking Jehovah's wisdom (1 Ki. 3:9-12)

Be balanced in viewpoint, having a conscience trained in God's law and also recognizing that some matters are properly left to the conscience of others to decide

Take sufficient time, and endeavor to reach the heart of the person

Be a good listener

This helps to open the heart of the one needing help

Must be certain of true condition and of most effective solution before offering suggestions or giving counsel

Take time to discuss application of scriptures; let the person meditate; it takes time to reach the heart

When advisable, take time to do research or discuss with another elder; where serious matters are involved be very sure your counsel is correct before you give it

If too busy to handle a matter properly, better to refer the person to another elder for consideration

VARIOUS WAYS OF GIVING COUNSEL

Direct counsel takes full cognizance of the situation and deals with all the factors involved in a specific way

No question or doubt is allowed to remain as to the nature of the problem or circumstances; all the facts are clearly identified and fully discussed

The course expected or required is defined in unequivocal terms

Indirect counsel leaves much to the discernment of the one counseled

The facts or circumstances may or may not be specifically stated

Counsel may be offered more in the nature of suggestion or by example, without making direct application to the one being counseled

Alternate suggestions may be offered, leaving the one counseled free to choose

May also be given as group counsel, allowing each one to apply it as it fits

Questions may be effective in helping an individual analyze his own situation or needs

For corrective counsel to be effective and constructive, all pertinent factors must be understood on both sides

The one giving counsel *must be in possession of all the facts*, not guessing or drawing unwarranted conclusions

May require thorough but tactful and considerate questioning, digging deep; or may require questioning others who might have knowledge

If counsel is given without considering all the factors, the one counseled can reject it with self-consoling view: "He doesn't understand"

Only if all facts are known can a proper evaluation be made and an effective solution found, getting at the basic, underlying causes

The one counseled must know exactly *what was done* that is being called into question

Kindly but straightforward approach to a matter is almost always preferable

If the erring one is forced to guess why he is being counseled, he may miss the point completely

If the one being counseled is unsure of what was done, he may conclude that the one counseling is unsure also or just voicing a personal opinion and discount any advice given

The one counseled must know *why it was wrong*

Scriptural principles not known to the wrongdoer may have to be drawn to his attention

Many newly associated ones bring with them concepts they have always accepted as proper; one may feel an act or course is justified under certain circumstances

Unless convinced that his act or course is wrong, he will have no inducement to change and no grounds for true repentance

The one counseled must know *what to do to correct the situation*

If uncertain he may take another false step or hesitate to make any change

The one counseled must be *encouraged to turn around* and take a right course (Heb. 12:12, 13)

Should feel the requirements are not impossible for him to meet

Should feel he is not too far gone to come back

The final goal of the counsel, as in all effective teaching, is to reach the heart

PROPER ATTITUDE OF ONE BEING COUNSELED

Accept the counsel as deserved, not trying to justify or excuse oneself (Heb. 12:5-7)

Appreciate the discipline received as from Jehovah through the elders appointed as shepherds (Prov. 12:1-3)

Listen carefully

Should not be thinking of self or feeling sorry for self so as to miss the good counsel being given

Jesus admonished his disciples to get the sense of instruction

Apply the counsel (Prov. 3:7; 19:20)

MAIN POINT: Giving effective counsel as an elder means "holding firmly to the faithful word." (Titus 1:9) As a true shepherd, endeavor to reach the heart of erring ones and cause a turning around

SOURCES: *ms* 119-122; *or* 163, 164; *sg* 73-78; *w65* 430-436

SITUATIONS: (Students should be prepared to discuss in class the following situations as to circumstances and counsel that could be offered)

NO. 1: You are approached by a brother who has been baptized about a year. He is a mechanic, working in the service garage of an automobile sales agency. His primary work is to condition the trade-in cars to be sold on the agency's used-car lot. His conscience has begun to trouble him because of certain routine practices that are required of him, such as turning back the mileage a certain percent on all cars, treating automatic transmissions with "dope" that quiets them down, etc. He comes to you for counsel as to how he should view the matter and what he should do

NO. 2: The children of one couple associated with the congregation are unruly during meetings and run around noisily inside and outside the Kingdom Hall after meetings. Both parents are dedicated and have been associated for three years. They have two children, a boy nine years old and a girl seven years old. Neither are dedicated though they do share in magazine work. Many of the brothers are disturbed by their conduct and you feel compelled to counsel the parents. Indirect counsel has been given on several occasions from the platform

NO. 3: You are approached by a brother who has been in the truth four years. He tells you he has a confession to make. He drank too much one night at home and now has a guilty conscience. Before he came into the truth he was a heavy drinker but has not been drunk since. His wife was visiting her mother out of town. This happened about a week ago and none of his neighbors or anyone else knows or has said anything about it to him

House-to-House Ministry

GREAT URGENCY TO PERFORM THE KINGDOM-PREACHING WORK

Jehovah's Christian witnesses are privileged to share in performing a most vital work on behalf of the world of mankind (Matt. 24:14)

As prophetically foretold, the work of declaring the good news is done under the direction of Jehovah's angels (Rev. 14:6, 7)

Time left for ingathering of God's "sheep" very short, before end overtakes this wicked system of things; hence very urgent

Following example of Jesus and disciples, Jehovah's witnesses take initiative and carry good news to the people, not waiting for people to come in search for the truth (Matt. 9:35; Luke 8:1)

House-to-house preaching has proved most effective means of reaching the people for over 50 years; good results obtained have shown wisdom of method; Jehovah's blessing evident; "wisdom is proved righteous by its works" (Matt. 11:19)

Need for each dedicated Christian to have as full and regular a share in house-to-house ministry as he can (Matt. 9:37, 38; Eph. 5:15-17)

FULFILL YOUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN MINISTRY

Jesus invited followers to take "yoke" of discipleship, which implies work, though "load is light" (Matt. 11:28-30)

While our personal ministry includes fulfilling obligations to our family and to the congregation of spiritual brothers, it must reach out beyond these (Matt. 5:46-48)

We must have love for people of the world of mankind as Jehovah does (Matt. 22:39; John 3:16)

Do we appreciate grave danger those outside God's organization are in, and their urgent need to learn of God's provisions for surviving the "great tribulation"?

Beyond this, we must have a desire to share in the sanctification and vindication of Jehovah's Holy Name, both by living up to the Name and by publicly proclaiming it as widely as possible (Matt. 6:9; Ps. 72:18, 19)

We should not become discouraged and feel we have failed in the field ministry because some refuse to listen or accept literature, or if, after obtaining literature, they refuse to study (Matt. 24:9-12)

While many hearts are hardened against God and message, others may soften; thinking and desires of people change due to personal ex-

periences and circumstances, changes in world conditions, etc.

We rejoice that, in God's mercy, he often grants persons repeated opportunities to hear, with result that many become believers

Continue to plant and water and look to Jehovah to make it grow (1 Cor. 3:6; Col. 3:23, 24)

Success in field ministry not determined merely by number of placements, nor hours spent, but by our showing love for God, by sharing fully Our ministry is a failure only when we quit; if we love God and obey him, and keep working, then our ministry is successful (1 John 5:3, 4)

HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS FOR HOUSE-TO-HOUSE MINISTRY

To be effective in public ministry, we must have Jehovah's spirit to back us up; *prayer* for His guidance and direction before we start and while we are performing ministry is beneficial Sincere prayer to God gives us confidence and courage to do his divine will (1 John 5:14; Eph. 6:18)

Preparation essential with a view to making presentation of message as interesting and effective as possible; benefiting from the experience of others, accompanying them, very helpful

Conscientiously endeavor to improve personal field ministry; include thoughts of field service when preparing for meetings; be alert for points useful in the field; practice new points; keep "fresh," adaptable

Practicing presentations at home, at get-togethers, may prove helpful

Like Jesus and disciples, we direct our discussion toward the Scriptures (John 7:16-18; Acts 17:2)

Our message has *God's kingdom as main theme*; we enthusiastically uphold it as mankind's only hope

Appropriate to have in mind one or more Scripture texts that relate to Kingdom theme that could be read and discussed enthusiastically

Like Jesus, we *honor Jehovah's name* continually, aiding others to know it and appreciate its significance (John 17:26)

Whatever theme we choose to use in ministry, it should relate to God's kingdom, His purpose, and His name

Aside from these major points, what we say at any one home will generally depend on the response of the householder

God's Word provides no detailed rules as to how to begin a presentation or how to answer questions or objections

- When you *approach* a house, do so in *positive spirit* of peace and friendliness (Eph. 6:15)
- This spirit is reflected in our introduction, showing warmth and kindness to those we meet, not prejudging as being opposers but assuming they are deserving of our message
- Most effective introduction presents a simple idea selected to interest individual; presented warmly and sincerely
- A friendly smile and cheerful greeting may often offset annoyance resulting from unannounced call by minister
- Since most persons have little understanding of Bible, presentation needs to be *simple*, so as to be easily grasped and understood
- Feel free to discuss what seems best for aiding each individual
- Strive to get persons to talk with you rather than "preach" to them; by *conversing with people* we are more apt to reach their hearts and understand their needs
- Their reaction will help us to slant discussion toward topic that will most likely interest and motivate them
- Simple but leading questions may be used to draw out thinking; use discretion so as not to embarrass
- Be positive; seek points of agreement, avoid unnecessary controversy; our purpose is to win hearts, not arguments (Eccl. 7:8)
- Be *flexible and adaptable*, so as to fit ourselves and our presentation to varying circumstances and responses; this is achieved by thorough preparation and experience
- Christians should be careful to avoid causing needless difficulties; no desire to antagonize or offend others, or have "last word," so need to cultivate *tactfulness* (Prov. 12:8, 18; compare 2 Timothy 2:24, 25)
- Our message should attract reasonable minds, not repel them; it should highlight points of agreement on things in which they are naturally interested
- While tactful, understanding and reasonable in our manner, we do not compromise on the truth; we are firm for what is righteous and true, yet never rude or belligerent (Prov. 15:18)
- Illustrations* are helpful; usually can be used to apply personally the information presented
- To have message *timely* requires our being up to date, concerned and knowledgeable about what is going on in world

Guide discussion to make message *applicable to individual*, emphasizing its personal and vital importance to him and family, with a view to motivating him

While effective Scriptural discussions at homes of people do much to interest them in Kingdom message, an important part of our purpose is to leave with them printed publications to aid in search for truth

Appropriate for *discussion to relate to literature* offer or one of topics considered in the publication

Offering literature may provide fine opportunity to demonstrate a study on initial call

Never forget that getting Kingdom literature into the homes of sincere seekers for truth may open way for them and their families to find the way to everlasting life

Our goal is to *leave a favorable impression*; if possible, more favorable attitude toward God, his Word, and his servants than before our visit; but may not always succeed

We have best message in the world, the most comforting and attractive to honest-hearted persons; no reason for concern when some do not show favorable response

Show willingness to share good news with all, letting each one decide whether he will accept or not

Our ministry not bound by many rules; many have fine success by, in effect, visiting with people, engaging in conversation

Our main concern is to find God's "sheep," by trying to reach all; following up not-at-homes at different times, by letter writing or telephone; makes advisable keeping a record

Share Kingdom message with people wherever we find them, in gardens, polishing car, in field, or barn, etc.

When we have prepared ourselves well, by filling our minds and hearts with Bible truth, and motivated by a sincere desire to impart knowledge to sheeplike ones, we can be sure Jehovah will direct us through power of holy spirit to help persons whose hearts are receptive (Acts 16:14)

MAIN POINT: Encourage each dedicated Christian to view the house-to-house ministry as an opportunity to honor Jehovah's name and to aid others to gain life

SOURCES: or 107-120, 126-128; qm 174-186

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture

Showing Full Appreciation for Jehovah's Temple

IDENTIFYING JEHOVAH'S GREAT TEMPLE

Tabernacle and Solomon's temple replacing it, as well as their features, represented Jehovah's great temple and its features (Heb. 9:2-10, 23)

Main features of tabernacle and Solomon's temple included—

Most Holy or "innermost room" containing ark of covenant; curtain separated *Most Holy* from the *Holy*

Holy (separated by curtain or screen from courtyard) containing lampstand(s), table(s) of showbread and altar of incense

Priestly courtyard with its altar

Significance of these features in Jehovah's great spiritual temple

Most Holy represents "heaven itself," the area where "the person of God" is (Heb. 9:24)

The *Holy*, the courtyard and their features pertain to things on earth having to do with those serving Jehovah on earth and their special standing with God while still in the flesh

Curtain as a barrier separating the *Holy* from *Most Holy* represented, in Jesus' case, his "flesh," which he had to lay down in sacrifice, giving it up forever, to be able to enter "heaven itself," the antitypical *Most Holy* (Heb. 10:20)

His anointed followers must also pass the fleshly barrier that separates them from access to God's presence in heaven

In the case of Jesus, the *Holy* represented the condition that entitled him to be in "heaven itself" with Jehovah God were it not for the barrier of his fleshly body (1 Cor. 15:50)

This condition was that of being a spirit-begotten Son of God

In antitypical *Holy* (during his earthly ministry) Jesus (as High Priest) could offer up incense of prayer, praise and service to God

Those called to heavenly life with Christ are likewise begotten by holy spirit and thus brought into condition represented by the *Holy*, a spirit-begotten condition though still in the flesh

On earth spirit-begotten ones (as underpriests) enjoy spiritual enlightenment as from lampstand, eat spiritual food as from table of showbread and offer up prayer, praise and service to God as if standing at the altar of incense

Fact that the *Holy* was separated from the courtyard by a curtain or screen shows that special spirit-begotten condition of spiritual underpriests is screened off from outsiders; outsiders cannot fully appreciate it

Priestly courtyard, in case of Jesus, represented condition in which he, as High Priest, super-

intended his human sacrifice to the death; condition was that of perfect *human* son of God

In the case of the "called ones," spiritual underpriests, the priestly courtyard represents special *human* standing with God, their having been declared righteous and thus being viewed as sinless; represents righteous standing as to their fleshly bodies (Rom. 3:24-26; 5:1, 9; 8:1)

Altar represents God's "will," as shown by his willingness to accept perfect human sacrifice (Heb. 10:1-10; 13:10-12)

Jesus presented himself for sacrifice on altar of God's "will" in 29 C.E., which date would mark the time when God's great spiritual temple took form

Priestly courtyard took form as Jesus, in 29 C.E., began superintending sacrifice of his perfect human body

Holy took form when Jesus, in 29 C.E., became spirit-begotten Son of God (Matt. 3:17)

Fact that Jehovah accepted Jesus' presentation of himself to die sacrificially meant that the area where Jehovah thrones in heaven took on characteristics of *Most Holy* where Jehovah thrones above propitiatory cover of ark of *new* covenant, willing to be appeased by satisfying sin offering

Antitypical Day of Atonement began in 29 C.E. and ended in 33 C.E. when Jesus presented value of sin-atoning blood in antitypical *Most Holy*, "heaven itself"

Jehovah's great spiritual temple is his arrangement for worship

In 'final part of days' people of nations to go to spiritual temple (Isa. 2:2-4)

Since 1935 C.E., "great crowd" of nonpriestly worshipers began to be noticed at spiritual temple

"Great crowd" are not in priestly courtyard but serve in courtyard of Gentiles (a special feature of temple built by King Herod, though provisions were made previously for Gentiles to share in temple worship); this represents the righteous standing to which all mankind must come in order to worship God acceptably (1 Ki. 8:41-43)

OTHER TEMPLES

NOT OF HUMAN CONSTRUCTION

When on earth, spirit-begotten Christians as a congregation form a temple that God inhabits by *spirit*, not in person (1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:18-22; 1 Pet. 2:5)

Jehovah God and Jesus Christ are temple of New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:22-24)

Since Jehovah is personally present, there is no need for separate building through which 144,000 should serve and worship him; Jehovah takes the place of a temple

Lamb, Jesus Christ, is there directly also and shares with Jehovah in being temple of New Jerusalem

APPRECIATION FOR JEHOVAH'S GREAT TEMPLE ARRANGEMENT SHOWN BY SUPPORT OF TRUE WORSHIP

Jews, just prior to Jehovah's raising up of Haggai and Zechariah, failed to show appreciation for true worship; neglected temple rebuilding work, giving prime attention to own houses instead (Hag. 1:2-11)

Divine blessing could come only by Jews' resuming work on temple despite governmental ban, trusting in Jehovah and not giving in to the fear of man (Hag. 2:4, 5, 18, 19)

Anointed remnant, after being released from captivity to "Babylon the Great" in 1919 C.E., were like Jewish remnant returning from Babylon; had to revive public worship at spiritual temple to receive Jehovah's blessing

Service at spiritual temple needed to be given first place

Materialistic opportunities of postwar period had to be put in background

Fear of man had to be dispelled

Full trust and confidence had to be placed in Jehovah

As Jehovah (accompanied by his messenger of the covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ) came to temple in 1918 C.E., judgment on God's people began; loyalty of God's anointed ones was put to the test from that time forward (Mal. 3:1-3)

Proving loyal under test would demonstrate appreciation for Jehovah's temple and service there

Tested as to—

Reliance on truths of God's Word and his use of "faithful and discreet slave" class to provide spiritual food

Willingness to share in preaching Kingdom message

Loyalty to God's theocratic arrangement

Today anointed remnant and "great crowd" must continue to give full support to true worship. Must show full devotion to Jehovah himself, doing all things in a way that honors his Name, and willingly responding to his Word. Must show full appreciation for ransom sacrifice, acting in harmony with it by avoiding sinful conduct (Rev. 7:9, 10, 15)

Regard shown by—

Receiving with appreciation spiritual food dispensed by "faithful and discreet slave" (Luke 11:9-13)

Giving loyal support to work of Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making (Matt. 28:19, 20)

Cooperating with elders appointed by governing body of the "faithful and discreet slave" (Heb. 13:7, 17)

"Great crowd" thus show proper regard for spiritual underpriests making up "faithful and discreet slave"; support underpriests in their work as did non-Israelite temple slaves (Gibeonites, Nethinim) (Josh. 9:3-6, 15, 23, 27)

Anointed and "great crowd" must avoid neglecting 'God's house' (Neh. 10:39)

Elders and ministerial servants must discharge responsibilities to show they are not neglectful (Compare 1 Timothy 1:18, 19; 4:14)

Just as Aaronic priests had to be clean when serving before Jehovah and Israelites had to be clean when at sanctuary, all (anointed and "great crowd") must maintain clean standing before Jehovah (Ex. 30:17-21; Lev. 22:2-8; Num. 19:20; Titus 2:11-14)

No one can afford to neglect assembling with others of like precious faith (Heb. 10:23-31)

Commenting at meetings and preparation to do so included in supporting true worship

Should never neglect prayer (Eph. 6:18; Jas. 5:16)

Our "sacrifices" include public proclamation of "good news" and assisting needy brothers in whatever way possible (Rom. 10:13-15; Heb. 13:15, 16; 1 John 3:16, 17)

Meeting places for worship require maintenance; financial contributions, also cleaning and repair work, a part of not neglecting "house of our God" (2 Cor. 8:12; 9:7)

FUTURE BLESSINGS THROUGH JEHOVAH'S GREAT SPIRITUAL TEMPLE

After "great tribulation" joyful antitypical Festival of Booths begins, for "great crowd" of tribulation survivors depicted as waving palm branches at temple, that is, in earthly courtyards of temple, "courtyard of Gentiles" as it were (Rev. 7:9-15)

Festival of Booths pictures gathering of redeemed ones of all nations to worship of Jehovah at his spiritual temple during thousand-year reign (*pm* 401)

During this joyful festival sin-atonement benefits provided on Jehovah's Day of Atonement are applied to "great crowd" of tribulation survivors with a view to bringing about their complete healing from sin and imperfection (Rev. 21:3-5)

Resurrected ones will also have opportunity to serve Jehovah in earthly courtyards of great spiritual temple, with prospect of becoming perfect human sons of God (John 5:28, 29)

Salvation impossible apart from service at Jehovah's great temple

Humans refusing to serve him and refusing to celebrate great antitypical Festival of Booths will not gain everlasting life

Those who do celebrate, show appreciation for deliverance from old system of things and desire to worship at Jehovah's temple, will receive great blessings (Zech. 14:16-18; Lev. 23:42, 43; Deut. 16:13-15; ad 575)

MAIN POINT: Jehovah's great spiritual temple was represented by the tabernacle and the temple of Solomon; we should give his arrangement for worship our full support today

SOURCES: ad 575; pm 401; w65 750-754; w 12/1/72

No. 15 - First Wednesday, 4:30

Preaching from House to House

SHARING IN A WORK OF UTMOST URGENCY NOW BEING DONE ON EARTH

Declaring 'the everlasting good news to every nation, tribe, tongue and people' is a work of utmost urgency now being done on earth

People everywhere are to be judged—they will live or die according to their reaction to the good news (1 Pet. 4:5, 6, 17; Rev. 14:6, 7)

Our desire is to utilize the time we can spend in field ministry to reach the hearts of "all sorts of men" and give them a thorough witness, so that they might come 'to an accurate knowledge of the truth' (1 Tim. 2:1-4; 4:16)

REACHING THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF HOUSEHOLDERS

To accomplish the most good, we should imitate Christ Jesus (Matt. 7:28, 29; 9:35-38)

Our personal attitude toward the field ministry is extremely important if we really want to help people

We must be aglow with warmth, love and kindness, going to the people in peace (Matt. 5:46-48; 22:39; John 3:16; Eph. 6:15)

Our message is happy, pleasant; facial expressions should reflect this; a warm, winning smile and cheerful greeting can attract and disarm; establishing eye contact with listener will reveal our conviction and sincere interest in him and enable us to sense his reactions

Speaking in a friendly, conversational manner with earnestness will gain the listener's confidence and obtain a more favorable reception than a stiff, matter-of-fact recitation

Sincere interest in people is the key to reaching the hearts of righteously disposed persons

If we expect people to listen, we must have something definite in mind to say to the people; utilize practical suggestions and helpful examples from *Kingdom Ministry*; prepare before sharing in field ministry (Eccl. 12:9, 10)

(Ask students when and how they do their preparation)

Our introduction should be planned, but not stereotyped; it need not be spectacular but should be friendly and appealing

Its purpose is to arouse the householder's interest, lay basis for friendly conversation by which we can stimulate interest in the Kingdom message

Even as we approach the home, try to analyze the situation: Are the people poor or wealthy? Do they have young children in the home? Are they interested in gardening, flowers, animals, sports? Do they appreciate natural beauty? Are there many locks on the door or is there a mezuzah on the doorframe? etc.

If observant we can often learn much about the household that will aid us to present the message in the most attractive way

We need to be flexible and adaptable so as to fit the person or circumstances, endeavoring to reach the heart and capture interest

Who will answer? Will it be an elderly man or woman? A child, teen-ager or college student? A young father or mother?

Consider subjects currently on people's minds, that are up to date, relevant to the listener, his family or community; select subjects that lead naturally into the Kingdom theme, such as crime, pollution, problems of youth, family, government, war, conditions in churches or among church members, particularly things of local interest that touch on a person's life

While our main theme is God's kingdom, as we meet different people in varying circumstances, it is good to have in mind several ways to vary this theme, thus making our message adaptable to the individual

Endeavor to stimulate conversation and thinking; questions will help get the householder's viewpoint, demonstrate our respect and avoid the air of "preaching" or "talking down" to him. Yet exercise caution so as not to embarrass listener by questions too pointed or personal, not irritating him by attempting to force him to answer if he appears to prefer listening

We need not try to "talk up" to those highly educated, nor be apologetic for obeying God's will by bringing them his message (Acts 4:29, 31; 1 Cor. 1:26-29)

Rather, set a friendly foundation by seeking points of agreement, utilizing statements or questions that elicit an affirmative answer; be cheerful, positive and avoid controversy

While many persons are opposed to God's Word and message, many others merely have natural resistance toward callers, and their reaction may reveal annoyance, a distrust of strangers

They may seek to reject us by evasive objections before they have had opportunity to hear, thus it is important at outset to try to steer their thinking onto a subject of vital concern to them; make them want to listen, appealing to the heart if possible

Consider objections as points of mutual interest, not unfriendly

When persons object, "I'm busy," "I'm not interested," "We have our own religion," or offer criticism of Jehovah's witnesses, try to use this as a basis for further discussion

Try to ascertain the basis for objections: Is person prejudiced against Bible or Jehovah's witnesses? Is he misinformed or influenced by what others think or say? Kindly endeavor to help him (1 Pet. 3:15)

Cultivate tactfulness, a sensitive perception and discernment that enables us to accomplish our mission without offending by our manner or attitude

Avoid causing needless irritation in overcoming objections; unnecessary to have "last word" or be "telling person off" if our message is rejected

Appeal to person's love of righteousness, to his reason, to his desire for better things, to his sense of honesty, etc.

Ridicule or condemnation of his religious views will close his mind; rather establish that God's Word is reasonable, that His witnesses are sincere, reasonable persons (Phil. 4:5)

View with empathy the other person's circumstances, reasons for beliefs and thinking; think from other's viewpoint

This does not imply compromising on truth; must be *firm* for what is right, but never unkind or rude (Titus 3:2, 3)

Use Bible to clinch conclusions; read scriptures enthusiastically

Our desire is to reach hearts of 'people of all sorts that we might by all means save some' (1 Cor. 9:19-23)

USE LITERATURE TO EXTEND PREACHING AND TEACHING WORK

Presenting printed publications to the people will aid persons interested in the message to continue their search for God's truth

Even when persons show little interest, literature left may later be read by them, by visitors or other members of family

Subscriptions for *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* especially helpful, bringing Kingdom message into homes on regular schedule

Appropriate to slant presentation toward one of the topics considered in the publication; literature offer should be a logical follow-up of the matter under discussion

Demonstrate by specific subject or illustrations how publication truthfully provides Biblical answers to questions already raised

Stimulate a desire for the literature by highlighting its personal benefit to the individual; let him see how it will answer *his* questions, benefit *him* and *his* family

Getting Kingdom literature into the hands and homes of sincere seekers for truth may open the way for them to find everlasting life

If literature is refused, no need to evidence disappointment; seek to leave a favorable impression

Keep in mind that our work includes being disciple-makers as well as Kingdom-preachers; Kingdom truths must be inculcated into hearts of interested ones (Matt. 28:19, 20)

If possible, on initial call illustrate how literature can be studied along with the Bible; whet appetite for increased Bible knowledge; emphasize personal need and application

Be considerate, not "pushing" study on first visit if circumstances not suitable; but if possible, make definite arrangement for future return visit on certain day and time

Leave on warm and friendly note, perhaps offering point to look forward to on return visit; keep the appointment

Our main concern is to find God's "sheep"; should have Jehovah's viewpoint (2 Pet. 3:9; Jonah 4:11)

Therefore, our desire is to reach everyone in our territory with the Kingdom message; helpful to keep complete house-to-house record

Good to make a diligent effort to follow up not-at-homes by calling at different time of day or week

May leave a magazine, tract or study folder for their consideration or write a brief letter or call by telephone

Letter writing or telephoning can be done by older or infirm publishers, giving them opportunity to have enlarged share

CONSTANTLY SEEKING TO IMPROVE OUR PUBLIC MINISTRY

Utilize good teaching and speech principles taught in Theocratic Ministry School in the field ministry (Isa. 50:4)

Make it a practice to keep field ministry among thoughts when preparing or listening to talks; be alert for points to use in the field, keeping presentation up to date by adding new thoughts, examples, illustrations and improving variety and adaptability

Good to analyze personal ministry and to counsel self; be alert as to how effectiveness of presentation might be improved and steady progress will be noted

Many practice and rehearse presentations at home or when with other publishers, analyzing presentations together

This often proves helpful in improving effectiveness and building confidence; may sharpen

perceptive powers, which are evidence of a mature and qualified minister (Heb. 5:14)

By preaching from house to house, we keep God's Word before the people; we watch for those upon whom God's Word makes favorable impression so as to motivate them to a righteous course

We plant and water and look to Jehovah to make it grow (1 Cor. 3:6; Gal. 6:9)

MAIN POINT: The house-to-house ministry shows our love both of God and of our neighbor

SOURCES: or 114-119; sg 69-72, 92-94, 96-99

TEACHING SUGGESTION: In connection with class discussion: (1) Consider objections commonly raised during introduction of message and how to overcome them. (2) Discuss interesting and appropriate introductions. (Each student should be ready to tell how he usually introduces himself in the house-to-house work.) (3) Examine ways to make appeal with literature offer, how to overcome resistance and leave a good impression when refused. (4) Call for suggestions for getting into a Bible study on the initial call, also arranging for a return visit. Instructor could ask for presentation by brother in the class who is having good success in these matters. (5) Discuss how field overseer and other overseers can use this material to help others in their congregations

No. 16 - First Thursday, 9:10

Building Up Spirituality in the Congregation

NEED FOR BUILDING UP SPIRITUALITY IN THE CONGREGATION

Spirituality is the quality or state of being spiritually minded; it is evidenced by having an interest in spiritual matters, by desiring to talk about such matters and to have one's life guided by God's spirit (Gal. 5:16-18, 25)

A spiritually minded person is God-oriented; he builds his life around his relationship with God

A spiritually minded person buys out time from daily affairs to study the Word of God, seeking understanding of it, and, especially, walking in accord with it; he appreciates the privilege of prayer to God for help and direction (Eph. 5:15-17; Ps. 51:10-12)

The level of spirituality within the congregation directly affects the health, growth and everlasting welfare of its members

If a congregation has strong spirituality, then problems, which usually result from carrying out fleshly desires, are minimized or eliminated from the congregation (Gal. 5:19-24)

Strong spirituality will prove to be of lasting benefit, helping congregation members to survive fast-approaching "great tribulation" (1 Tim. 4:16; Rev. 7:9, 10)

MUST RECOGNIZE SPIRITUAL NEED IN ORDER TO BUILD UP SPIRITUALITY

Included in elders' shepherding work is the responsibility to help members of the congregation recognize their spiritual need (Acts 20:28)

Jesus said, "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need" (Matt. 5:3)

Do you, as elders, see the need of spiritual things? Do all those within your congregations?

In a physical way, sometimes persons have no hunger; they fill up on 'junk' foods, which kill their appetite for nourishing food, and so they suffer malnutrition

Spiritual appetite of brothers evidenced by what

they prefer; will they pick up and read worldly magazines in preference to *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, or do they prefer watching television to going to meetings?

Elders need to guard against the development of spiritual malnutrition, doing so by stimulating the spiritual appetite of those in their congregations and by showing them the value of spiritual food (1 Tim. 4:8)

One way to do this is by speaking about particularly appealing articles, perhaps in closing comments of meeting, saying, 'Did you read this article in the latest *Watchtower*?'; then note briefly but enthusiastically some points of interest

Should not try to show up ignorance of brothers and embarrass them; rather, simply try to stimulate their appetite for the Society's literature and the Bible

Good parents encourage their children to eat nourishing food. Why? Because it tastes good to the children? No, but because it will make them healthy and strong physically; later the children may develop a taste for such food and even come to prefer it

Similar with spiritual food; not always does it at first taste best, but "eating" it will build up a person spiritually

So, it is often just a matter of getting the brothers regularly to taste the "food"; then they, as a result, will develop an appetite for it and may even come to prefer it

At times brothers do not appreciate the value of a particular spiritual food

Some may say, 'What difference does it really make if we understand this deeper Bible material in Revelation, Ezekiel, Haggai and Zechariah?'

Elders can explain that "all Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial . . ." (2 Tim. 3:16) and ask, 'Do you really believe that? Do you believe that God knows what we need? Do you have faith in his organization that en-

deavors to further our understanding of Bible prophecies?" (Heb. 5:13-6:3)

Elders can also explain that, since there are parallels in our day to those ancient times, a detailed study of what occurred then is spiritually strengthening to us who face similar circumstances today (Rom. 15:4)

Even though details may not be remembered, we are benefited by the main points of that material, which illustrate Jehovah's love and care for his people and give force to his promises to destroy the wicked (2 Pet. 3:6, 7)

Sometimes brothers also say, "I believe the Bible is true, so why do I need to read information the Society provides on Bible authenticity or that proves evolution wrong?"

Study of such literature will equip us to answer objections often raised, such as, "How could Noah have saved all the animals on earth in the ark? Where did all the floodwaters go? Do not scientists have evidence that man has been on earth much longer than 6,000 years?" etc.

Elders can ask brothers, "What kind of witness for Jehovah do you want to be? Do you desire to be able to do the very best in the field ministry, effectively answering objections that may help honest-hearted ones to accept the truth? None of us want to make a weak explanation or offering, do we?"

Is it not true that Jehovah expects the very best offering we can possibly give? And as a result of Jehovah's provision of this literature, is it not proper that he expects us to offer effective answers and explanations on these matters? (Mal. 1:8, 13; Hos. 14:2; Heb. 13:15)

CONVERSATION ON SPIRITUAL MATTERS UPBUILDS CONGREGATION'S SPIRITUALITY

What the brothers talk about when they are together reflects their spirituality

Not wrong to discuss sports, secular work, clothing and so forth, but the extent to which such matters dominate the conversation indicates the level of spirituality in the congregation or of individual

The Bible says that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matt. 12:34); elders can do much to encourage brothers to draw from their heart's abundance speech that will build up spirituality (Ps. 19:14)

Publishers on way to territory, rather than discussing worldly interests, can be encouraged to discuss presentations, how to meet common objections, return visits they plan to make, etc. These discussions will serve to improve the quality of 'sacrifices of praise' and will build up congregation's spirituality

Conversation before and after meetings at the Kingdom Hall can be spiritually upbuilding

if elders set the example and encourage others to follow it (Phil. 4:8)

Field service experiences can be shared, things read during the week in the Bible or Society's literature can be discussed; elders can encourage brothers to talk about questions they may have on the Scriptures

When telling a speaker you enjoyed his talk, tell him *what* you enjoyed about it and *why* you enjoyed it

This will make the conversation more meaningful and spiritually upbuilding

While there is nothing wrong in talking about worldly interests at social engagements, conversation on these occasions can also be used to build up spirituality in the congregation

Elders can take the lead, showing how the Bible or the Society's literature can be enjoyably read or discussed together

Bible games may be found both enjoyable and instructive, or each one can tell how he came into the truth

Care should be exercised, however, not to overdo this, spending so much time on this that it makes social engagements mentally exhausting

(Are there problems in your congregation relative to these matters and on which you would now like suggestions?)

ACTING AS SPIRITUAL MAN, NOT PHYSICAL MAN, WILL BUILD UP SPIRITUALITY IN CONGREGATION

Physical man's mind is inclined toward satisfying his fleshly desires and passions; but the spiritual man has gained the "mind of Christ" by taking in information from God's Word and applying it (1 Cor. 2:14-16; Eph. 4:22, 23)

The force actuating the physical man's mind has been formed in him by sinful inheritance and worldly influences

The spiritual man has put on a new personality because of filling his heart with information that gives him a new 'spirit' or dominant attitude. This force actuates his mind to apply that knowledge, doing what is in harmony with God's will

Examples of contrasts of behavior between a physical man and a spiritual man:

When faced with a moral temptation, the force actuating a physical man is his sinful desire for fleshly self-gratification, and he succumbs to the temptation (Prov. 7:6-23); the spiritual man, on the other hand, has God's Word flash through his mind, and the new force actuating his mind pushes him away from the temptation (Prov. 4:14-27)

Also, when someone irritates a physical man, his reaction is to 'tell him off' with harsh words (Prov. 25:28; 29:11); the spiritual man, however, considers what is pleasing to God, and so

is governed by the fruits of God's spirit (Gal. 5:22-24)

Need to guard against the traits of the physical man showing up in our brothers, even in elders themselves (Prov. 14:29, 30; 1 Cor. 3:1-4)

Elders when under pressure may succumb to being brusque or giving terse commands

These are traits of a physical man; instead, be kind to the brothers, saying, "Would you please do this? Would you like to do that?"

Love, kindness and mildness should never be sacrificed in favor of efficiency; do not drive others or expect as much from them as you do of yourself (1 Thess. 2:7, 8)

There is also danger of being shaped by inclination of physical man to seek materialistic things, a prominent position or to be jealous or rebellious

Among early Christians material attractions influenced Demas to forsake the apostle Paul (2 Tim. 4:10)

Even Jesus' apostles did not immediately become free from the trait of the physical man, being concerned with position and prominence (Matt. 20:20-28; Luke 22:24)

Today loss of spiritual-mindedness may show up in feelings of jealousy; a person being resentful because of feeling he should have received a privilege another one received

Elders should be alert to correct traits of physical man if they see them cropping up in themselves or in other brothers

Scheduling parts on the service meeting that deal with the problem may be sufficient to correct the bad trait

Or it may be necessary to speak privately with an individual to help him correct a bad inclination

BENEFITS OF BUILDING UP SPIRITUALITY IN THE CONGREGATION

A congregation strong in spirituality will be peaceful, loving, morally clean and will be zealous and effective in the field ministry, gathering in new ones (Eph. 4:16, 25)

Strong spirituality will mean spiritually healthy families, essentially free of problems that require attention of the elders (Eph. 5:21-6:4)

Congregation members will remain faithful in time of persecution and temptation, and will survive the "great tribulation" (Eph. 6:10-20; Rev. 7:14-17)

MAIN POINT: Be alert to recognize any evidences of loss of spirituality, and take the lead in building up spirituality by wholesome conversation and by acting as spiritual men

SOURCES: w69 409-412; w71 543, 544

TEACHING SUGGESTION: After class consideration of material, three brothers previously assigned can be called on to present short three- to five-minute service talks such as they might work into concluding comments on the service meeting: (1) Deal with importance of attending congregation book study to get insight into deep spiritual food Jehovah has provided. (2) Discuss importance of being well prepared both for field ministry and on Bible studies so that this part of our sacrifice of praise will be well pleasing to Jehovah. (Mal. 1:8) (3) Brother explains difference between being a physical man and a spiritual man and how to develop such spirituality.

Finally a panel of six brothers could prepare beforehand to answer briefly questions from the class (as from a student group at school) with two brothers each preparing to reply on one of the points raised: (1) How all the animals could get in the ark, (2) What happened to the floodwaters, (3) Evidence that man has not been on earth as long as the scientists claim, and what the six creative days in the Bible really mean. (Comments should be based on material from *Is the Bible Really the Word of God?* if available. Explain that similar presentation could be worked into local service meeting.)

No. 17 - First Thursday, 10:40

Reaching All Who Will Hear

MAKING KNOWN THE "GOOD NEWS"

Jehovah is the greatest Evangelizer, Sender of "good news"

Content of the "good news" is indicated by the expressions "good news of the kingdom," "good news about Jesus Christ," "good news of the undeserved kindness of God" and "everlasting good news" (Matt. 4:23; Mark 1:1; Acts 20:24; Rev. 14:6)

Widening out of the proclamation

Jesus brought good news to "lost sheep" of Israel (Matt. 15:24)

His disciples preached to Israel, then to Samaritans and, starting in 36 C.E., to the Gentiles (Acts 8:5, 14, 25; 10:24, 34, 35; 11:18)

Faithful anointed ones, though few in number, have for centuries declared the good news

"Great crowd" now join in proclamation (Rev. 7:9, 10; 22:17)

"Good news" proclaimed under angelic direction to all nations (Rev. 14:6, 7)

HOW STRONG IS THE EVANGELIZING SPIRIT IN YOU?

Ask yourself: Do I really appreciate what the good news means to me and others?

Do I realize that Christ "shed light upon life and incorruption through the good news" and this is the only light of life people have? (2 Tim. 1:10)

Do I appreciate that others will live or die according to their reaction to the "good news?" (1 Pet. 4:5, 6, 17; 2 Thess. 1:6-8)

Do I understand that a knowledge of the good news obligates me to share it with others? (1 Cor. 9:16)

Am I aware of the bloodguilt that results from failure to proclaim the good news? (Acts 20:26, 27; 18:6)

If properly motivated, your concern is not just to cover territory or report activity, but rather to help every sheeplike person because you love such ones (1 Thess. 2:8)

Proper motive results from love of Jehovah and of neighbor (Matt. 22:37-40)

If motivated by a loving heart, we will be overflowing with the good news to everyone we meet; it will not be a matter of preaching at just certain designated times, but rather doing so on *any* occasion

It is not necessary to move to where "the need is greater" in order to share in the evangelizing work

This is beneficial when properly planned and done with right motive, but those with restless desire to move from place to place rarely accomplish much

An active family, settled in the community, can be very effective representatives of the good news, able to find interested ones and stick with them until they are firmly rooted in the truth

Best results obtained by those diligent to follow up all interest, providing progressive teaching to reach the heart (Matt. 28:19, 20)

Teaching requires time, effort and patience if it is successfully to move sheeplike ones

Help offered earnestly and sincerely is a major factor in convincing others that this is the truth

EXTENDING TO ALL PERSONS THE OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR

How Jesus and the early Christians preached
They did not do preaching on just selected occasions; hearts moved them to take advantage of every opportunity

They preached in Jewish synagogues (Acts 13:14-16)

They approached individuals and groups in the marketplaces (Acts 17:17)

They went wherever people could be found (John 4:7, 10; Acts 16:13)

Those who showed interest were visited at their homes (Luke 19:1-10; Acts 20:20)

They willingly sacrificed personal convenience in the interest of spreading the good news

All Christians preached (Acts 1:14, 15; 2:1, 4); the 500 to whom Jesus appeared after his resurrection proclaimed what they saw and heard (1 Cor. 15:6; Matt. 28:16-20)

Heart appreciation should prompt us to speak at every opportunity

Local customs in most lands rarely give opportunity to speak spontaneously to large groups, as in ancient synagogues; however, we can reach people who appear on streets, in markets and shopping areas

When visiting their homes we have fine opportunity to talk to them privately in relaxed atmosphere without distractions

We can follow up preaching by teaching interested ones through return visits and Bible studies

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INFORMAL WITNESSING

Informal witnessing done each day can be very productive, sometimes accomplishing more than planned, systematic witnessing

Take initiative to talk to others (Prov. 15:7)

Seed sown now may bear fruit much later (Eccl. 11:6)

Confident reliance on Jehovah's help will give boldness to speak out (Acts 4:31)

Share the truth with your relatives, as Cornelius did (Acts 10:24)

We have many opportunities to explain our beliefs about the Kingdom, holidays, material pursuits, education and training of children, etc.

Strike up conversations with those you meet in your daily routine as you travel, do secular work, go to school, etc.

Comments about articles in *Awake!* often prompt interest that can be directed to the Bible

Simply reading the Bible or literature in the presence of others may stimulate curiosity and prompt inquiry

Some persons are prone to talk about their problems and distressing conditions; we can share practical advice based on the Bible (Isa. 135-149)

Carry magazines, books, tracts, etc., with you to place with responsive ones

Assemblies, special events, outstanding progress of the work may give you opportunities to tell others what Jehovah's people are doing

Use of telephone and letter writing often prove to be good means to establish or maintain contact with those difficult to reach

Be discreet, tactful

Avoid controversy or wasting time with those not sincerely interested

Be careful not to use time that belongs to an employer or interfere with work others are required to perform

Do not be discouraged by lack of response

Even if the majority do not respond, there is cause for much satisfaction in being able to speak about Jehovah's name and purpose (Heb. 13:15)

What your hearers do about the good news is their responsibility; since Jehovah accepts only voluntary worship, there is no need to attempt to coerce unwilling ones

Your words may be ignored initially but recalled to mind by events and circumstances in the future

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO REACH PEOPLE

Street work may be successful in your community. It may provide a good opportunity to approach people rarely contacted.

Many report excellent results at shopping centers, bus stops, busy intersections, etc.

Usually more effective to take the initiative, approaching people in friendly, tactful manner.

Store-to-store work can be productive means to reach others.

Business people usually are not at home when calls are made, but circumstances at their place of work may allow for a brief witness.

Some store managers will respond favorably, often allowing opportunity to witness to employees.

Important to be well mannered, brief, tactful.

Group witnessing arrangements are very practical.

Working in a group is a real source of encouragement to everyone, especially new and less experienced ones.

Midweek group service arrangements often encourage more participation and effort.

In plans for service, take into consideration circumstances of publishers; be helpful and encouraging to those who need assistance.

Select time for activity according to circumstances and customs in your community.

THOROUGH COVERAGE OF TERRITORY

Calling at every door shows we are impartial; have love for *all* our neighbors.

People today are not generally inclined to discuss their religion publicly; the home is usually the most likely place to find them receptive.

Distribution of literature increases the spread of the good news.

Detailed information in printed form can be studied at householder's convenience.

Possibility exists that many individuals may read each piece of literature left in the home.

Magazines are especially effective in giving concise, meaningful witness; they have a variety of appealing subjects.

Cover your territory with the goal of contacting people in each home.

Be systematic, giving attention to the whole territory, not avoiding certain homes or particular territories where people tend to be unresponsive.

Keep record of all interest and placements, making prompt return visits to develop interest.

Make renewed effort to contact those previously not at home.

Many not at home in busy communities; large portion of territory bypassed if no further effort made to contact them.

A tract or older magazine left at the door, preferably out of sight to passersby, may be

favorably received, opening up opportunities for a witness later.

Call back at a different time, taking into consideration local customs and daily routine of residents in the area, calling at a time most convenient.

Do not disregard apartment buildings where landlords refuse admittance; sincere, discreet approach may bring opportunity to visit tenants.

Or, person in charge may accept tracts or handbills and distribute them to tenants.

Telephoning or letter writing may be helpful if contact otherwise is prevented.

No need to force the issue; householders bear responsibility if they allow others to choose for them.

SERVING WHERE THE NEED IS GREATER

Before moving far away, first consider what you might do to help a congregation in your locality needing assistance.

Overseers can contact neighboring congregations and work out arrangements to help one another cover their territory.

If you wish to move a long distance, write to the branch office for suggestions on where help is needed.

If interested in going to another country, write to the branch office there.

Count the cost before making a major move, carefully planning ahead for employment, housing, schooling, etc.

TIME LEFT TO REACH HEARERS GROWS SHORT

"Great tribulation" is near; destruction of Babylon the Great will come with a shocking suddenness (Rev. 18:19, 21).

Determination to prove our devotion and love for others should move us urgently to speak the truth at every opportunity.

We have assurance that Jehovah will bless our efforts.

MAIN POINT: Let love for Jehovah and your fellowman impel you to reach everyone possible with the good news.

SOURCES: *ad* 537, 677, 678, 1331-1333; *or* 107-120; *sg* 80-82; *qm* 185-189.

TEACHING SUGGESTION: During discussion ask (1) if any in class have moved to serve where need is greater; get their comments on factors involved or problems some might encounter as well as blessings gained. Discuss how local elders can be of assistance to those moving in, helping them to be accepted locally.

(2) Ask brothers for good experiences from informal witnessing. (3) Are brothers having any difficulty with certain aspects of the witness work here discussed, such as store-to-store work, group witnessing or thorough coverage of all territory, and, if so, what have they done to overcome it? Ask whether other students have suggestions that would be helpful.

Making Return Visits

RETURN VISITS AN IMPORTANT AND JOYFUL PART OF OUR FIELD MINISTRY

Why should we exert ourselves to call back?

Jesus commanded his followers to 'go, make disciples and teach them'; return visits are needed to accomplish this (Matt. 28:19, 20)

It means life to interested ones to learn and act on the truth (John 17:3; 3:16, 36)

Jehovah's name is honored by the work of teaching and disciple-making

We follow Jesus' example by teaching interested people in their homes (Luke 10:38-42; 19:1-10)

Our goal is not to "sell books," but with love for our neighbors we desire to help God-fearing ones seek life and God's goodwill (2 Cor. 2:17-3:3)

The work is urgent because the time is short and lives are involved, both ours and others (1 Tim. 4:16)

No doubt you have experienced the great refreshment that comes from making a return visit and helping someone to learn from God's Word, or from seeing an appreciative response (Acts 20:35)

Helping others learn the truth and seeing them live by it brought much joy to the apostle Paul too (1 Thess. 2:13, 19, 20)

ALWAYS WATCH FOR INTERESTED PEOPLE

In house-to-house work, at secular job, when going about the normal affairs of life, watch for interested people

Most of us have no trouble in identifying them

They may take literature; or they may decline our literature but make a comment that shows interest, a right heart condition or abhorrence for the detestable things in the earth

Make a record that will remind you of the interest and provide the information you need to make an effective return visit; house-to-house records showing interest are very helpful

In some cases, on initial visit, you may want to raise a point of interest for future discussion

If possible, make an appointment; they will then expect you

They will be prepared to receive you, or it may motivate them to read something in preparation for your call

They may be more inclined to discuss the Scriptures with you because they know why you have returned

PREPARE FOR EFFECTIVE RETURN VISITS WITH A GOAL IN VIEW

Preparation need not take much time, but plan your approach before you go; why are you going back?

Going (1) to help them gain more Scriptural knowledge, (2) to start a study, (3) to present a magazine or other literature you think will be of interest; (4) if Jehovah's witnesses are not generally accepted in the territory, your call may simply be to get better acquainted, build friendly attitude and confidence

How can you help them get more Scriptural knowledge?

Have a point ready to share with them on a subject that will interest them, a scripture you want to show them, or a sentence or two in an article that will appeal

Ask yourself: When I return, what will encourage them to receive me, to talk to me and to listen to me?

Will it be your friendliness that will attract them?

It may be, or it may be your warm interest in their welfare or your desire to help them gain Scriptural knowledge; on the other hand, it may be the subject you introduce for discussion

It is often good to follow through on the subject that initially caught the person's interest, expanding on that subject

What if the person does not respond to that subject? Be adaptable; you decide how to handle it. You may be able to determine what *does* interest the person and be guided by this, or introduce another subject that you believe will be appropriate

Remember, one of our goals is to help him learn something more from the Scriptures (Acts 18:11; 1 Pet. 2:2)

Another goal is to demonstrate the study if it is appropriate

Be prepared to do this, knowing what chapter you will use and on what page and paragraph you will start

Do not feel that you have to demonstrate the study or that you have failed if you are not able to do so; it may take time to gain the person's confidence or stimulate his interest in spiritual things, or he may have questions that are more important to him at the beginning

Offering magazines on a regular route is a good way to keep in touch with interested persons and to stimulate their interest

In the Bible there are no rules governing return visits; just remember you want to help the person learn something from the Scriptures so

he can grow stronger in his love for Jehovah and his kingdom, if possible starting a study

MAKING THE RETURN VISIT

Greet the householder by name if possible; remind him of your name

Seek an invitation into the home if appropriate; it makes it easier to start a study (Discuss how to do this in your area and the value of doing so)

Tell the householder the purpose of your call

Encourage the householder to use his own Bible; he will be impressed by what his Bible says

You may tell him of the study arrangement, offering to demonstrate it; or, it may be that you will choose to go ahead and demonstrate it without calling attention to what you are doing

As a teacher, following your discussion you may wish to review the high point(s) learned and thus impress them on the householder's mind, helping him to appreciate what he has learned

Arrange to call again; stimulate interest in the return call by raising a question for consideration or leaving one of the householder's questions to be answered then

SUGGESTIONS FOR EFFECTIVE CALLS

Make the initial return visit as soon as possible; can you make it later the same day when other members of the family will be home, or the next day?

Tell the householder clearly why you have returned, namely, to help him understand more about God's kingdom and why it is urgent for those who seek life and God's goodwill, if this approach is appropriate in your territory

Then, what he desires to do with the information is up to him

Let him know that you will be glad to answer his Bible questions if you can

You can assure him that there will be no cost

Welcome the householder's questions; they may be a key to his interests

Answer some of them; you may want to save one or two of his questions for the next call

Show him how he can find the answers to some of his questions and encourage him to search them out

If controversial questions arise that you feel must be dealt with, do not hesitate to answer them; but, do so in a kind manner and then direct your attention back to the Kingdom message again or to the subject you were discussing (1 Pet. 3:15; Prov. 15:1; 2 Tim. 2:24)

Be patient and understanding with the householder; he has much to learn and it takes time because he may believe that what his religion has taught him is the truth

Be alert to demonstrate the study as early as possible; you may be able to do so within the first few minutes of the call

Do not stay too long; if you have helped the householder learn one or two points of value from the Scriptures, you have done good for him and your call has been successful

Discuss other subjects on the next call; keep your presentation simple and uncomplicated (John 16:12)

If you are not invited into the home, be prepared to present the information briefly at the door; feature the main point and thus help the householder learn something of value even if the conversation must be short. Always be kind, respectful and considerate of others

ANALYZE YOUR RETURN VISITS WITH A VIEW TO GREATER EFFECTIVENESS

Did you teach a Scriptural point? What point? One point simply and clearly made with personal application to the householder is often sufficient

Were you tactful and kind, or could you have shown more tact and kindness? How?

Did you endeavor to start a study? How?

When started, what will you do to keep it going and build the householder's appreciation for it?

Can you improve your ability as a teacher? Jesus used questions, not hard ones, but questions that invited people to think and draw conclusions (Matt. 16:13-16)

You can use such questions, too (Speaker may wish to illustrate)

Jesus used illustrations that fitted those to whom he was speaking, such as farmers, housewives, merchants, fishermen, etc. (Matt. 13:3-47)

His illustrations encouraged people to think; they helped them apply to themselves the point being made and served as memory aids (Luke 10:25-37)

Jesus kept referring his listeners to God's Word; you should do this too (John 7:16)

Jesus took time to explain when necessary (Mark 4:34; Matt. 13:36, 37)

Did you stay too long?

How will you handle things next time in an effort to be most helpful to the interested person, so the householder will enjoy the call, learn more and be personally benefited?

Before making return visits, do you pray that Jehovah will bless you in your efforts to find and feed those who will become his "sheep"?

Do you keep the Bible to the fore so the sheeplike ones can recognize the Shepherd's voice? (John 10:3, 4, 16, 27)

Remember it is not our own personal ability or skillfulness that brings success; we plant and

water, but it is Jehovah who makes it grow (1 Cor. 3:6, 7)

CAN YOU HELP OTHERS MAKE RETURN VISITS? HOW?

All qualified publishers can be encouraged and aided

Help them see the need to make return visits and the joy that can be theirs

Help them to be alert to watch for interested people at all times

Help them prepare and have their goal clearly in mind

Invite them to come with you or arrange for other willing and qualified publishers to help them

Young ones can deliver magazines regularly to those who show interest

They can offer Bible study to all and then take their parents or another publisher with them to conduct it if necessary

They can offer to study with classmates and neighbor children

Help others in your congregation to have a full share in this activity and to experience the joy that Jehovah gives to those who share in the work of teaching and making disciples

MAIN POINT: Show a genuine interest in the "sheep," by following up all interest, aiding others to do so too

SOURCES: *qm* 207-211; or 121

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture, with comments from students as time allows as to how they have obtained success in making return visits and starting studies

No. 19 - First Thursday, 3:00

Responsibilities of Overseers

ALL OVERSEERS ARE SHEPHERDS AND TEACHERS

Each overseer should share in giving personal attention to the spiritual needs of others in the congregation

Do not wait for someone to ask you to do it; it is your responsibility as an elder (1 Pet. 5:1-3)

Discussion among elders will aid in coordinating efforts so that their time is used most effectively

Willingly minister to the needs of your brothers (Matt. 20:25-27); be an example to the flock, not only in knowledge, family life and personal conduct, but also in zeal for Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making

As teachers, all overseers are to share in instructing the congregation

Much of this is done in the meetings of the congregation, giving public talks, conducting meetings, caring for other platform assignments

Also involves giving personal counsel, enlightenment, exhortation and reproof, as needed

All overseers are shepherds and teachers of the flock no matter what other duties the body of elders asks them to handle for any one year

PRESIDING OVERSEER COORDINATES WORK AND SETS GOOD EXAMPLE IN SHOWING CONCERN

Initiative and alertness on his part are necessary to keep the congregation moving forward

Should regularly discuss matters with other overseers and ministerial servants, offering suggestions and listening to their recommendations; he is interested in all the activities of the congregation

When problems arise, he is to take the initiative in seeing that they are given attention; many minor situations require attention week by week, and he will make appropriate decisions on these

He serves as chairman of the body of elders
He should coordinate the efforts of the body of elders

When presiding at meetings of the elders, he is not simply to open and close the meeting; he should preside "in real earnest," doing all he can to aid toward fruitful discussion (Rom. 12:8)

Certain decisions are made by the elders as a group and not by the presiding overseer alone
Presiding overseer is wise if he benefits fully from the experience and counsel of the other older men (Prov. 24:6; 27:17)

Should not hesitate to ask their opinions
Not necessary to change all arrangements of congregation when new presiding overseer is assigned

He cares for correspondence with the Society, signing reports, remittance forms and other congregation correspondence

He maintains a file of appointment letters, dis-fellowshipping correspondence, legal and financial records, etc.

At end of year he submits a report to the branch office on the condition of the congregation and what has been accomplished during the year

A principal responsibility is showing concern for all, being a shepherd

Love, not just efficiency, should govern his dealings with others (1 Thess. 2:7, 8)

He should encourage those showing good spirituality and zeal, assist those who are weak (Acts 20:35)

He should be interested in aiding brothers in the congregation to qualify for positions of responsibility, as ministerial servants or elders (2 Tim. 2:2)

By loving counsel he can help them to overcome problems that may be holding them back, taking initiative to offer helpful suggestions. Where possible, he will make arrangements that enable them to gain needed experience by assisting others.

He may find it beneficial to visit the various congregation book study groups; it is up to him to decide how often he will do so, perhaps once or twice during the year.

He is responsible to see that beneficial service meetings are provided for the congregation each week.

He is responsible to see that details are worked out in arranging for public meetings.

FIELD OVERSEER COORDINATES ALL FEATURES OF THE KINGDOM-PREACHING

He has been entrusted with oversight of the field ministry, particularly the various features of the preaching work; he should take the initiative in promoting it (Matt. 24:14).

A primary concern is the *viewpoint* of the congregation toward Kingdom-preaching; he encourages right attitude and full participation.

He seeks to cultivate among the brothers a heartfelt desire to preach, a feeling of responsibility and appreciation for the privilege (1 Cor. 9:16).

Field overseer should encourage brothers to remember that their commission is from God, and that field service is part of their worship. Balanced view is needed as to success in placing literature and how a person feels about his service when public is indifferent or opposed.

He oversees group witnessing arrangements in cooperation with book study conductors.

He keeps close watch over these arrangements to see that they are workable, that they really help the brothers fulfill their desire to share in preaching.

He should lovingly give personal help to aid anyone to improve his ability in field ministry. Kindly awareness of personal circumstances and limitations should be shown.

The field overseer is responsible to see that all who live in the congregation's territory assignment are given full opportunity to hear the good news.

He sees that the territory is divided up into convenient sections for assignment and checks to see that territory is regularly covered.

He makes arrangements for group witnessing in areas not regularly covered.

Realizing the benefits from using the various kinds of literature, he should see that the

territory receives magazine distribution, also other literature offers, and benefits from special campaigns arranged by the branch office. It is his responsibility to follow through on programs the branch office recommends, such as to reach special groups—teachers, public officials, doctors, etc.

Following suggestions of "faithful and discreet slave" class will result in blessing and increase (Acts 16:4, 5).

Field overseer is responsible to see that adequate magazine and other literature supplies are provided.

He plans ahead to see that literature and magazine orders are submitted, being careful not to order excessive amounts.

When special magazines are announced by the branch office, he is to alert publishers, then see that order is submitted for extra copies needed.

Handbills and tracts should be ordered and the field overseer should see that they are used in the field.

Field overseer responsible for field service report of congregation.

At end of month he collects report cards from pioneers, tabulates congregation's report of field ministry for the month and gives it to the presiding overseer.

Total report of the congregation publishers is posted on a Publisher's Record card that is appropriately marked for entire congregation. Each one's field service report is posted on his Publisher's Record card.

When new publisher reports, field overseer shows personal interest; must ascertain if person qualifies to be publisher.

First, he talks to one who is studying with the person; second, with person himself; third, with presiding overseer.

Field overseer will, no doubt, need the assistance of ministerial servants to care for supplies and records (Principle of Acts 6:1-6).

He may use their assistance in assigning territory, caring for supplies of magazines and other literature, perhaps also posting records.

The field overseer must realize, however, that all these needed services are his responsibility; they all come under his oversight.

Besides shepherding and teaching responsibilities, field overseer will act as chairman of body of elders if they have reason to meet while presiding overseer is away.

BIBLE STUDY OVERSEER RESPONSIBLE FOR WORK OF DISCIPLE-MAKING

He will encourage the brothers to have zeal for making return visits and conducting home Bible studies; he will help all to share to extent their circumstances allow.

When possible, he will go with brothers on return visits to offer help; also will arrange for those desiring assistance in this activity to be aided by experienced ones

By repetition and emphasis he can help others to become very conscious of the value of calling back on all who show some interest, giving "thorough witness" (Acts 10:42)

He might stress that all in congregation can hunt for those who want to study and, if not able to handle them themselves, turn calls over to someone who is able to care for them

He should work closely with those publishers and pioneers who are conducting studies with newly interested persons

Offer commendation and suggestions as to teaching, reaching the heart

Bible study reports received each month provide a guide, showing what work is being done

Publisher may request him to go on study; when possible he should do so; if he cannot, another capable publisher may assist

Thus, in one way or another, he should know who among brothers are conducting Bible studies, the people being studied with and the progress being made

He should encourage family Bible studies for those already associated; also work toward having studies developed with unbelieving mates

Bible study overseer has as his special field of responsibility those who are beginning to show interest in the truth or who have associated for a comparatively short time with the congregation

He welcomes newcomers to the Kingdom Hall; is "hospitable" (1 Tim. 3:2)

He should make them feel at ease, introduce them to others

He strives to get to know the names of each newly interested person attending meetings

He may recognize name from Bible study reports; if not, he may invite person to study Bible and arrange study for him if the person so desires

He is responsible to keep a reliable monthly record of meeting attendance

WATCHTOWER STUDY CONDUCTOR, DILIGENT TEACHER

In caring for *Watchtower* study this elder is responsible for all that relates to the meeting

He personally conducts the study or arranges for another elder, if available, to do so when he is away

He assigns readers for the specific weeks when they will serve, using those approved by the body of elders

To aid the congregation to benefit to the full from the spiritual food in *The Watchtower*, he needs to be thoroughly prepared

It is his assignment to be sure that he thoroughly understands and emphasizes main points of articles so congregation will thoroughly understand the material and be aided to remember it (1 Tim. 4:16)

He should realistically help all to see how lesson bears on their lives, drawing out practical application of material

He should correct misunderstandings tactfully so that commenter is not embarrassed but right answer is left in minds of brothers

As a loving shepherd, he is responsible to give personal assistance

Aid newer ones to learn how to study the lesson; assist timid ones to share

Help brothers to appreciate that comments are part of their worship

THEOCRATIC MINISTRY SCHOOL OVERSEER BUILDS SCRIPTURAL APPRECIATION

As an overseer, he is responsible for the orderly functioning of the Theocratic Ministry School in the congregation

If more than one group of students is required, he will request another elder, if available, to serve in counseling a second group

He makes assignments of talks for the school so material will be covered

He also should help those enrolled to improve their abilities individually as preachers and teachers

Kind, practical and encouraging counsel is to be given from platform; he will explain *how* things can be done and *why* they are effective

Individual help may be given students in their homes or at meeting place

In his comments, he can do much to enrich the congregation's knowledge and appreciation of the Bible; show how information applies to *their lives*

Not all his time for counseling needs to be used in analyzing speech qualities; this may be kept quite brief

He is not to try to restate the student's entire talk, but appreciative comments for fine Scriptural points that were covered will help focus attention on them, emphasize them

If main points were not covered or inaccurate statements were made, he is responsible to draw attention to these as time permits

If a Kingdom Hall library is maintained, he will oversee it

CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY CONDUCTOR GIVES PERSONAL ASSISTANCE

Primary responsibility is as teacher, conducting weekly book study

He must help those attending to see, not only answers, but reasons for them and value of information, how it applies to them individually

He should aid his group in their Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making
 He arranges for group witnessing, territory; he or someone else qualified is to take the lead
 Close relationship allows him to help young and old to improve in their ministry; should give needed encouragement

As a shepherd, it is his responsibility to get to know well those in his group (Compare Romans 16:3-15)

In relaxed atmosphere, he can listen to their problems and thoughts; show deep concern and love by encouraging with Bible counsel
 He should arrange for help to be given to elderly, sick and those in divided households (Jas. 1:27)

THE SPIRIT TO BE SHOWN BY OVERSEERS

Each one must be willing to shoulder the responsibility that is his, not expecting someone else to carry his load but seeking ways and means to discharge fully the responsibility entrusted to him (Gal. 6:5)

Manifest a spirit of genuine cooperation with all the other overseers; there should be no insisting on one's "rights" but rather a common desire to get Jehovah's work accomplished

Always keep in mind that Jesus Christ is the appointed Head of the Christian congregation and we should strive to serve humbly under his direction

MAIN POINT: Overseers as shepherds and teachers should humbly shoulder their individual responsibilities; they should cooperate fully to accomplish Jehovah's work and give loving aid to all in their care

SOURCE: or 70-82

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Problems for discussion: How might the Bible study overseer help a newly dedicated family head see the value of a regular family Bible study? What Scriptural counsel could be used? Students should have a point in mind that would be helpful.

Ask class: (1) Are reports for field service and Bible study reports being received? If not, how do brothers handle late reports? (2) What have Bible study overseers actually done to help brothers on their home Bible studies or to help new ones get started in this work? Consider suggestions from class

No. 20 - First Thursday, 4:30

Visiting Those Showing Interest

DO YOU HAVE JOY IN MAKING RETURN VISITS?

(Invite personal expression from students as to why this activity brings them joy)

WHERE CAN YOU FIND INTERESTED PEOPLE?

(Invite personal expressions from students concerning where and how they have located interested people; include points from lecture, No. 18)

WHAT WILL BE THE PURPOSE OF YOUR CALL?

(Invite students to comment on the four points discussed in lecture and how to accomplish each)

WHAT WILL YOU DISCUSS ON YOUR VISIT?

(Ask students what subjects they find are of interest to people in their territory and are effective for discussion on return visits)

HOW WILL YOU BEGIN YOUR CONVERSATION?

Often our getting a hearing ear or not depends on how we begin the conversation or introduce the subject we will feature during our call; what do you say to encourage the householder

to receive you, to listen to you and to talk to you?

Some publishers have found that there are householders who resist them when they feel they are being pushed or urged, but these same people respond easily and relax when the publisher is warm, friendly or shows personal interest in them, their family and problems
 With others it may be the subject you introduce for consideration that will attract and hold their attention, especially if it is of personal interest to them and the members of their family

Some publishers find it effective to use questions to catch the interest and stimulate thought, such as, 'What does the future hold? Will things get better or worse? Will there ever be peace on the earth? What do you think? What does the Bible say?' Or, 'Most of us have lost a loved one in death and many are asking, What happens to dead people? People have different opinions. What do you think? Have you ever read what the Bible says?'

(Ask students how they introduce themselves and endeavor to hold the interest when making return visits. Instructor can arrange for two or three students briefly to demonstrate how they introduce themselves and try to achieve their goal on the call. Students may pick their own householder, if this is desirable, and should handle the call just as they would in their home

congregation territory. Demonstrations should be short, two or three minutes)

(Before the return visit is demonstrated, ask student first to tell the class (1) what means he proposes to use to encourage the householder to receive him and listen to what he has to say, and (2) the goal of his call. Then, as the student makes the return visit, others in the class can observe specifically how he handled these two matters)

(Students should make their call the way they feel it will be most effective. People are different. Jehovah has a variety of people in his organization, making it possible for the greatest variety of people to be reached. Do not try to get all students to follow a certain pattern that appeals to you)

(Following each presentation, call on others in the class to comment on what they felt was effective about the presentation. Instructor may make his own comments on this too. Students may have other suggestions as to how they would handle a situation like that just demonstrated. Call for these comments. Use the discussion as an opportunity for the students to exchange ideas with one another. The instructor can draw attention to practical suggestions given, but will not propose that one approach was better than another)

HOW CAN THE STUDY BE STARTED?

Some have found it effective to raise questions on a subject, then after arousing the person's interest, turning the householder to the scriptures that answer the question

Paragraphs can be read in summary, pointing to the value of the publication

Some have found it effective just to tell the householder, 'We conduct free home Bible studies with people and I would like to demonstrate the arrangement for you and your family, if I may.'

Then turn to an appropriate chapter in the publication, use the questions, read the scriptures and sum up the paragraphs

Many publishers use the *Truth* book, "*This Good News of the Kingdom*" or the "*Look!*" booklet

Some say, 'We are assisting people to understand the Bible. I would be pleased to study the Bible with you and your whole family at a time convenient to you at no cost.'

Others explain that the householder is entitled to a free home demonstration of our Bible study arrangement

(Discuss other suggestions. Ask students what they find to be most effective in their territory)

BE DISCERNING

Do not stay too long

Some will not ask you to leave but will not invite you in again if you stay too long

Be observant

Are children crying or was the householder doing something that it would be best not to interrupt?

Is he getting fidgety, expecting company, or was he about to leave? It may be best to suggest that you call at another time

You may want to express regret that you called at an inconvenient time and tell the householder that under the circumstances you would like to leave with him one point that will give him something good to think about during the rest of the day

Then you can read one well-chosen verse from the Scriptures or a sentence from one of the publications

Be friendly, use discretion, be considerate

WHOM WILL YOU HELP IN YOUR CONGREGATION AND HOW CAN YOU AID THEM?

When you get back home, help the brothers in your congregation to see the urgency of visiting those showing interest

Help them enjoy pleasure in this part of the Christian ministry (Acts 20:35)

Help members of your own family. By discussion or by informal practice sessions help them to prepare to introduce themselves effectively and to plan how to explain to the householder the purpose of the call

Help them to prepare effective ways to introduce the study

Consider what publication might best be used, the page and paragraph where the study will begin

Might let members of the family practice on one another and thus prepare for effective activity in the field

When convenient, may include other families or other publishers in the congregation in these discussions

Young and old, new publishers and experienced ones can share

Regularly go along with the members of your own family in making return visits

Invite others to go along with you when making return visits whenever possible

Arrange for other willing and capable brothers and sisters to accompany publishers needing assistance in this activity

Encourage all in the congregation to show a genuine interest in others who are responding to the Kingdom message

Publishers may make return visits by delivering magazines or other literature, by conducting a study, writing a letter or calling the interested person on the telephone

Use each contact to stimulate interest; make your calls friendly

When you have appropriate parts on the service meeting, use these to keep before the brothers the importance of making return visits, teaching and making disciples

On all occasions, help the brothers find pleasure in this rewarding activity

(Ask students how they might help others in this activity when they return home. Suggest that

they make a note of the names of such publishers now, while they are thinking of them. Urge students to follow through and aid their brothers in this important work of making return visits.)

MAIN POINT: Help other publishers to show genuine concern for sheeplike ones by making return visits on all interested persons

SOURCE: *or* 121

No. 21 - First Friday, 9:10

Life, Marvelous Gift of God

JEHOVAH GOD IS THE SOURCE OF LIFE

Life has always existed because Jehovah has always been in existence (Ps. 36:9; 90:2; 1 Tim. 1:17)

The order of appearance of life was established by God

First, God's only-begotten Son, then the angels (Col. 1:15-17)

Later, the physical universe, earthly vegetation, sea creatures, winged flying creatures, land animals, man and woman (Gen. 1:1-27; 2:7, 21, 22)

Evolution was not used, but at Jehovah's direction his Son acted to carry out His commands and the different "kinds" were created; earthly creatures and plant life each reproduced "according to its kind"

The Bible uses "soul" (Hebrew, *ne'phesh*; Greek, *psy-khe'*) for life as a person or animal, whereas "life" (Hebrew, *hay-yah'*; Greek, *zo-e'*) Scripturally applies to life itself, the life principle (Job 10:1; Ps. 66:9)

Life force (spirit; Hebrew, *ru'ahh*; Greek, *pneu'-ma*) animates the creature; breath (Hebrew, *n'sha-mah'*) sustains the life force (Isa. 42:5; Ps. 104:29; Gen. 7:22; *tr* 38-40)

Organisms (fleshly bodies) differ (1 Cor. 15:39) *Encyclopædia Britannica* states: "... each distinct type of organism seems to have some distinctive protein of its own, and some characteristic rate or rhythm of metabolism"

The life force or "spirit" put in Adam by God is passed on to offspring by means of the procreative process

God created Adam's body, put life force (*ru'ahh*) and breath (*n'sha-mah'*) into it, and man became a living soul; he began to have life as a person (Gen. 2:7; *ad* 1546, 1547)

The life of man and animals is dependent first of all on the life force provided originally by God when creating, and, secondarily, on breath to sustain that life force (Gen. 7:23)

Appreciation for life is enhanced by considering the variety of forms of living things and their ability to grow, adapt and reproduce

WHAT MAN NEEDS FOR EVERLASTING LIFE

Fruit of the "tree of life" in the garden of Eden would not in itself have given life; the "tree" represented God's *guarantee* of life "to time indefinite" to ones He permitted to eat thereof (Gen. 2:9; 3:22)

Adam's sin resulted in a descent of about 930 years toward death, in accord with the principle of James 1:14, 15 (Gen. 5:5)

For everlasting life, man must live 'not by bread alone, but by every expression of Jehovah' (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4)

Man, being created "in God's image," has attributes like God's; he was given a capacity for spirituality, being able to appreciate and worship his Creator (Gen. 1:26, 27)

For everlasting life, man must exercise spirituality, taking in knowledge of God and Christ (John 17:3)

Faithful men of old embraced God's promise of deliverance, believed in the resurrection and had hope in God's citylike administration (Heb. 11:10, 16, 35)

The "holy and righteous" Law given through Moses did not provide that deliverance; it condemned the Jews to death and showed all men to be sinners, but provided prophetic patterns of God's provision for deliverance from sin (Rom. 7:9-12; Gal. 3:19)

Christ died to open the way for release from sin and Adamic death for all who would believe; he died *on a stake* to remove the Law's curse from the Jews (Gal. 3:13)

Eternal life is possible only through Jesus Christ and his ransom sacrifice (2 Tim. 1:10; Acts 4:12)

Exercising faith in the Son and obedience to the "good news," the "word of life," are essential (John 5:24; Phil. 2:16)

Through Christ's priesthood life will be administered to those on earth

Under Kingdom rule, the "law of sin" will be overcome by obedience, prayer and forgiveness made possible through the ransom (Rom. 7:21-8:2)

As the "Eternal Father," Jesus is able to regenerate mankind, giving life to obedient ones who exercise faith in the offering of his soul (1 Tim. 2:5, 6; Isa. 9:6; Matt. 20:28)

With humanity restored to perfection, Satan and demons will then be loosed and a final test will occur

An indefinite number will succumb, allowing themselves to be misled through selfishness; they will be executed, coming forever into the "second death" (Rev. 20:7-10, 14)

Those humans who are faithful, having proved themselves to be righteous, will be acknowledged by Jehovah as his sons through Christ (Rom. 8:21)

Having the hope of everlasting life is not selfish; it is held out by God as a reward, and it shows appreciation to look to the reward with faith (Heb. 11:6)

IMMORTALITY AND INCORRUPTION GRANTED TO CERTAIN ONES.

Immortality is deathlessness

Jehovah is immortal, deathless, "the King of eternity" (1 Tim. 1:17; Hab. 1:12)

Jesus Christ received immortality as a reward for faithfulness; he did not possess it previously (Rom. 6:9; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16)

Jesus' 144,000 joint heirs share the likeness of his resurrection, thus receiving immortal life (1 Cor. 15:42-54)

They, like Jesus, are granted, not just everlasting life, but the "power of an indestructible life" (Heb. 7:16; Rev. 20:6)

These are depicted as standing on heavenly Mount Zion; thus they have immortal life in heaven (Rev. 14:1)

This grant of immortality to Kingdom joint heirs is all the more remarkable, since God's angels are mortal (shown in the fact that the Devil and demons have the judgment of death entered against them) (Matt. 25:41; Jude 6)

Hence, the granting of immortality to Christ's joint heirs demonstrates Jehovah's confidence in them

Incorruption pertains to that which cannot spoil, be ruined, be brought to an inferior state or be destroyed

It applies to organisms of God, Christ and the 144,000 in heaven (1 Tim. 1:17; 1 Cor. 15:42, 44, 48, 49)

Incorruption does not apply to human bodies, for they are fleshly and corruptible (Rom. 1:23)

Humans have bodies subject to damaging diseases and dissolution in death, the elements forming the body breaking down in decay (Acts 13:36)

Even perfect human bodies are corruptible, not beyond destruction; thus Paul could say that

the resurrected Jesus was "destined no more to return to corruption," that is, to life in a corruptible, though perfect, human body (Acts 13:34)

Immortality relates to the *quality* of the life they receive (its endlessness and indestructibility), whereas, incorruption pertains to the *organism* or body that God gives them (one beyond ruin, decay or destruction)

Nonetheless, joint heirs, like Christ, continue subject to the Father's will and directions (1 Cor. 15:23-28)

SAFEGUARDING THE HEART IS ESSENTIAL FOR LIFE

Out of the heart come wicked reasonings, wrong conduct and lack of faith that lead to death (Matt. 15:19, 20)

We need to supply the heart with life-giving spiritual nourishment to protect it (Prov. 4:23; Rom. 8:6)

By meditating on right things, by speaking about them, and by associating with those who value them, one builds up a good condition of the heart (Phil. 4:8; Ps. 63:3; Heb. 10:22-25)

JEHOVAH'S GIFT OF LIFE SYMBOLIZED

Scriptures use the expressions "tree(s) of life" in various ways

Wisdom is called a "tree of life" in that it supplies what is needed for life, knowledge of God and insight to obey his commandments (Prov. 3:13, 18; 16:22)

"The fruitage of the righteous one is a tree of life," for his calm, right speech and example lead others to life

They listen to him and get spiritual nourishment that leads them to serve God and receive life (Prov. 11:30; 15:4)

The "thing desired is a tree of life" in that desire fulfilled gives refreshment, renewed vigor (Prov. 13:12)

The divine provision for immortal heavenly life is symbolized by "tree(s) of life" (Rev. 2:7; 22:19)

In another context "trees of life" are God's provisions for continually sustaining life for obedient mankind on earth in the new order (Rev. 22:1, 2)

Names are written in the "book of life" or "scroll of life"

Jehovah's "book of life" contains names of all persons worthy of the grant of life (Ex. 32:32, 33; Rev. 20:11-15)

Abel's name apparently is the first one in it (Heb. 11:4, 6)

"Lamb's scroll of life" contains names of Christ's Kingdom joint heirs (Rev. 21:27)

Mankind will benefit from the "river of water of life"

Its life-giving waters represent God's entire provision through Christ for eternal life for mankind in the new order (Rev. 22:1, 2)

Invitation is given now to enjoy what is available of such "water," to begin drinking of God's provisions (Rev. 22:17)

TRUE CHRISTIANS SHARE

JEHOVAH'S VIEW OF SANCTITY OF LIFE

They have God's view of mankind and love their fellowman (John 3:16)

We do well to ask ourselves whether we feel that way toward people in our territory for witnessing. Are we interested in the lives of people?

Within the congregation, we should not look at things statistically, saying, for instance, 'We only lost one publisher last year'

Rather, our concern should be how we can help our brothers and sisters gain life

Obviously Paul had such concern for fellow servants of God (Acts 20:31, 32; 2 Cor. 11:28, 29)

The world views life as being cheap, as evident from its violent crime, wars and much of what it considers to be entertainment

Christians consider life to be sacred; do not even wantonly kill animals, as some hunters do

Since 'life is in the blood,' Christians do not eat or otherwise misuse blood (Gen. 9:3, 4; Lev. 17:11, 14; Acts 15:28, 29)

Value of life is so sacred that the blood of a murdered person is viewed by God as defiling the earth, and such defilement can be cleansed only by shedding the murderer's blood (Gen. 9:5, 6; Num. 35:33)

Christians, like the psalmist, fittingly pray that Jehovah deliver them from bloodguiltiness and bloodguilty ones (Ps. 51:14; 26:9)

One could become bloodguilty before Jehovah by: (1) bloodshed, murder, including supporting bloodguilty organizations (Rev. 17:6; 18:

2, 4); (2) eating blood, which includes transfusing blood (Acts 15:20); (3) failing to preach the lifesaving good news of the Kingdom (Acts 18:6; 20:26, 27)

Bloodguilt may be incurred if one fails to obey traffic and other safety laws

Congregation's judicial committee investigates automobile or hunting accidents involving a Christian and that cause someone's injury or death, as the congregation does not want to come under community responsibility therefor

Disciplinary measures may be necessary if even a measure of bloodguilt attaches to such driver or hunter; for some time he could not instruct or hold a responsible position in the congregation (w63 510, 511)

ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD TO USE LIFE IN GOD'S SERVICE

Christians mold their lives in harmony with Jehovah's will and give his law and worship first place (Mic. 4:1-3)

Like Jesus Christ, they use their lives in harmony with the will of God, knowing they are accountable to Jehovah (1 Pet. 4:1, 2; Rom. 14:10-12)

Having 'plenty to do in the Lord's work,' labor is not in vain (1 Cor. 15:58)

True happiness and satisfaction result from using our lives in God's service (Eccl. 12:13; Ps. 16:11)

MAIN POINT: Life is a gift from God, to be treated as sacred, and to be used in full harmony with his will

SOURCES: *ad* 243-246, 823, 824, 828, 829, 1061-1065, 1546, 1547; *li* 387-393, 397-400; *tr* 38-40, 162; *w*63 510, 511

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Arrange for several students to prepare three- to five-minute talks, assigning an appropriate subheading of the material to each student. Other students may ask questions of the speaker after each talk on the material assigned

No. 22 - First Friday, 10:40

The Watchtower and Congregation Book Studies

THE PURPOSE OF THESE STUDIES IN OUR CONGREGATION

They are Jehovah's provision through the "faithful and discreet slave" for teaching his people (Matt. 24:45-47; Isa. 54:13)

Objective is to impart knowledge, convey understanding and enhance heart appreciation (Prov. 4:7, 8)

Conductor must have knowledge and understanding of the material being considered;

know not only answers to questions but also the basis for those answers

Help brothers get material into minds and hearts (Eph. 3:17-19; Col. 1:9, 10)

As appropriate, draw out not only direct answer to printed question, but also reasons why answer is so and how scriptures cited tie in

Stress theme of lesson at appropriate points, not overdoing it

Show practical value of the material; how it applies in daily living, points for field service, etc.

THE WATCHTOWER STUDY

CONDUCTING THE WATCHTOWER STUDY

The Watchtower greatly aids one to establish and maintain a good relationship with Jehovah

It is the product of careful research and thought; not inspired, but produced under the guiding influence of holy spirit (John 16:12, 13)

Each article contributes to the forward movement of Jehovah's people and it can aid us individually to produce the fruitage of the spirit

The study should ordinarily be one hour in length, not including songs

It is helpful for the conductor to mark material in 15-minute sections

Just because hands are raised does not mean they all need to be called on if points have already been adequately covered

Opening remarks and comments of the conductor should be brief and to the point; be warm, enthusiastic, encouraging

The conductor should not comment excessively; remember that a teacher does not do the thinking for the students, rather he helps them to think in an orderly manner and arrive at the correct conclusion

By effective use of questions, draw attention to main points, help all to see how points in the paragraphs relate to the theme, how scriptures support main points and the theme

When important points are missed by commentators, usually it is better to ask specific questions to draw out the points instead of simply asking, "Any further comments?"

Keep outside material to a minimum, thus not detracting from the study material

Encourage preparation and commenting in own words, making comments brief and to the point

Main objective is to get audience to think on and understand the material, not just to give comments they read but do not fully understand

Discourage the reading of answers; suggest short extemporaneous comments

First comment might be a direct answer to the printed question, with additional comments on how scriptures apply, supporting arguments or practical application

Read and discuss unquoted scriptures as time permits

Have brief concluding comments (or a few brief review questions) before concluding the study with song and prayer

If, due to ban or postal strike, magazines are not received, you could base the study on older issues of *The Watchtower*; or you could use congregation book study material for both the book study and the *Watchtower* study for a time, and then if the missing *Watchtower* issues arrive you could study these at both meet-

ings each week until up to date; local elders should decide on the procedure

CONGREGATION PREPARATION FOR STUDY

Encourage everyone to read the entire magazine as soon as received to get overall view; also to make a detailed study of the main article before it is considered at the Kingdom Hall

Help brothers to enjoy learning (Ps. 1:1, 2)

Objective in family preparation is not just to get answers for comments, but to gain understanding (Prov. 4:7, 8)

If this objective is reached, there will be no problem in giving meaningful comments

Family preparation sessions need not be handled the same as regular *Watchtower* study

There are no rules for such family studies, so encourage brothers to do what works best for their family situation

The one conducting may want to ask the question first and then have the paragraph read; those participating can find the answer and underline it; take time to discuss the reasons for answers and how the material should affect our lives

Avoid underlining too much—just key words or ideas to facilitate giving extemporaneous comments

It is good to look up unquoted scriptures and discuss them

Encourage family heads to conduct their own family studies

Visiting a family study conducted by someone else, if invited, may be helpful in gaining ideas on how we can do better with our own family study

WATCHTOWER STUDY CONDUCTOR'S PREPARATION

Get clearly in mind the overall theme and objective of the article, and take note of how the various points in the article contribute to these

Fix the main points of the study clearly in mind

Select key scriptures to have the congregation read as time permits

If any new explanations of scriptures are presented in the article, get them clearly in mind so that you can aid the congregation to appreciate them

Give thought to your introductory and concluding comments for the study

THE CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY

OBJECTIVES OF CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY CONDUCTORS

Like the *Watchtower* study conductor, his first responsibility is to be a teacher in conducting the study

He has the privilege of aiding the publishers in his group in the field ministry

He is usually in position to give individual attention to the spiritual needs of those in his group

CONDUCTING THE BOOK STUDY

Since teachers are needed, elders should be used if available

It may be best to have larger groups, with qualified brothers as conductors, rather than having many smaller groups, with brothers who are not qualified as teachers; however, if sufficient qualified brothers are available, teaching smaller groups is most effective

There is no set amount of material to cover each week; it is better to cover less material if necessary to impart understanding, but do not let the study drag

Do not emphasize minor points; rather show how they relate to the main points and the theme

Opening remarks can be brief; no review may be needed if you are starting a new chapter

At beginning of the study you may wish to read the portion of the Bible that will be considered that evening if it is not too long

Look up unquoted scriptures and have them read; long citations can be assigned to be summarized where advisable, or key verses only may be read

Encourage all to participate, perhaps by reading scriptures; important thing is getting all to think about and understand the material

Encourage putting comments in own words

Conductor needs to know the potential and ability of all in the group, not expecting more from those with limited education than would be reasonable

Watch commenters and their response or lack of response to see if material is reaching both mind and heart

When a comment is read, you may wish to ask person to rephrase it in his own words

Conductor needs to listen carefully to comments to see if heart appreciation is manifested

Can partition printed questions if necessary or ask supplementary questions to encourage commenting and to highlight key thoughts

To aid in understanding points not clear, various types of questions can be employed

Use true or false, multiple choice, leading questions, viewpoint questions, rhetorical questions (Luke 10:36; 12:49-51; Matt. 16:13-15; 17:25, 26; 22:41-46)

Good to have closing review from the Bible rather than from the book if material lends itself to this; or review can be handled in other ways to draw attention to main points (Ask students what might be done to build up attendance at the book studies)

EFFECTIVE MEETINGS FOR FIELD SERVICE

Meeting for field service need not be held after meetings on Sunday if publishers want to go directly to the territory

When meetings for field service are held, arrange them to fit the needs of the group, changing time and meeting place when necessary

Start meetings for field service on time

Meetings should not be perfunctory

Briefly consider text, using rest of time to consider material that will aid in service

Can have discussion or demonstration of field points

Have objective of equipping publishers for the preaching and teaching activity in which they are going to engage on that day

SIZE OF BOOK STUDY GROUPS

Factors to consider: Qualified brothers available to conduct studies, distance to travel to study, and availability of suitable homes

In larger congregations, possibly three groups could be formed from two groups, rather than splitting one into two

It is not good to let groups get too large; at least, when group gets to 20 publishers, usually it is wise to consider forming a new group

Book study conductor can watch for overcrowding, be considerate of householder's viewpoint and furnishings; may be best not to have too many children in any one group if this causes problems

HOW TO HELP PERSONS PREPARE FOR THE BOOK STUDY

Help them to see how underlining key words will be helpful, not underlining excessively

Meaningful notes can be made in margin of book in addition to underlining answers to printed questions

Look, not only for answers, but for the basis for the answers

Look up unquoted scriptures and consider how they apply to the material in the book

MAIN POINT: Help the brothers benefit from the spiritual food provided, both by advance preparation and sharing in the studies

SOURCES: *sg* 36-38, 49-54; *or* 91-94, 100, 101; *qm* 97-103

TEACHING SUGGESTION: (1) At conclusion of class discussion consider how a *Watchtower* or book study conductor could be helpful in assisting timid ones to give comments or young ones to make their comments more meaningful. (2) Ask students what they have done to help the brothers in their study group to appreciate the application of the material in their lives. (3) Do they make the main points stand out, or do they try to cover all the details equally?

Home Bible Study Ministry

DISCIPLINE WORK

A PART OF OUR MINISTRY

The public ministry assigned to Christians is twofold: first, proclaiming the good news of God's kingdom, a preaching work; second, teaching those who respond favorably, making disciples of Christ (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20)

Our objective obviously not just to put time in field ministry or to place much literature; it includes helping honest-hearted persons learn the truth, becoming Christian witnesses of Jehovah with prospects for eternal life

This disciple-making work is best accomplished through the home Bible study ministry

Time is needed to teach the truth in a progressive way

All of Jehovah's witnesses old enough to teach others should seek to share in this ministry as time and circumstances permit

Much joy and happiness come from sharing knowledge with others (Acts 20:35)

HOW CAN WE START AND CONTINUE HOME BIBLE STUDIES?

May offer home Bible study on initial call

Usually a publication is left with interested persons, so a study can be continued if started on initial call

More often studies are started through return visits on interested persons

In either case it is good to demonstrate our study — method briefly, using one of the publications. Sometimes several visits may be required before actual study is started

Some will have Bible questions they want answered; this may take time

Good to demonstrate how a *regular* study will answer many questions; this will tend to stimulate more interest in a regular study

What should we study?

There is no set rule; consider the individual student's needs, his background, his interests and ideas

Questions the student first asks may help you determine what to study

We could use the Society's books, but it could be a booklet or magazine article, a tract, or simply the Bible

Try to use what will help the student most and hold his interest; show sincere interest in the student

Right from the start of a study it is good to include other members of his family

Others may be interested, and if we do not invite them, later they may feel too much progress has been made for them to join the study

It is a fine thing to see husbands and wives, or

whole families, study together; there are fewer problems when all learn the truth together

It is good to explain reason why opposition to their studying may arise (Matt. 10:36, 37; tr 16)

To keep study interesting and progressive, the one conducting should instill confidence in the students; accomplished by careful preparation on the part of the conductor

He should study the material ahead of time and know it well

Best to study with this particular student in mind

Try to determine points that would be of special interest; try to see *his* viewpoint of matters

Anticipate questions he would likely ask and prepare to answer

Do not feel that every question must be answered immediately; some may require research to give correct answers or additional background for student to understand answer

All studies should direct interested ones to God's Word

With good reason we call them *Bible* studies, not book studies

We should use the Bible freely during our studies, looking up Bible texts cited or even some quoted

The one conducting the study may even wish to use additional scriptures from time to time

We should be *Bible* teachers, constantly directing student to the Bible

Many persons with whom we study know little about the Bible

We may have to get a Bible for some, and most will need help in learning to use the Bible

Show the student *how* to use the Bible, how to find the books by checking the table of contents, chapter and verse divisions

Allow him time to find Scripture references before reading them

If several are present for the study, try to arrange for all to follow the reading of Bible references

GOOD EXAMPLE OF THE CONDUCTOR IS VERY IMPORTANT

Those who study the Bible look to us as ministers; we, in turn, should always conduct ourselves as real Christian ministers (2 Cor. 6:4, 6, 7)

We are there to teach Bible truth, not to meddle in personal affairs

Students will take note of our conduct; is it always good?

They will observe our dress and general appearance; do we set a good example in this regard

and dress in a manner befitting God's ministers?

They will listen to how we speak and what we talk about; do we set a good example in this too?

Our setting such a good example will help the student recognize the truth quickly; he will see that we practice Christianity daily

We should always show appreciation for any kindness offered us, but be careful never to take liberties with such kindness

Set a good example by avoiding any wrong appearances (2 Cor. 6:3)

It is generally best not to make a call alone on someone of the opposite sex; if you must call by yourself, then good to go when other members of the family are home

Otherwise, may take some member of your family or another publisher along; if this is not possible, then it might be wise to turn the study over to someone of the same sex to handle

This is a matter of safety as well as avoiding wrong appearance

While we should be good examples, we should not teach to draw attention to ourselves or cause students to look to us as leaders

Paul was a good example for us, directing attention to Jehovah and Jesus as Teachers (1 Cor. 1:13-15; 2:1-5; 3:5-7, 21-23)

Follow his good example, directing students to Jehovah, Jesus and the Christian congregation, "a pillar and support of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15)

Thus, in many respects a student's progress will be promoted by the good example set by the one conducting the study

REACHING THE HEARTS OF YOUR STUDENTS IS ESSENTIAL

Jesus showed that a Christian must love Jehovah with his whole heart as well as his whole mind (Mark 12:28-30)

Reaching the student's heart is a matter of concern to all who conduct home Bible studies (Eph. 3:16-19)

A capable teacher can impart knowledge to the mind of his student, and this is very important. To this end, the conductor should show the student how to prepare his lesson ahead of time, underline main points, etc.

To illustrate, show the student how you mark your book

But, what will the student do about what he is learning? Is he just looking for knowledge, or will Bible knowledge motivate him to action? Will he take steps to apply his knowledge?

Heartfelt appreciation is very important; the truth must get into the heart if the student is to apply it to his life and act upon it for life in the future (Ps. 119:11)

How can we reach the hearts of our Bible students?

One way is to encourage the student to ponder on what he learns

As a conductor, you can make this easier by emphasizing main points of each lesson and not trying to cover too much

Encourage the student to review the main points and ponder on them

Another means is to ask occasional questions throughout the study

Use practical questions to be sure the student not only learns but also gets the truth down in his heart

At times we might ask: "Do you believe what we just studied? How do you feel about it? How could you apply this in *your* life?"

A third way to impress the truth on hearts is to help our students think in terms of their relationship with Jehovah

In your weekly study emphasize Jehovah's love and wisdom; review Bible principles, how to apply these and their value; help your students to cultivate the habit of seeking Jehovah's direction in matters before making decisions

Build up appreciation for Jehovah, his worship and his service

Additionally, we can encourage our students to analyze their motives for doing things

Teach them to ask themselves questions like: "Why do I want to do this or that? Am I seeking to please God or my own fleshly desires? Am I sincere or perhaps deceiving myself with false reasoning?"

Our students can properly be warned of deceptive dangers that could interfere with their progress as Christians (Prov. 28:26)

Lastly, keep before your students the perfect example of Jesus

He was loyal to his Father Jehovah. How? What did he do?

He studied to learn God's mind on matters; he prayed to his Father, seeking God's direction in all things

Such an example is an excellent one to put before our students; encourage them to pray regularly to Jehovah as Jesus did

So, in all studies, take the time needed to help your students to get to know Jehovah, draw close to him, and get his Word firmly rooted in their hearts

Then there is firm foundation for student also to love Jehovah with his "whole soul"; he will take positive action as an individual

ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO ASSOCIATE WITH JEHOVAH'S 'NAME PEOPLE' AND SHARE TRUTH WITH OTHERS

As a student progresses he should be informed of the organization Jehovah is using, especially of local congregation meeting times

Many may begin such association with the congregation as a result of their initial Bible study. Others may have to study for some time before they are able to identify the true Christian congregation and recognize the need for an organization for Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making.

If your student can be encouraged to attend the meetings, his spiritual progress usually will be much faster.

So help your Bible students get to the meetings; see that they have the necessary publications as they begin to attend regularly.

At the Kingdom Hall introduce them to others; make them feel *very welcome* in a congregation of real Christians.

How long should a study be continued?

There is no set time; after a reasonable period, we should be able to determine the student's motives, so studies should not be extended indefinitely.

If there is no progress, then it is better to spend time with others.

As long as student shows evidence of good motives, keeps making progress and shows this by beginning to associate with the congregation and in other ways, we would continue the study; even if he progresses to the point of being baptized we would continue study for a time.

Usually we observe that such a progressive student starts talking to friends, relatives, fellow employees and others about truths he is learning. Often, the more he learns, the more he talks.

He may need help from you in answering questions propounded to him; take time to give him the needed assistance.

As you teach, then, help your students think of using what they learn; show them in simple terms how to explain truths to others.

Gradually you can explain the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work assigned to God's servants today, showing how they can share in it.

When they qualify, invite them to share in the field ministry with you, giving them the necessary help and encouragement.

There is much joy in seeing our students sharing

in the ministry and coming to the point of dedication and baptism.

Producing another new disciple of Christ is our goal in the Bible study work.

HOW CAN BIBLE STUDY OVERSEERS HELP OTHERS IN THE BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY?

One way is to set a good example by conducting Bible studies.

Keep studies progressive; give them personalized help.

Help them to attend congregation meetings regularly.

Also show interest in the Bible study service.

Go with brothers on their studies to get acquainted; offer suggestions where needed and appropriate.

Could occasionally make calls on those progressing well to encourage.

Invite brothers to tell you of good study prospects when they cannot handle them and follow through on these.

Try to assist more in the congregation to share in Bible study service.

When new ones are at the Kingdom Hall, talk to them; make them feel welcome, introducing your family and others to them.

Learn their names; help them with their questions.

Help families in the congregation with their studies.

Encourage each family to have a study; visit them, offering suggestions if needed and as it seems opportune to do so.

Help all to see the good results of family and home Bible studies: the making of more Christian disciples in response to Jesus' command (Matt. 28:19, 20).

MAIN POINT: The goal of the Bible study ministry is to make disciples of Christ, in harmony with Matthew 28:19, 20.

SOURCES: or 122-125; sg 73-78

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture, with comments from students on key points as time permits.

No. 24 - First Friday, 3:00

Whole-Souled Service to Jehovah

OBLIGATION TO LOVE AND SERVE GOD WITH WHOLE SOUL

Jesus, quoting God's Word, said, 'You must love Jehovah with your whole soul.' (Mark 12:30; Deut. 6:5)

Original-language words for "soul" can also be translated by personal pronouns such as "you" and "I."

Loving Jehovah with "whole soul" means that every fiber of one's existence is involved in lovingly serving God; no function, capacity or desire in life is excepted.

Since our whole soul is our complete person, why did Jesus say we must also love God with our 'whole heart, mind and strength'?

These facets of the soul are evidently mentioned

for emphasis, so that we do not fail to consider them in our service to God

For example, a man under the Mosaic Law could have sold himself (his soul) into slavery to another; but thereafter the man might have failed to serve his master wholeheartedly, with full motivation and desire to please him; he might not have used his full strength or his full mental capacity to advance his master's interests

Thus Jesus was emphasizing that love of God must involve the entire person

EVERYONE, REGARDLESS OF SITUATION IN LIFE, CAN SERVE GOD WHOLE-SOULED

Physical perfection is not required; we must simply apply all the faculties of our own imperfect soul in doing the will of God

The amount that persons do in Jehovah's service and the quality of that service will obviously vary from person to person; some who seem to be doing little may be whole-souled

In Revelation 7:9, 10, 15 the "great crowd" are shown rendering sacred service "day and night" in the spiritual temple; yet surely not all do the same amount in the field service or in congregational service, nor perhaps with the same effectiveness

In Jesus' illustration of the Sower, when "the word of the kingdom" fell on "fine soil" it produced thirty-, sixty- and a hundredfold. (Matt. 13:18, 23) Why the difference in fruitage? Were those producing thirtyfold less devoted—not whole-souled—while those bearing a hundredfold were?

Circumstances in life vary—differences in health, vigor, mental ability, obligations and responsibilities, time in truth—all affecting the amount one may actually produce

So there is variety in quantity produced, but Jehovah is pleased with whatever this "fine soil" bears as long as the service rendered is whole-souled

Jesus showed that what is vital is not the quantity one does in relation to what someone else does, but doing what one can, as Mary did in ministering to Jesus, and as the widow did who gave all that she had (Mark 14:6-8; John 12:3; Luke 21:1-4)

The apostle Paul was whole-souled in service. He actually 'labored in excess of all the apostles.' (1 Cor. 15:9, 10) He had fine mental ability, evidently had physical stamina, and was free from family responsibilities. So Paul was under obligation to use these assets in God's service; it was necessary in order for him to be whole-souled

Must a person do as much as Paul did, or be as effective a teacher as he was, to be whole-souled in Jehovah's service?

Perhaps one has a family for which to care, a health problem, certain limitations as to ability, or has little knowledge due to newness in the truth. He may be doing all he can in Jehovah's service—being whole-souled in it—yet his public service may not be nearly as extensive as that of Paul or that of some modern-day pioneers

Such ones should not feel discouraged. Jehovah is just as pleased with a thirtyfold or sixtyfold fruitage if it is whole-souled as with the hundredfold produced by another

Hours or literature placements are by no means the sole guide as to 'fruitage' produced. A family man who is well known in his community as one of Jehovah's servants because he is alert to opportunities to speak in favor of the truth, and whose conduct is truly exemplary, will cause more people to think on Jehovah's way and the Kingdom message than one who pioneers but is not exemplary in his conduct (Compare 1 Timothy 5:24, 25)

Children who become fine servants of Jehovah through loving teaching and training by father and mother are also evidence of 'fruitage' and parents may contribute through them and their activity to a manifold production of the 'seed' of the Kingdom message

On the other hand, a person may have assets similar to Paul's; if so, he is obligated, like Paul, to devote more time

Such a person cannot complacently look at others whose preaching activity is not extensive, or who appear less productive, and reason that it is enough for him to do what they do. For him to give whole-souled service may require that he 'reach out for an office of overseer,' or pioneer, be a missionary, serve at a Bethel home or in some other capacity (1 Tim. 3:1)

It is not the place of the elders to judge others as to whether they are rendering whole-souled service, but to encourage them to use all their faculties—their whole soul—in serving Jehovah

This can be done by building up in them appreciation for what God has done for them and how the Bible affects their lives beneficially (John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15)

Help them to see the opportunities that are open to them to increase the amount and quality of their service to God

GOD REQUIRES, NOT MERELY PARTICIPATION, BUT WHOLE-SOULED SERVICE

A runner could participate in a race, even putting his 'heart' in it, but if he did not employ the rest of his faculties properly (his legs and eyes, even his mouth and stomach), would he run successfully?

What if his legs tired easily because of lack of training? What if he allows his eyes to be distracted from the goal? What if he had earlier

used his mouth to overload his stomach with food? (Phil. 3:19) The whole soul, mind, heart and physical strength, must cooperate, be involved or devoted, in order to run successfully. Similarly, the whole soul of a person needs to be involved and devoted to God's service.

A person may participate in true worship by attending all five meetings a week. Does merely attending show that he is whole-souled? He might ask himself the following questions, but he should not use these to judge others (Rom. 14:4)

Why does the person attend? Because he really wants to go—it being the desire of his whole self? Or does he go merely out of obligation, or because someone (such as a family head) says he must go?

What is the soul doing while at the meeting? Is it totally involved? What is done with one's mouth when songs are sung? Does this part of the soul express heartfelt words of praise to God?

How about the hands? Does one raise a hand to let the conductor know that one wants to comment?

Where is one's mind, which is also part of one's soul? Is it focused on what is being said, on comments and on prayers, or does it wander off to other matters?

Whole-souled service to God involves use of all the faculties of the soul while at meetings.

Does regular participation in the field ministry necessarily mean that one is whole-souled in the work? There are ways to tell.

Does one give just token service—going in the field ministry for a short while each time, without really exerting oneself physically?

For an older or sickly person, an hour may be all his soul may wisely do, but for a stronger person this may not be whole-souled effort.

Just because others quit earlier does not mean that whole-souled love for God and neighbor should not move one to do more if one can.

How about one's mind? Is its full capacity used? Does one prepare so as to give the best presentations one can? Does one analyze objections in order to handle them effectively? Or is the mind used in only a token way, little effort being made to prepare presentations and to defend the truth effectively?

Does simply caring for one's family and secular obligations prove that one is whole-souled? (Col. 3:16-24)

A husband may provide for his family, but for it to be whole-souled service in the sight of God, love and kindness must characterize his relations with his family and he must do things "as to Jehovah."

A wife may be in subjection to her husband, doing what he says, but if she does it begrudgingly is it really whole-souled compliance with God's arrangement?

Children may obey their parents, yet they may continually complain and, when spoken to about their attitude, say, "Well, I *did* what you said!" But were they whole-souled in doing what God required?

A man on his secular job is not working whole-souled if his mind is not on his job.

Are those serving in special capacities in God's organization necessarily serving Jehovah whole-souled?

A brother can be at Bethel or a man may be an elder, but if his mind, hands and all other parts of his soul are not applied fully to the work he is not whole-souled.

Some brothers serve where the need is greater. If they go because of a spirit of adventure, rather than desiring to share fully in God's work, what they are doing does not prove that they are whole-souled.

We should consider: Is God going to accept us if we go through the motions of doing things, but our whole soul is not in it?

There is need to help brothers to see the need of being *whole-souled*.

MOBILIZING ALL OUR FACULTIES, OUR WHOLE SOUL, TO DO GOD'S WILL

There is the possibility that a part or parts of the soul may lead one's whole soul astray.

The eyes can look at a woman in a lustful way, and lead the person into sin (Matt. 5:27-29).

One's mouth may speak, or the ears listen to, unclean, unprofitable talk; and this can lead to the whole soul's ruination (Eph. 5:3-5; Jas. 3:2-12).

A brother may have his mind filled with Bible truth, his feet may regularly take him in the field ministry, but his sex drive can get the mastery over him and he may use his hands in an unclean way in loose conduct. His whole soul may thus be led into a sinful course (Gal. 5:19, 20).

Need to be alert for warning signs, and work to combat sinful inclinations of soul to do what is bad.

If mind begins to think improper thoughts, must work to keep it on right things, matters of heavenly origin; deaden sexual appetite by controlling one's thoughts (Col. 3:2, 5).

The trouble may be with the eyes—what is looked at. Do not allow what the eye feeds the mind, as in reading or watching visual entertainment, to cause ruination (Mark 9:47).

Do not allow one's ears to cause one's destruction by listening to gossip or ideas that lead one from true worship.

Learn to use each part of the soul to strengthen one's devotion to Jehovah—the tongue in up-building conversation, the feet to take one to meetings, in the field ministry, or to homes of brothers in need, the hands to locate scriptures or to render helpful services.

It is well for us personally to ask and to encourage each of our brothers to ask: Am I really *whole-souled*?

Elders should help all in the congregation to appreciate that whole-souled service to God is a Scriptural requirement that all can meet. Help those who may feel discouraged to appreciate that Jehovah does not require more than they can give; but alert the complacent to the

fact that God requires as much from them as they can possibly give

MAIN POINT: Whole-souled service to God is a Scriptural requirement that is possible for everyone to meet, regardless of his ability and circumstances. We must love and serve Jehovah with our whole soul—no part being omitted

SOURCE: or 108, 109, 147

No. 25 - First Friday, 4:30

Conducting Home Bible Studies

GOAL OF BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND

Our objective is not merely to have a study be listed on our record card

Purpose of a study is to make new disciples in harmony with Jesus' command at Matthew 28:19, 20

A disciple is a learner, a taught one

Thus, a disciple of Christ is one taught to believe in Jesus as God's Son and "Chief Agent of life," one who not only believes but also closely follows Christ's teachings (Acts 3:15)

Must be taught to "observe all the things" Jesus commands, including sharing in the preaching and disciple-making work himself

This goal in the home Bible study ministry should be kept prominently in mind as we conduct studies

Should determine if student has appreciation for meaning and value of prayer

When we feel it is appropriate, show him the importance of prayer to Jehovah through Jesus in connection with study (Ps. 25:4; Jas. 1:5)

Thereafter, it is good and proper to ask for Jehovah's blessing and direction before each study

We could pray for His help to understand Bible truths; ask for His help in retaining what we learn

It is good to close Bible studies with prayer of thanks for good things learned; we could also pray for help in applying Christian principles to lives

One conducting study or other qualified baptized minister should pray (if qualified baptized brother is present he would pray even if attending a study of a sister that she will conduct) (1 Cor. 11:3)

After the opening prayer, usually advisable to have a brief review

Such would cover points studied in previous week's lesson

However, it need not be confined to such; it could cover other important details already studied and which would relate to the current lesson

Review could be handled in various ways, such as by simple, direct questions on important points, or true or false questions; scriptures could be related and student asked to explain meaning, or simple illustrations of points may be used

The review should lead right into the lesson at hand

CONDUCT AN INTERESTING AND PROGRESSIVE STUDY

A Bible study must be interesting in order to progress and continue

To be interesting to the student, it should be obvious that he is learning something valuable each week and his Bible questions are being answered

The one conducting the study should therefore strive to be a good teacher

—OPENING REMARKS AND PRAYER AT OUR BIBLE STUDIES IMPORTANT

Such remarks should be brief but kind; we can express happiness at seeing student again, inquire briefly as to family, health, etc.

Then, direct thoughts to study; comments could include several important points to be considered in lesson for the day

Such comments would also indicate *we* have prepared for the study

Commend student if he has Bible and books out and is obviously ready for the study

Invite all present to join in the study; show interest in entire family

Some members may be overlooked if we assume they are not interested

Perhaps true with some at first, but later they hear or see something which kindles their interest, but they may be too bashful or shy to ask to join in

So it is good for each one to know he is welcome

Prayer before the study to seek Jehovah's direction is also important

We might omit it at first few studies if advisable; though we personally pray before going to conduct the study

Not all have the same ability in this regard; however, all can make effort to improve teaching ability

Teaching involves conveying information to others, in this case, Scripture truth

First, be sure you understand the material by preparing well; learn to simplify points being discussed

Then, as a teacher, you can learn to explain the whats, hows, whys, wheres and whens

There is no arbitrary rule on how the study is to be conducted

The main thing is to teach and be sure student understands points discussed

Recommend that the student prepare his lesson beforehand

Then, you will be able to ask questions first, look up scriptures cited and summarize by reading material in paragraphs

You may have to demonstrate to student how to study and mark the answers in his preparation

At some studies you may wish to consider several paragraphs together, perhaps an entire sub-heading if not too long, according to your discretion

Always encourage student to give answers in his own words

We know what the paragraph² says, but what does the student say?

If questions in the book prove too difficult, break them down or simplify them

As a good teacher, you might ask additional questions to help student learn, being sure he understands the main points

From time to time you may wish to include questions that make the student think about what he is learning, viewpoint questions, such as, What is God's law on (fornication, stealing, polygamy)? Do you agree with God's law on this? What benefit is there to following God's law on (give subject)?

By asking such questions you help the student to learn and to reason on what he is learning

Occasionally the student will raise questions during the study; always acknowledge questions propounded

If on the lesson, it is good to answer them, using the Bible, and relate your reply to the point under discussion; be sure student understands

It is effective to use other questions to help student answer his own question for himself

If his question is not on subject, you might answer briefly and suggest that it be discussed in detail after the study is concluded (Then, do not forget it)

Or, show that it will be answered in another lesson to be considered later

Sometimes questions can be answered through use of illustrations; should be simple, dealing with things student knows or uses; make

illustrations *personally* applicable to the student if possible (Matt. 13:34, 35)

Do not underestimate the value of simple illustrations to help students

As study progresses, help your student through use of repetition

Endeavor to relate new truths to those already learned; repeat points learned or have student repeat such points and then relate them to new points

Remember that student constantly builds on foundation of basic truths, so be sure he does not forget them

This is essential if student is to make progress

A good teacher also gives commendation, so commend student for good preparation or ability to understand new truths

Also show you have joy in seeing his good progress; this will encourage him

Include all present at the study in your teaching methods

Children may be present so do not overlook them; encourage them to sit in on study, asking them simple questions so they can participate, or have them read scriptures if they are able

Elderly ones should also be helped to participate; use kind, tactful questions, showing respect for their age and opinions

A good teacher will review with his students

Take several minutes at end of study (usually after about an hour) to review points learned

It can be beneficial to use variety in review, such as simple questions, or true or false; you may use illustrations or read Scripture texts discussed and have student explain in own words

Again, it can be beneficial to relate new points to truths already learned

To keep the study interesting, keep student alert, thinking, looking ahead

Conductor could ask several interesting questions after the review to be answered in next lesson, thus encouraging student to prepare lesson ahead

ALWAYS REMEMBER IT IS A BIBLE STUDY; USE THE BIBLE

As you conduct any study, have in mind you are teaching *Jehovah's thoughts*, not man's thoughts; never have student look to you as teacher

Always direct students to Jehovah and Christ Jesus

Many scriptures quoted and cited in Society's publications

At first, may be advisable to read them all from the Bible, thus focusing attention on God's Word

Later, may be sufficient to look up texts cited but not quoted

Use the Bible to answer questions propounded by student

In this way student will know he is getting God's answers to questions

Explain scriptures so student himself can reason on Bible's answer, then ask questions to be sure he understands

Encourage student to use the Bible in personal study

He should look up Scripture citations as he prepares his lesson

Show list of "Important Bible Words for Quick Reference" in back of *New World Translation*, which will assist him to find answers to his questions

HELP YOUR BIBLE STUDENTS TO GET GOD'S TRUTHS INTO THEIR HEARTS

If truth gets into a student's heart, he will be moved to accept it and act on it

So take time to build appreciation in student's heart; ask questions that cause him to think about his motives and actions in harmony with Bible truths he is learning

Highlight the grand qualities of Jehovah and help the student to see his relationship to Jehovah

Encourage him to lean on Jehovah for help; teach him how to pray and show need for regular communication with Jehovah

Build up in student a feeling of loyalty and devotion to Jehovah

Assist student to see how truths learned will assist him to please Jehovah and do his will (Prov. 3:5-7)

Always teach with goal in mind to help the student to act on truths learned so as to become a disciple of Christ, a Christian witness of Jehovah

If it becomes evident the student is not interested in becoming a disciple, it is best to stop and study with someone else who may be

FOR CONTINUED PROGRESS, ASSOCIATION WITH GOD'S ORGANIZATION IS NEEDED

Our Bible students need association with the congregation

Help them to appreciate congregation arrangement Jehovah has established

Explain Scripturalness of the theocratic arrangement, how early Christians had a governing body, with elders and ministerial servants in their congregations

Show how Jehovah's Christian witnesses today are organized the same way in each congregation earth wide; you might use *Yearbook* to show worldwide scope of activity

As you continue to study, keep directing newly interested ones to the congregation

You could take time before or after some studies to tell students about congregation activities, new things learned at meetings, experiences in field ministry, about assemblies, or other points of interest in the organization

In this way help student to see the value of the meetings and importance of the field ministry

Invite your students to the meetings and help them get there; make them feel welcome at the Kingdom Hall by introducing them to others, especially to the elders

As your students progress, continue teaching with your goal in mind

Remember, if they are to be disciples they too must be able to teach

Show them how to use the Bible in explaining truths to others; explain the privilege of Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making

Encourage them to have a share in preaching by telling relatives, friends and neighbors about what they are learning

At the same time, prepare them for indifference, or even persecution on the part of those who may oppose

OUR GOAL REALIZED

If the student continues to progress and applies what he learns, then he should be encouraged to share with us in the public ministry

First, of course, it should be determined that he qualifies to share

We should help student to grow in knowledge, in love and appreciation of the privilege of serving Jehovah God

It is good to continue the study even after persons are baptized so they will be well grounded and stabilized in the truth

What a joy it is for all of us to see our Bible students dedicate themselves to God as evidence of his blessing on our disciple-making work

MAIN POINT: Be a good teacher at Bible studies, seeking to reach the students' hearts so they will be motivated to act on the truth they learn

SOURCES: ad 451, 813-820; sg 49-54; qm 211-215

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS: General class discussion. Instructor may call for comments on any of the following:

(1) Illustrate by a question of your own or from the Society's publications the use of questions that would reveal a student's viewpoint on doctrine or morals, helping you determine if the instruction is reaching his heart. (2) Give an example of how you might raise anticipation of student for coming study. (3) Have you been able to help a student overcome discouragement due to opposition? If so, how? (4) What results have you had in encouraging others in families to attend the home Bible study, and how did you go about it? (5) Discuss how to encourage students to associate with the congregation. (6) Explain how you would determine whether to continue a study. (7) How can we help students use the information they are learning to preach to others?

Operations of the Holy Spirit

JEHOVAH'S SPIRIT IS HIS ACTIVE FORCE, ALWAYS EXERTED FOR GOOD

Holy spirit is a force exerted or projected, not merely inactive or latent power; has drive or thrust, impels, motivates, gets things moving. Figuratively referred to as God's "fingers" for doing his works (Ps. 8:3)

Though not a person, it is no mere 'blind force.' It reflects and imparts God's warmth and personality (Gal. 5:22, 23)

Spirit is "holy," being clean, sacred and proceeding from God

It acts as a force for holiness, cleanness (1 Thess. 4:7, 8; Ps. 51:10, 11)

Being expressive of God's holy personality (actually of God himself), it can be "grieved" or made to "feel hurt" by a practice of uncleanness (Eph. 4:30; Isa. 63:10)

SCRIPTURAL RECORD OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

"Active force" used to create matter, form the inanimate earth and universe (Gen. 1:1, 2; Ps. 33:6)

Force that was used to create all life, including human life, revive life-giving reproductive powers, heal illness and raise the dead (Ps. 104:30; Matt. 1:18; Gal. 4:28, 29; Heb. 11:11, 12)

Force that motivated and guided God's servants for his purpose in a variety of ways (1 Cor. 12:4-7, 11)

As force for revelation and understanding of God's will, it gave spiritual direction and instruction, prophecies, interpretations and inspired the Bible (1 Pet. 1:10-12; 2 Tim. 3:16)

It gave increased understanding and opened the prophetic Word to the Christian congregation (1 Cor. 2:10-16)

As driving force, it energized those who wanted to serve God, to accomplish His purpose with fiery zeal and boldness (Ezek. 3:14; 1 Thess. 1:5)

It was a force that assured success of Kingdom-preaching (Acts 1:8; 4:31, 33)

It gave strength to withstand hardship, opposition (Phil. 4:11-13)

As a qualifying force for a work or an office, it cooperated with and heightened natural abilities and knowledge

It guided and increased mechanical abilities of Bezalel, Oholiab and others (Ex. 31:2-6)

It qualified others in various ways: Moses, the 70 elders, Joshua, the judges and others received or were "enveloped" with spirit to perform miracles, lead, judge and fight in behalf of God's people; David was prepared

for kingship (Num. 11:24-29; Judg. 6:34; 1 Sam. 16:13)

It increased abilities for work of teaching, counseling and shepherding in the Christian congregation (Eph. 4:11-13)

It acted as a "helper" to qualify them to speak before all men by refreshing memories, stimulating mental powers, teaching so they got the point of the information, the lesson it held (John 14:26)

As a force for judgment, it can examine everything and carry out judgments and punishments (Acts 5:1-10)

God's Word, as spirit's "sword," exposes what a person really is, causing softening or hardening of heart (Heb. 4:11-13)

As a governing force, it was used in the early congregation to guide the selection of men for special service and direct their ministry (Acts 13:2-4; 8:28, 39)

As a unifying force, it joined them peacefully in bonds of love and devotion to Jehovah (Acts 9:31)

As a "helper" in making decisions, the spirit's thrust or drive would indicate God's will

Question of circumcision raised in early congregation is an example

Spirit was granted to uncircumcised ones; its operations were evident in bringing the good news to them; James' remembrance of Amos' inspired prophecy was stimulated by spirit; all this indicated spirit favored one conclusion (Acts 11:15-17; 15:1-29)

Decision expressed as coming from "the *holy spirit* and we . . ."

As the force behind the miraculous gifts, it gave supporting proof of divine commission and backing of the early congregation (Heb. 2:3, 4; Rom. 15:18, 19)

Its gifts filled the need for Bible knowledge and direction in the early congregation, which had few copies of the Bible (1 Cor. 12:4-11)

Gift of tongues helped get good news spread quickly in Asia, Europe and Africa (Acts 2:4-6)

As force for begetting or adoption, it was a token to Jesus' disciples of their heavenly inheritance (2 Cor. 1:22; Rom. 8:14-17)

It anointed Jesus' disciples, commissioning and qualifying them to preach as ministers of new covenant (2 Cor. 1:21; 3:6; compare Luke 4:18)

As force for righteousness, it enabled men to produce fruits of the spirit and develop new Christian personalities (Rom. 8:2, 4; Eph. 4:22-24)

It operated on minds and hearts of Christians to control imperfect flesh (Rom. 8:5, 6, 13)

GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT CONTINUES TO OPERATE TODAY WITH MARVELOUS RESULTS

Operations of spirit have differed through years as required by God's purposes at the time (creation, miracles, etc.) (1 Cor. 13:8-10)

Holy spirit still used to promote God's purpose to preserve and phenomenally expand pure worship in face of opposition (Zech. 4:6; 1 Cor. 3:6) As force for understanding, it influences those responsible for supplying spiritual "food" steadily to broaden understanding of the Bible (Prov. 4:18; 1 Cor. 2:10-13)

We can gain spiritual understanding only through aid of this "food" together with the inspired Word and spirit

"Spiritual words," Bible terms, not Christendom's philosophical expressions, are used to explain truth

Governing force and action as a "helper" in making decisions seen in direction of preaching world wide, not by inspiration, but by a prospering of activities and decisions of true Christian congregation (Acts 6:4-7)

Society's schools, preaching methods, increased understanding of spiritual things gained through its publications and assembly programs demonstrate spirit's guidance

Leading of spirit is followed in governing body's appointments of overseers (Acts 20:28)

Those recommended must display fruits of spirit; qualifications are recorded in inspired Word; overseers making recommendations and governing body making appointments have measure of spirit and are given authority by spirit

Always pray for guidance of holy spirit when you must make decisions

As driving force it energizes Jehovah's willing servants to zealous activity in public preaching (Isa. 61:1)

Strength to endure test is given; God also provides a "way out," not by removing the test, but showing us the right way to go and seeing to it that temptation not more than one can bear (1 Cor. 10:13)

As a qualifying force it cooperates with the abilities of brothers who seek its guidance in developing of shepherding and ministerial ability, and in production of Bible literature, directing the work at the Society's factories, farms, and in construction activities and assembly organization

As you respond to its direction, it can also accomplish much through you as an elder in your congregation

Its force for cleanness and judgment is seen in the way Jehovah's servants keep "without spot from the world" religiously, politically and morally (Jas. 1:27)

Spirit-appointed overseers act to remove uncleanness, which will always "become manifest" in time (2 Cor. 6:14-17; 1 Cor. 5:3-5, 13; 1 Tim. 5:24, 25)

Its unifying force is observed in love and unity of thought and action among Jehovah's witnesses, moving them to accept spiritual "food" and cooperate with decisions of spirit-anointed "faithful and discreet slave" class (Eph. 4:2-6)

Spirit's begetting and anointing has resulted in spiritual priesthood to take lead in 'declaring abroad the excellencies' of God (1 Pet. 2:5, 9)

Effects of spirit's operation are experienced by those who serve under the direction of God's 'faithful slave' class and inspired Word

Modern-day history of Jehovah's witnesses, worldwide expansion of their preaching activity in all major languages, Christian love, all prove backing of God's spirit

Complete inspired Word is available to all, making miraculous knowledge and gift of prophecy unnecessary (1 Cor. 13:8)

Force for righteousness works to help us hold in check practices of innately sinful flesh and helps us bear instead the beautiful "fruitage of the spirit" (Rom. 8:13; Gal. 5:16-24)

If spirit is allowed free flow individually or congregationally, these Christian qualities will be found in abundance, replacing greed and self-centered ways with *love*, discontent and sorrow with *joy*, trivial bickering and feuds with *peace*, anger over others' imperfections with *long-suffering*, thoughtlessness and unconcern with *kindness*, bad treatment of others with *goodness*, questionings and uncertainties with *faith*, extremes of temperament with *mildness*, and passionate pressures from the flesh with *self-control*

Spirit operating on Scripture-trained minds and hearts assures correct testimony from witness-bearer or conscience within so we have the spirit or "mind" of Christ to guide us (Rom. 9:1; 1 Cor. 2:16)

Operations of spirit have resulted in "great crowd" coming to Jehovah's great temple without bringing along the spirit of the world

These "other sheep" receive instead holy spirit because of study of God's Word, also association with spirit-filled remnant (1 Cor. 2:12)

This spirit enables them to face the same problems, tests and responsibilities as anointed

HOW TO RECEIVE AND RETAIN GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT

Cooperation with the leadings of spirit through its various operations, including following the direction of the inspired Word and spirit-directed "faithful and discreet slave" class, governs extent of its free flow in our lives and in the congregations where we serve

We must make a sincere request for it with a right heart and act in harmony with God's requirements (dedication, baptism, etc.) (Luke 11:9-13; Acts 15:8; 5:32)

We must 'circumcise heart by spirit,' clearing out obstructions rising from the heart in wrong desires and motives (pride, jealousy, etc.), which cause unresponsiveness to spirit (Rom. 2:29)

We must allow free flow through all channels of operation such as: personal study of inspired Word (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2); hearing word preached by ministers with spirit (1 Cor. 14:4); engaging in preaching service under direction of holy spirit (Acts 1:8); association at congregation meetings where Christ is by spirit (Heb. 10:24, 25); prayer for assistance in connection with problems when we are not sure what God's will is (Rom. 8:26, 27; Jas. 1:5)

To retain free flow of spirit, we must avoid "grieving," "resisting" or "outraging" it by acting in some way that is contrary to the purpose for which God is using it (Eph. 4:30; Acts 7:51; Heb. 10:26-29; 1 Thess. 4:7, 8)

Such a course could lead to spirit's withdrawal and evidence of spiritual weakening and sluggishness (1 Sam. 16:14; Ps. 51:11)

"Fruitage of the spirit" would also be missing

Reluctance to make room for flow of spirit through any one of its channels of operation could "allow place for the Devil" (Eph. 4:26, 27, 30; 1 Tim. 4:1)

Where problems arise, cause producing withdrawal of spirit must be determined by overseers to help (2 Pet. 1:5-8)

Congregation does not function as a worldly business, dependent mainly on efficiency of its administrators; rather, it prospers when God's spirit operates freely in the lives of its members

Jehovah's spirit does not make miraculous manifestations through us today, but its leadings are manifest to those who look for them with appreciation

The more we bring our lives into harmony with the inspired Word and the leadings of God's spirit, the fuller our 'spiritual life' becomes, leading to everlasting life, whether in the flesh or in the spirit (Heb. 12:9-11; Gal. 6:8; Rom. 8:5, 6)

MAIN POINT: God's holy spirit continues to operate marvelously today, accomplishing Jehovah's will. We should seek it and work in harmony with it

SOURCES: ms 466-468; w68 415, 416; w70 447, 448; w71 501-505; ad 1542-1546

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture

No. 27 - First Saturday, 10:40

How Bible Laws Are Administered

PROPER VIEWPOINT OF BIBLE LAW

Law is defined as the principles and regulations issuing from a superior authority. Simply stated, it is 'a rule of conduct or action'

Theocratic laws are supreme, emanating from God and also enforced by him (Isa. 33:22; Acts 5:29)

God's law commands obedience to what is right and forbids what is wrong; while some of God's expressions are stated formally as commandments, any expression of divine will should be viewed as law, in that such establish a rule of action for us

We should not view as law only those commands to which are attached sanctions that are immediately enforced (Ps. 119:105-112)

God's laws are perfect, trustworthy, upright, clean, pure, true, more precious than gold or silver, sweeter than honey; in the keeping of them there is great reward (Ps. 19:7-11; 1 John 5:3)

Bible law embraces the regulations, principles, decisions, judgments and decrees that are found in the Bible

They constitute divine law, God's written law. Man's laws may or may not be contrary to Bible laws (Matt. 22:17-21; Acts 4:19; 5:29)

Greek Scriptures do not set forth a law code but show the pattern for Christian life, which is as a law to us

MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO OBEY DIVINE LAWS

Man is made in the image of God, possessing powers of observation, intelligence and reasoning sufficient to learn from God's past dealings with mankind

The record of what God has done in the past constitutes a standard or guide in the absence of a written law or formal decrees (Rom. 1:20)

Various aspects of divine action from Adam through Noah's day could be observed: Man was given headship over woman, Adam being created first; mankind was given work to do; ownership rights were to be respected, as indicated by the restriction as to a tree in Eden; lying was shown to bring bad effects; Cain was banished for murder; because of mankind's violence God brought the Flood, but righteous ones were preserved alive and blessed. Prosperity and divine blessing on patriarchs who shunned idolatry and worshiped Jehovah could be observed by others (Gen. 35:1-12; Job 31:26-28; 42:12, 13)

Prior to specific legislation against adultery, Joseph recognized that it was "sin against God" (Gen. 39:7-9)

Man is gifted with the inherent faculty of conscience—that inward sense of right and wrong that excuses or accuses one (Rom. 2:14, 15)

We today, as enlightened slaves of God, are responsible to learn, uphold and obey Bible laws (Matt. 4:4; Heb. 2:1-4)

LAW OF THE CHRISTIAN SYSTEM OF THINGS

Christians are not under the Mosaic law, but under the "law of the Christ" (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21)

The Mosaic law is filled with guiding principles from God, but it is not by that Law covenant that Christians gain salvation (Col. 2:13, 14)

The 'law of Christ' embraces the whole scope of a Christian's life and work; it is law that originates with Jehovah himself (John 12:49)

The law of Christ is the "law of faith" (Rom. 3:27), because a righteous standing with God depends on faith in Christ; obedience must be motivated by faith (Rom. 14:23)

Christian law focuses primary attention on our relation to Jehovah (Matt. 4:10), then on faith in Jesus Christ and submission to him (1 John 3:23; Col. 1:18); next on our relationship with fellow Christians (John 13:34, 35; Heb. 10:24, 25); and, finally, on our obligation toward unbelievers (1 Pet. 2:13-15; Rom. 1:14, 15)

Law of Christian system shows what is in the heart

Of those in new covenant, law is said to be inscribed "in their heart"; we need to be sure that it is in our hearts (Jer. 31:33; 2 Cor. 3:3)

There are very few commands the breaking of which is sufficient reason for expelling one from the congregation

Hence, we are judged not only on our attitude toward these few that bring obvious sanctions, but also on how we really view all the other commands of God (Eccl. 8:11-13)

A person may attend meetings, share in field service and refrain from doing anything for which he could be disfellowshipped, but much more is required to have God's approval

One who retains a love for the world may not be barred from the congregation, but will he get eternal life? (1 John 2:15-17)

A person may never have committed actual fornication or adultery, but what is in his heart? (Matt. 5:28)

We may never commit an overt act against our brothers, but do we truly love them? (Rom. 14:13-15; Jas. 2:15, 16; 1 John 3:14, 15)

We may say that we love Jehovah, but is our love really of the kind that he requires? (Luke 10:25-28)

If we are given assignments that do not please us, do we grumble or quit, or do we prove that we really meant it when we said to God we would be his willing slaves? (Rev. 4:11; Ps. 110:3; 1 Thess. 1:9)

Law of Christian system does not reject as condemned those who truly love what is right, even though sinful inclinations at times overtake them (Rom. 8:1, 2; 1 John 1:9; 2:1, 2)

ADMINISTRATORS OF BIBLE LAWS

Jehovah's laws are enforced through various agencies: natural processes; secular authorities; husbands and fathers; elders in Christian congregation; the "faithful and discreet slave" represented by its governing body and appointed agencies; the angels; and Christ Jesus

Those with "spiritual qualifications" should help a fellow Christian who has inadvertently gone wrong; Christian obligation to do so (Gal. 6:1, 2; Jas. 5:19, 20)

Cases that involve simple personal differences can be handled by individuals concerned or with help of one of elders; not all matters require attention of a congregational judicial committee (1 Cor. 6:5)

Elders empowered as judges within the congregation to render decisions based on Bible laws (1 Cor. 5:12, 13; 6:1-6)

The elders are appointed by holy spirit; the laws they must apply are God's (Deut. 1:16, 17; Isa. 1:26)

These administrators of Bible law should be viewed with due respect, and as a loving provision of Jehovah (1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Thess. 5:12, 13)

The governing body representing the "faithful and discreet slave" has special responsibility in directing the administration of Bible laws today among Jehovah's Christian witnesses. They act in a capacity like that of the first-century governing body of the Christian congregation (Acts 15:2, 6, 22, 23)

HOW BIBLE LAW IS ADMINISTERED

Much effort is put forth to educate us in the divine law, to help us bring our lives into line with God's requirements

Counsel is given regularly on a congregational and personal basis as a loving provision of Jehovah; we need to get His law in our minds and in our hearts (Rom. 12:2; Heb. 10:16)

Our conscience plays a part in personal application of Bible law and needs to be trained in it. An elder needs to be outstanding in his knowledge of Bible law and his ability to apply it

If someone commits a wrong "before he is aware of it," loving help is given in a spirit of mildness to readjust him (Gal. 6:1, 2)

Nevertheless, adverse consequences to wrongdoers are not completely eliminated (Gal. 6:7)

If a person starts on a course that is in direct conflict with divine law, an effort is made to help him get straightened out (Titus 3:10, 11; Jude 23)

In some flagrant cases it is necessary for elders to reprove "with severity" to restore a healthy and strong faith (Titus 1:10, 13)

Some, though not expelled from the congregation, may prove themselves to be undesirable company in a social way (2 Thess. 3:14, 15)

If serious wrongdoing affecting the congregation is reported, a hearing before the judicial committee is held

The judicial committee seeks, not only to uphold Jehovah's justice and protect the congregation against corrupting influences, but also to do everything possible to readjust the wrongdoer and help him to make straight paths for his feet (Heb. 12:12, 13)

Where repentance is lacking their merciful efforts cannot rightly continue toward him

No. 28 - Second Monday, 9:10

Helping Men in the Congregation

JEHOVAH DIRECTS ATTENTION TO THE FAMILY UNIT

Family is a basic unit of human society, reflection of grand family of God (Job 38:7; Acts 17:28; Eph. 3:14, 15)

Jehovah gave attention to the family unit and its integrity by direction in Fifth Commandment, the "first command with a promise" (Deut. 5:16; Eph. 6:2)

Inspired Scriptures have foretold vicious attack on family institution—must work hard to keep it intact (1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-5)

What are you personally doing to guide your own family in pure worship?

You cannot expect perfection; yet should work to improve your own family and thus be in position to help other families (1 Tim. 3:1, 4, 5)

RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEADSHIP

In Hebrew society father was head of household; it was a patriarchal, not matriarchal, society. The father served as guardian, decision maker, judge and priest for his family (Gen. 12:7, 8; 31:32; Job 1:5)

He had the responsibility to teach God's principles to his family and to follow Jehovah's pattern of loving care (Deut. 6:6, 7; Gen. 18:19)

Headship of man in the family arrangement is clearly shown at 1 Corinthians 11:3, yet man is in subjection to God and Christ

Headship of man does not mean he is independent and without need to recognize a head

BLESSINGS AND BENEFITS FROM ADMINISTRATION OF BIBLE LAW

By applying Bible law in our own life we receive blessings from Jehovah; such application brings peace of mind with contentment (Ps. 1:1-3; Prov. 3:1, 2, 13-18)

In the congregation, administration of Bible law brings peace and unity, makes for strength and growth (Acts 15:22, 30, 31; 16:4, 5; Eph. 4:11-13)

Our willing application of Bible law makes Jehovah's heart glad, like that of a father with a loving obedient son (Prov. 27:11)

MAIN POINT: Elders must administer Bible laws in the congregation with love and mercy toward their brothers and out of fear of Jehovah, the Universal Sovereign, the One whom they represent

SOURCES: ad 1035-1037, 1045-1047; or 58; w70 393-409
TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture

over him. Rather, he is obliged to follow direction and pattern set by his head, Christ (1 John 2:6)

Man given headship over woman because (1) man was created first (1 Tim. 2:12, 13) (2) woman was created from the man and for the man (Gen. 2:18, 22, 23; 1 Cor. 11:8, 9)

Headship includes responsibility of making final decisions and providing oversight and care for the family, both in material and spiritual matters (Eph. 5:23-27; 1 Tim. 5:8)

Example set by Christ with Christian congregation to be followed by husbands; in dealing with wife should lovingly consider her mental, emotional and physical makeup (Eph. 5:28-33; 1 Pet. 3:7)

Elders should exercise headship over wives in love, showing same quality to children, not irritating them (Col. 3:19; Eph. 6:1-4)

In presiding over your household, are you "reasonable, not belligerent," as an overseer in the congregation must be? (1 Tim. 3:3)

Obviously one should not be constantly belittling family members for what they do, but must take their feelings into consideration (Eph. 6:4)

Are you a loving family head, not the harsh, boss type? Do you in your leadership set a fine spiritual example?

EDUCATION AT THE FAMILY LEVEL

Husband or father responsible to take the lead in family instruction and training for life

In Israel parents cooperated in educating children by word and example
 Father taught sons a trade; mother gave daughters instruction in domestic duties
 Spiritual needs were given close, regular attention (Deut. 6:7, 8)

Christian parents can follow similar pattern, also learning from Jesus' interest in children and his willingness to teach them spiritual things (Mark 10:13-16)

Children do not automatically become disciples just because parents are

Do you take time to study with your children, pray with them, go in field service together, play with them, reason with them instead of just laying down rules, help to guide them and answer their questions?

In providing proper education for the family, prayer is very important on the part of the family head to show reliance on Jehovah and appreciation for spiritual things; we should never be too busy to pray (Phil. 4:6, 7)

A well-directed family study can be a major factor in the spiritual growth of family members
 Regular Monday-evening Bethel family study sets a fine example for family studies world wide

It is good to relate experiences in the family circle, showing an interest in spiritual things

Children respond when parents show genuine interest in what they say or have accomplished, whether in school, field ministry or elsewhere

Discussion sessions and family preparation for service help keep the family together and progressive in field ministry

Good preparation can bring increased joy and better results in preaching the good news in one's neighborhood

Parents should give children balanced counsel on participation in sports and school activities, help them to avoid bad associations

Planning family recreation, trips and educational activities (visits to museums, zoos, etc.) can fill a need in children's lives, contribute to family unity

Balanced and wholesome recreation is upbuilding, but it must be kept in proper focus and should be coordinated by family head

Parents should help children by counteracting instruction that might undermine their faith (1 Tim. 6:20, 21; 1 Cor. 3:18-20; Col. 2:8)

Discipline includes thought of giving training that molds or corrects

By loving discipline, wise parents prepare their children to cope with problems and situations they will encounter in their contacts with the world (Prov. 22:6)

Permissive parents are not observing the principle of headship in educating their children

Eli was permissive; but Manoah showed wisdom (1 Sam. 2:12-17, 22-29; Judg. 13:8)

Good family instruction and training of children required if family head is to enjoy greater privileges in the congregation (1 Tim. 3:4, 5)

Children can reflect unfavorably on their parents and disqualify fathers for service as elders and ministerial servants (Titus 1:6)

Obviously, fine parents will want to train, discipline and educate children in paths of righteousness, that entire family may bring credit to Jehovah and gain reward of everlasting life

Good Christian upbringing contributes much toward helping young men to qualify in due course as ministerial servants and later as elders in congregation

HOW TO HELP MEN IN THE CONGREGATION TO PROGRESS

A marvelous expansion is now taking place, opening a great need for responsible brothers to handle work in congregations (Isa. 60:22)

Brothers are encouraged to reach out for an office of overseer (1 Tim. 3:1)

The best recommendation any one of us can provide is a good example

Do other men see a good example in you and your family, an example they could do well to follow?

Does your family work unitedly and harmoniously in the congregation? Does it provide a good example of Christian living within your community?

Does your family show real appreciation for the privilege of preaching and disciple-making?

Is your family hospitable, loving, kind and united? As circumstances permit, do you invite friends to your home from time to time for food, fellowship, study? Let others see your family in action

Help men in the congregation to see rewards of regular, meaningful family study and stimulating spiritual discussions

Elders should constantly seek to encourage and aid men to help share work in the congregation; be on the lookout for potential ministerial servants and elders

Be positive and upbuilding in your relationship with newer ones

Prove you personally are no longer living for yourself, but that your entire life is built around your relationship to Jehovah through Christ Jesus

Be aglow with the spirit; render whole-souled devotion to Jehovah; enthusiasm begets enthusiasm (Rom. 12:11; Col. 3:23)

HOW TO HELP UNBELIEVING HUSBANDS

Encourage wives to help unbelieving husbands by keeping their own integrity, thereby setting the best example for the unbeliever

Advise setting a fine example in modesty and cooperation

May be able to win husband to the truth by fine example more than by preaching (1 Cor. 7:13, 16; 1 Pet. 3:1-4)

Recommend consideration in planning of field activities, having in mind husband's plans or wishes; this will aid wife to avoid unduly irritating her husband

Encourage wives not to argue about the truth but to speak the truth with mildness to break down opposition (Prov. 15:1; 25:15)

Suggest helping unbelievers by indirect approach
Wife may ask unbelieving mate to help her with her talk in Ministry School or may leave literature around so he can read it

Elders should keep in mind the possibility of personally giving spiritual help to unbelieving husbands of women in the congregation

Can you help by making friendly calls on husband with view to getting acquainted, perhaps in time starting a study?

Inviting such ones to a meal in your home, perhaps with other brothers present, may have beneficial effect

Do not give up hope; invite various brothers to visit unbelieving husbands over a period of time to get acquainted

ARE YOU IN POSITION TO HELP MEN IN YOUR CONGREGATION?

Be sure that you are setting a good lead for your own wife and family; then you will be in position

to reach out to help other men in the congregation so that the entire congregation will be spiritually strong

While the matter of helping men in the congregation is under consideration, make a note of whom you might help by counsel or personal assistance to reach out for additional privileges

Consider how you might help some brothers build up spirituality in their families, thus contributing to a stronger congregation

Finally, consider if there are some unbelieving husbands that you might possibly help into the congregation or at least help to have greater respect for the truth, thus making it easier for the believing mate to serve faithfully

MAIN POINT: Strong theocratic families provide an excellent example for attracting other families to the Christian way of life. Strong families make strong congregations. Elders should work closely with family heads

SOURCES: *ad* 487-489, 504, 564, 565, 569, 726, 1104, 1105; *w*71 104-107, 207-213; *w*72 126

TEACHING SUGGESTION: (1) Give class opportunity to relate what they have done as family heads to care for the spiritual welfare of their families and to keep family members close together. (2) Have some been able to assist unbelieving husbands, and do they have suggestions that might be helpful to the other students? (3) How do brothers feel they may be able to help men in their congregations?

No. 29 - Second Monday, 10:40

The Service Meeting

PURPOSE OF SERVICE MEETINGS

These meetings are specifically to help equip and stimulate the brothers to share fully in both preaching and disciple-making

This is special work that Jehovah has assigned to all his Christian witnesses

To a considerable extent this work today is accomplished by speaking to other persons and by placing literature with them

It is appropriate that a special meeting each week be devoted especially to this work (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20)

It is beneficial to discuss and demonstrate *how* to engage others in conversation about the Bible, how to overcome objections, how to follow up interest, how to start and conduct studies

It is helpful to discuss what is contained in the various pieces of literature that we are offering to the public, what outstanding points of interest we can show them, etc.

It is good to show the value of all the features

of field service from time to time, also outlining arrangements for group work, offering personal instruction to new ones, etc.

Application of Bible principles in our lives greatly influences the effectiveness of our field ministry

It is therefore appropriate that service meeting programs give attention to matters of Christian conduct, whether conduct at home, in school, at secular work, or in the field service

Service meetings may be arranged to give direct assistance to the congregation in connection with any problems that arise in their service to God

Many in attendance have been Witnesses for years and know how to declare good news and make disciples, but the program can encourage, stimulate them to continued faithfulness and zealous activity

Relating experiences and discussion of counsel from God's Word itself helps to accomplish this

MAKING ASSIGNMENTS

Most service meetings are conveniently outlined by the branch office, thus giving overseers assistance in planning the program and providing for unity of action by brothers in the field

Kingdom Ministry may vary from country to country according to needs of the field, literature available in local language, etc.

Bans or restrictions on work may alter local preaching arrangements

Soon after the *Kingdom Ministry* arrives, the presiding overseer will study it carefully and either personally assign the various parts for each meeting or arrange for this to be done

He considers who could appropriately present each part, having material presented under supervision of elders and ministerial servants, with elders taking weightier matters

Bible study overseer might logically consider parts dealing with Bible studies; Theocratic Ministry School overseer, parts pertaining to school, etc.

Any in good standing in the congregation, including children when appropriate, may be used on the program for demonstrations or discussions

Suggestions may be made to one assigned the part as to who might be used in demonstrations or discussions, if desired, with a view to working into the program as many qualified publishers as possible over a period of time

Outline for meetings is flexible and may be adjusted to care for local matters needing attention, special letters from the branch office, etc.

Also body of elders may be aware of something helpful to consider for which no program is outlined

This could be developed on fifth meeting of the month or worked into an appropriate part already scheduled or into the conclusion of the meeting

Local problems might include poor preparation for sharing in meetings, gossip, coming late to meetings, immodest dress, lack of personal family study, children repeatedly going to rest rooms during meetings, service problems, etc.

Preparing fifth meetings a good training for elders who will be responsible to prepare service meetings if *Kingdom Ministry* does not arrive due to strikes, bad postal service, weather, etc.

It will be helpful if presiding overseer gives full copy of program to each one having an assigned part, so next brother may be properly introduced

Not required to select a theme for the meeting, but may be arranged locally if desired and appropriate; where fitting, may work in thought contained in yeartext

DEVELOPING THE MATERIAL

First carefully study part assigned from *Kingdom Ministry* and see how it applies to local congregation or can be adapted to do so

Can abbreviate certain material that is not pertinent to the congregation

Stimulates interest to have some variety in presentations; brothers may be encouraged to use originality, at the same time following general outline of *Kingdom Ministry*

If parts call for a demonstration or questions, good to follow such suggestions, as branch office arranges a balanced program with variety of presentations

Text consideration could be by question and answer, by a talk, comments from audience, family discussion, on a return visit, when visiting ill publisher, etc.

For a question-and-answer part you could use true or false questions, multiple choice, panel of publishers with questions from audience, etc.

Many variations possible, but avoid embarrassing anyone or having brothers compete

While helpful, variety is not major concern; sound spiritual instruction is

Demonstrations do not require costumes and elaborate settings, although a few simple things may add realism

Settings or illustrations should always be secondary to the material being presented

Scenes depicting door-to-door work, discussions at home or on a Bible study are always appropriate

Dramas are not used for service meetings as too much time is involved in writing script, becoming familiar with parts, etc.

Rehearsals of demonstrations are very important so brothers know when to come on platform, where to stand, perhaps how to use microphones May see brothers facing away from audience to present literature when not well instructed

Last-minute preparation or rehearsal should be avoided

May be helpful to have persons in same book study group in demonstrations to facilitate rehearsal

When you have a part to prepare, ask yourself: Why is it scheduled and how will it be helpful and applicable to local congregation? What is there in it that the brothers need to learn? If it is something they already know, why is it being repeated? Is there a fresh approach to it? How can it be presented so it will be remembered and applied? Would a newly interested person in attendance understand the presentation and how it would apply to him?

Suggestions made in connection with preaching the good news should not be viewed as rules; encourage the brothers to use the presentation they personally find effective

SOUND AND STAGE

Where sound equipment is used, it is up to the one who has the part to be sure that microphones will be properly placed and that those sharing in the part know how to use them

If microphones will be needed for comments from audience, arrangements should be made beforehand

For those on stage, will hand mike be passed or will brothers use standing mike? Who will make necessary adjustments?

If additional chairs will be needed on the platform or other adjustments that cannot be cared for before the meeting starts, arrangements might considerably be made for it to be handled quickly at the beginning of that part, not during presentation of a part by another brother on the program

In some congregations, qualified younger brothers have been trained to assist with these matters

TIMING AND CONCLUSION

The meeting should be finished in about an hour, including both of the songs and the prayer

A common tendency is to prepare too much material; brothers should be ready to eliminate something, even a demonstration if necessary, to stay within time

All on program should cooperate in working toward goal of finishing on time

If a brother runs considerably overtime or might have done better on his part, appropriate for presiding overseer to give him helpful suggestions with view to future improvement

Conclusion of program should be spiritually strengthening and motivating

For variety, interviews might be interesting on how some came into the truth, why others started to pioneer and how they like that service, how families are able to get to meetings on time, new things learned, etc.

Service arrangements may be considered, but not in perfunctory manner and not necessarily at end of the meeting

Do not use the meeting to scold or criticize brothers for their activity, but to encourage and upbuild

Could assign a question in advance for research and discussion by brothers on coming meeting, perhaps suggesting the source of material

Presiding overseer does not always have to handle the concluding portion; he may want to take the introduction or perhaps a weighty Scriptural part, having other elders share in concluding the program

ENCOURAGING MEETING PARTICIPATION BY CONGREGATION

How many in your congregation make an effort to share in question-and-answer parts?

Such "public declaration" builds up brothers spiritually; it helps to incite others to love and fine works even more so than does our just being present at meetings (Heb. 10:23, 24)

Encourage young and old alike to share in the program and in commenting

Recommend that brothers read over program in advance; have book study conductors alert brothers to parts for audience participation

Having a share by commenting will strengthen and speed up advancement by those in the congregation, so encourage and help all with this in view

Help all attend with the thought of giving, not just receiving

Participation helps to build up our faith, our love for the brothers and for Jehovah, and aids us to retain what we have learned so that we can apply it later in the field and in our daily life

To aid all to use what they learn, presiding overseer may suggest that points from the service meeting be reviewed at coming meeting for group field service

CONTINUING UNDER OPPOSITION

Just as the disciples continued to meet together despite opposition, faithful Witnesses throughout the world continue to meet together for spiritual strengthening despite modern-day opposition (John 20:19, 26)

If *Kingdom Ministry* is not available, meetings can be planned by local elders

The Bible or available publications of the Society may be used for discussions

Place of meeting may have to be changed frequently to avoid detection

Important thing is that even under difficult conditions the brothers appreciate the need to assemble together to equip themselves to offer to God a sacrifice of praise, and that the overseers make provision for such spiritual strengthening wherever possible (Heb. 13:15)

MAIN POINT: Service meetings should build the brothers up spiritually and equip them for field ministry. Variety of presentation helps stimulate interest; use teaching methods so material will be remembered and used by brothers afterward

SOURCE: or 97, 98

TEACHING SUGGESTION: (1) Discuss what local problems brothers have handled on their service meetings and how they have handled them. (2) What do various ones in the class do to make parts they have on service meetings interesting and varied? (3) Have some had good success in encouraging meeting participation or in working as many as possible into the presentation of material, and if so, how?

Jehovah's Progressive Organization

EARTHLY ARRANGEMENT TO CONTINUE

Counting from the creation of the first man, Adam, in the early autumn of 4026 B.C.E., 6,000 years of man's existence on earth will evidently end by the mid-1970's

But faithful mankind and Jehovah's governmental arrangements for the earth will continue and progress on into the endless future

JEHOVAH HAS ALWAYS HAD SOME FAITHFUL WITNESSES ON THE EARTH

A long line of faithful men recorded in Hebrews 11:1-40

Abel was the first faithful witness (Gen. 4:4; Heb. 11:4)

Nation of Israel became organized as a "chosen people" in 1513 B.C.E. with a theocratic government founded on the Law covenant as a constitution (Ex. 19:5-9)

Following the rejection of the promised Messiah by the Jewish congregation, Jehovah's use of the newly established Christian congregation became manifest (Matt. 21:33-43)

Heavenly direction of the Christian congregation was shown by the outpouring of holy spirit at Pentecost, 33 C.E. (Acts 2:1-4)

Anointing by spirit was extended to Gentiles in 36 C.E. (Acts 10:44, 45)

Centuries of spiritual darkness characterized the long period of apostasy or falling away after the death of the faithful apostles by 100 C.E.

"Man of lawlessness," apostate leaders of Christendom, developed (2 Thess. 2:3, 4)

Organized during the fourth century, Christendom reached its peak during the "Dark Ages"

But true Christianity was not snuffed out; as foretold, both "wheat" (true Christians) and "weeds" (imitation Christians) continued to grow until the "harvest" (Matt. 13:30, 36-43)

THE PROGRESS OF JEHOVAH'S MODERN-DAY ORGANIZATION

From the 1870's onward, God's modern-day "faithful and discreet slave" class began to be manifest and to be restored to spiritual wakefulness.

The turning from religious confusion was given impetus as the result of a searching study of the Bible by Charles Taze Russell; interest was aroused in the invisible return of Christ

In July 1879, the first issue of *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence* was published

In 1909 its name was changed to *The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence* and in

1939 to its present name, *The Watchtower, Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom*

Congregations, called "ecclesias," were established in the late 1870's

They were loosely structured, with elders being chosen by elections, but all were receiving the same spiritual food through the *Watch Tower* and certain bound volumes

The headquarters building, called the "Bible House," was built in the Allegheny section of Pittsburgh in 1889

It served as headquarters until 1909, when buildings were acquired in Brooklyn

A "Society" was organized in 1881 to expand the distribution of printed material; this was legally incorporated in 1884 and is now called Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. Other corporations were formed to operate in various places, such as, in 1909, the one now known as Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., and International Bible Students Association formed in England in 1914, etc.

These all serve as instruments of the "faithful and discreet slave" class and its governing body (Matt. 24:45-47)

A great public preaching activity characterized the modern progressive organization

The Watch Tower carried the stirring call: "Wanted 1000 Preachers"; also an article entitled "Anointed to Preach," based on Isaiah 61:1

Magazines and books were printed by commercial firms

"Publishers" shared in distributing literature part time, while "colporteurs" did so full time and gave the message wide distribution by offering sets of volumes

Basic truths of God's Word were made clear again, Bible chronology was carefully studied and the annual Memorial celebration was restored

Doctrines such as the ransom, soul, resurrection, condition of the dead and others were properly explained from the Bible; Trinity and immortality of human souls were exposed as false. As far back as 1876, Brother Russell Scripturally demonstrated that the year 1914 would mark the end of the 'Gentile Times' or "appointed times of the nations" (Luke 21:24)

The Memorial was seen to be an "Anniversary Supper," to be celebrated once a year on Nisan 14

Opposition to Jehovah's Kingdom interests and its governmental direction, both from within the congregation and outside thereof, was met by going on the offensive spiritually, with good results (Acts 5:39)

The Protestant clergy's ministerial alliance challenged Brother Russell to a six-day debate in Pittsburgh's Carnegie Hall; this resulted in a fine witness before record audiences in March 1903

Some prominent workers, including C. T. Russell's wife, set themselves in opposition (See w72 382-384)

The Society's work expanded into Europe, parts of Africa and Asia as well as Australia

An intensive publicity campaign was carried out, warning of the climactic events in 1914

Millions of tracts, pamphlets, magazines and books were distributed

Weekly sermons of Brother Russell were published in 3,000 newspapers

The "Photo-Drama of Creation" was made and shown to large audiences in many parts of the world

JEHOVAH'S PROGRESSIVE ORGANIZATION UNDERGOES REFINEMENT

Jehovah's coming to his temple meant a judgment period (Mal. 3:1-3)

Tests of loyalty, zeal and devotion came from inside and outside the congregation

Pressures mounted from world governments during World War I (Rev. 11:1-10)

Brothers were tested (1) by opposition from within the congregation as to their loyalty to theocratic governmental arrangements rather than to human leaders; they were also tested (2) by service arrangements as to their zeal and devotion for Jehovah's worship in the witness work; and they were tested (3) as to their love for revealed truths

A change in Society administration brought adjustments; Brother Russell died on October 31, 1916 and Joseph F. Rutherford was made president of the Watch Tower Society on January 6, 1917

In 1918, situation of spiritual Israel became similar to that of Jews in Babylonish captivity; Society's officers were arrested and imprisoned and the work seemed to have been killed (Rev. 11:7-10)

PROGRESSIVE ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FROM 1919 TO 1931

The surviving anointed remnant arose to restore true worship to its proper place and prominence after their deliverance from "Babylonish" captivity; work was revived and strengthened (Rev. 11:11-13)

The Society's officers were released from prison on March 25, 1919; Cedar Point, Ohio, convention was arranged for September 1-7, 1919; Society headquarters reopened in Brooklyn, N.Y., October 1, 1919

Under direction of holy spirit the work of preaching the good news of the established Kingdom was revitalized (Isa. 60:1)

Special privilege of service as ambassadors representing the Kingdom was extended to the anointed as the payment of the "denarius" (or "penny") in 1919 (Matt. 20:1-16)

Conventions, declarations, resolutions and flashes of new spiritual information came as evidence of God's teaching and leading of his anointed ones

Second Cedar Point, Ohio, convention held September 5-13, 1922

Series of declarations or resolutions, corresponding with the beginning of the pouring out of the "seven bowls of the anger of God," issued at conventions from 1922-1928 (Rev. 16:1-21)

The name "Jehovah's witnesses," adopted at Columbus, Ohio, in 1931, served to identify Jehovah's name and purpose with his people and show the responsibility of his "servant" class to witness (Isa. 43:10-12)

FURTHER ORGANIZATIONAL PROGRESS EVIDENCED IN RESTORATION OF THEOCRATIC STRUCTURE AND DIRECTION

From 1919 onward the true Christian congregation was progressively restored to its theocratic structure

A Society "director" appointed to work alongside "elective elders," but not subject to yearly election

By October 15, 1932, the system of "elective elders" was discontinued

By June 1938 arrangements were being put into effect to appoint all local "servants" in the theocratic way (Isa. 60:17)

The "holy place" or "sanctuary" was in its "right condition" for the first time in the modern history of Jehovah's people (Dan. 8:14; w71 724)

World War II pressures were used by the 'small horn,' the seventh or Anglo-American world power, to 'trample on the established place of God's sanctuary,' though it was unable to stop altogether the "daily sacrifice" of praise to Jehovah (Dan. 8:10-12; w71 720-724)

Two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings counted from when "holy place" was in "right condition" the first time, June 1938, until October 1944 (Dan. 8:13, 14; w71 724-728)

Jehovah's organization progressed and the "holy place" was brought back to its "right condition" in October 1944 as a firm stand for theocratic direction was seen in amendments to Society's charter

Jehovah's name was incorporated in the charter, and basis for membership became active service to Jehovah, not monetary contribution

Further strengthening of theocratic structure and operations came in 1972 with the replacement

of one overseer in each congregation by the appointment of "elders" or "older men" to serve as a "body of elders" with a rotating chairmanship (w71 695-701)

EXPANSION OF THE ORGANIZATION AUGMENTED BY "OTHER SHEEP"

By 1935, the gathering of the remaining ones of the 144,000 had been basically completed, and the continued Kingdom-preaching and discipling resulted in the gathering of those of the "great crowd" (Rev. 7:4, 9, 10)

From 1942 onward, an extensive educational program has been in progress through congregational meetings, assemblies and special schools of training

These include: Theocratic Ministry School (1942-1943); Gilead School (1943); Kingdom Ministry School (1959)

In certain recent years more have become baptized disciples of Christ Jesus, with earthly life in view, than became his faithful anointed followers during the entire period from 33 to 1935 C.E.

THE PROPER VIEW OF JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION AND ITS PROGRESSIVENESS

The theocratic structure within God's congregation and its spiritual beauty and strength today are a remarkable product of God's spirit, coupled with a long record of world-recognized integrity and uncompromised devotion to Jehovah God (Isa. 62:2, 3)

The reason for progressive changes is in order

to keep pace with Jehovah's provisions for advancement (Isa. 60:17; Prov. 4:18)

We need to accept the progress and changes made in the earthly theocratic structure, showing loyalty to Jehovah's kingdom and his Son's headship and keeping pace with his revelation of truth (John 6:67, 68)

Be prepared to explain matters to others, helping them recognize, respect and fully appreciate working with the "faithful and discreet slave" class as it continues to progress under Christ's headship (Ps. 37:28; 149:1)

As overseers, see that young ones, new Bible students, as well as all with the congregation, understand and appreciate the background and history of Jehovah's marvelous dealings with his name people and his progressive guidance of them

God's organization in heaven and in earth has steadily moved forward, is making great strides in progress now, and will continue progressing to time indefinite in Jehovah's righteous new order

MAIN POINT: Overseers need to understand the background and history of Jehovah's dealings with his people in modern times in order to instill in those entrusted to their care loyalty and appreciation for Christ's headship through the earthly theocratic arrangement and organization that Jehovah has provided for their direction and blessing

SOURCES: *ad* 298, 851, 1105, 1106, 1206; *jp* 12-127, 139, 140, 147-149, 158, 186-205, 284-295; *or* 54-64; *w71* 695-701, 720-728; *w72* 382-384

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture

No. 31 - Second Monday, 3:00

Importance of the Shepherding Work

WHY THE RESPONSIBILITY IS A SERIOUS ONE

The "flock" belongs to God; overseers must render an account to him for it (1 Pet. 5:2; Heb. 13:17)

Jehovah judges adversely those who use their position as shepherd for personal glory and selfish gain instead of truly caring for the flock (Ezek. 34:2, 10)

Good spiritual condition and fine works of the flock result in glory to God (Matt. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:12)

The lives of our brothers, persons for whom Christ died, are involved; we should have genuine love and concern for them (Acts 20:28)

LEARNING FROM AN ANCIENT AND HONORABLE OCCUPATION

"Shepherd" has been defined as 'a person who

tends, feeds and guards sheep'; the occupation dates back to Adam's son Abel (Gen. 4:2)

Work of a shepherd included seeing that the sheep had food and water, were cared for when they got sick and were safeguarded against wolves, etc.; the shepherd was concerned not only for the flock as a whole but for any that strayed (Ps. 23:1-6; 1 Sam. 17:34-36; Matt. 18:12, 13)

Shepherding was a rigorous life; much time was spent away from home caring for the flock; Jesus Christ the Fine Shepherd laid down his life for the flock (Gen. 31:40; 37:12-17; John 10:11)

WHY THE WORK OF SPIRITUAL SHEPHERDING IS SO IMPORTANT

When sheep are not being cared for by a shepherd they become scattered and are easy prey for enemies; this is true of both literal sheep and symbolic ones (Ezek. 34:5)

We live in a time when the Devil is bringing great pressure on all mankind, especially those who seek to please Jehovah; opposition may come from marriage mate, other relatives, even the government; in many places the economic situation is difficult and some find that they have to work extra hours; personal shortcomings easily cause one to become discouraged (1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12:12, 17)

Do not let life's problems take away your concern for congregation (2 Cor. 11:23-29)

One of the marks of true Christians is that we deeply care about one another; shepherds especially need to demonstrate that love (John 13:35; Gal. 6:10)

CIRCUMSTANCES CALLING FOR THE ATTENTION OF A SHEPHERD

One of the main responsibilities of a shepherd is to 'feed the sheep,' to be a teacher of God's Word in the congregation (John 21:15-17)

Much of this is done when conducting meetings and handling other assignments from the platform; give this work careful attention so that the "sheep" are truly helped to benefit from the spiritual food

Additional teaching is done on personal basis, giving further explanation to those who need it; be willing to do that

Those who give evidence of spiritual ill health or who begin to stray from the flock need special attention; keep an eye out for circumstances calling for attention and handle them promptly

When any begin to miss meetings, a personal visit or a phone call can help to draw them back into the fold; prompt attention can help to avoid problems becoming more deep-seated

Are some lacking zeal as to field ministry? Do not wait until they completely stop; they may need encouragement to see the value of what they are doing; perhaps some assistance on the way they handle matters at the doors will help them to find more joy in their field service; work along with them

Do you observe lack of respect on the part of certain children, or evidence of lack of discipline? Perhaps the household needs help with arrangements for a family study

Are some, by their habits or manner of dress, showing excessive interest in imitating the world? A kindly, Scriptural discussion with the young person's parents, or with the sister's husband or with the person himself might help to correct the situation before it goes too far

Is someone getting involved with worldly association, perhaps "dating" an unbeliever of the opposite sex? Recognize the danger; provide loving but firm counsel from God's Word

If any "wolfish" elements are trying to destroy or corrupt the faith of a member of the con-

gregation, quickly come to the brother's rescue and use the "sword of the spirit" to destroy that bad influence (Titus 1:10-14)

The responsibility of a shepherd is not only toward the strays; those who are doing well need attention too

Commendation for their fine work, for their faithfulness and endurance upbuilds them and strengthens them to press on

Some do not bring their problems to you, but that does not mean they do not have them; often they are grateful for aid when you show personal interest

When anyone is physically ill, it is good for shepherds to show loving concern and to see that any needed assistance of a physical nature is provided

Important to know the "sheep" well and their spiritual condition so that you readily recognize problems when they begin to develop (John 10:3, 4; Prov. 27:23)

Sometimes those in need of spiritual aid will call and request your help to restore them (Jas. 5:14-16); in other cases you discern the need and kindly take the initiative in offering assistance (Gal. 6:1)

HOW FINE SHEPHERDS CONDUCT THEIR SHEPHERDING

In dealing with the brothers, imitate the loving concern shown by Jehovah himself (Isa. 40:10, 11)

Jesus Christ, the great shepherd, said that those coming to him would find refreshment; as you imitate the example of Christ, the flock entrusted to your care will experience that refreshment (Heb. 13:20; Matt. 11:28-30)

When you talk with brothers and sisters at congregation meetings, show an interest in the things they are doing; encourage them to share their experiences with you; ask about their Bible studies; commend them for their comments, their talks, their regularity; share with them your experiences, new things learned, etc.

When visiting them in their homes, go as one would to visit a dear friend or a fleshly brother; show warm interest in them (2 John 12; 1 Thess. 2:17-19)

Enjoy relaxing, upbuilding conversation with them; if they offer refreshments and you want to accept, do so; your friendliness will build up their confidence in you

In this atmosphere, publishers will often tell you their problems without your even asking; your visit need not suggest that there are problems unless you are specifically there for that purpose, as visits may also be made on those doing well

May do some Bible reading together, or help them with Ministry School assignment, or read

together something of special interest in newly received *Watchtower* (Rom. 1:11, 12)

In handling problems, take the needed time and weigh carefully the counsel that you give

Learn to be a good listener; get the other person to express himself; get all the facts before giving counsel (Prov. 18:13; Jas. 1:19)

Help the person to realize that you are genuinely interested in assisting him to pursue a course bringing Jehovah's approval and leading to eternal life

Base counsel firmly on God's Word; read from the Bible; encourage reliance on Jehovah; build appreciation for Jehovah, his Word and for Christ's headship in directing the Christian congregation, not directing attention to yourself or your own wisdom (Prov. 3:5, 6; Ps. 146:3-10; Titus 1:9)

To serve most effectively as shepherds, we must keep in mind that we too are "sheep" in Jehovah's flock; we are all brothers (Matt. 23:8)

No reason to "talk down" to the brothers or to treat them as if they are babes

Apostles viewed themselves as working with the brothers, referring to them as "sharers with me in the undeserved kindness," "brothers," "yokefellow," etc. (Phil. 1:7; 4:3; 2 Thess. 1:3; 1 Pet. 5:1)

WHERE AND WHEN WE CAN SHARE IN SHEPHERDING

Much shepherding can be done by speaking to the friends personally at congregation meetings; have in mind whom you want to see and what you hope to do for that one's upbuilding

Some of the shepherding can be done beneficially in private homes

You may want to invite some to your home, perhaps to share in family study or for other upbuilding association

A personal visit to the publisher's home helps you to get to know him better; when there are not many other people around, as at the Kingdom Hall, he may speak more freely; apostles went to the homes of disciples to teach them (Acts 5:41, 42; 20:17-20)

No reason for each elder to feel that he must visit the home of each person in the congregation in order to fulfill his responsibilities; this is a work that the elders share as a body

As for making visits at the homes of publishers, each elder must decide when he personally can engage in this work

Not good always to be doing this when other publishers are starting out in field service; they need your help there too

Might choose to reduce time spent in field service one weekend a month to make shepherding calls; evenings may be best for some calls; any other convenient time may be used

BALANCE SHEPHERDING WITH PERSONAL STUDY, FAMILY AND FIELD SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES

Shepherding cannot replace personal study or caring for family responsibilities

Timothy as an overseer was counseled: "Pay constant attention to yourself"; if you do not do adequate personal studying you cannot do good teaching, which is a principal part of the work of a shepherd (1 Tim. 4:16)

To qualify as a shepherd a man who is married must preside over his own household in a fine manner; that involves giving proper attention to your wife and your children; it also includes time for regular family study and spiritual discussion (1 Tim. 3:4, 5)

(Ask the brothers what problems they have in this regard; invite others to tell how they handle matters to maintain needed balance)

Shepherding does not take the place of one's field ministry, which is a vital, urgent part of our service to God because of the time and circumstances in which we live; what we do in this regard affects our brothers because they follow the lead of the shepherd

Shepherding too is an important responsibility and not to be neglected; it does not take the place of other responsibilities, but needs to be given a definite place in our schedule

None are compelled to be shepherds; we do this willingly, out of love for Jehovah and for his people; we may have the ability, but to be a shepherd we need to make ourselves available to the "sheep," being approachable, willing to help (1 Pet. 5:1-4)

At times there is more shepherding that needs to be done than at other times; we need to be flexible, willing to make adjustments

At periodic meetings of body of elders, shepherding needs of the congregation should be considered. This does not require analyzing the life of each one in the congregation; simply consider situations that need attention

Decide among yourselves who is in position to give the required attention to the various ones needing it; others of the elders may have suggestions as to what can be done

Each elder should share freely in the shepherding work so that the entire flock continues to be well fed, spiritually sound, giving evidence of a spirit of warmth and unity, and rendering praise to Jehovah

MAIN POINT: All elders should share in providing loving care for the flock of God, while not failing to give due attention to their own households and to the field ministry

SOURCE: or 55-58, 71, 82

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Give class opportunity to relate their own experiences in the shepherding work and how they have arranged to share this responsibility with others

Readjusting Your Erring Brother

NEED FOR READJUSTMENT

Jehovah's will is that his servants reflect his fine qualities in attitude, word and action (Matt. 5:44-48; Eph. 5:1, 2)

Being imperfect, humans fall short of God's glory and do not reflect his image perfectly (Rom. 3:23)

True Christians, including elders, sin (Jas. 3:2; 1 John 1:8)

Readjustment needed in case of all in order to reflect Jehovah's fine qualities to greater degree

"To readjust," as used in Scripture, means 'to bring to a proper state or position,' 'to fit things to a certain standard,' 'to restore'

Whenever we err, we must again be brought in line with Jehovah's standard as set forth in the Bible

Not only may adjusting be necessary when some backsliding is involved, but also to bring one's thinking initially into harmony with Jehovah's viewpoint on certain matters

Counsel and discipline based on God's Word serve to bring about adjustment in our attitude and our conduct; proper response works to our benefit, but resentment can be injurious (Prov. 6:23; Heb. 12:5-11)

"Gifts in men" (elders) are entrusted with the responsibility to readjust members of congregation (Eph. 4:11, 12)

We must be willing and alert to give aid (Acts 20:31; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3)

Should avoid becoming busybodies, prying into other people's affairs, making issue of minor matters and imposing own standards on others (Rom. 14:1-12)

Wrong to be suspicious and to ascribe bad motives to brothers; love does not suspect or disbelieve brothers unless sound evidence is available that they are wrong (1 Cor. 13:7; Heb. 6:7-9)

WHEN SOMEONE TAKES A FALSE STEP BEFORE HE IS AWARE OF IT

Important to realize why those wanting to serve Jehovah may take false steps

Sin at work in body members of all (Rom. 7:18-20)

Outside pressures at work or school may make it more difficult to keep sinful flesh in check, causing one to slip into wrongdoing

Bad association may gradually cause wrong desires to take root in heart (1 Cor. 15:33)

May lack Bible knowledge

Anxieties of life can become major concern and begin choking out appreciation for spiritual things (Matt. 6:33, 34; 13:22)

Individual may know certain course is wrong but

circumstances are such that, without premeditation, he slips into it before he is aware of it

One who slips into wrong course needs help to recover himself from weakness leading to his wrongdoing (Gal. 6:1)

To be of help, elder must hate wrong but have love and compassion for wrongdoer, earnestly desiring to aid him (2 Cor. 7:8-13; 12:14, 15, 20, 21; Jude 23)

Dealing harshly with erring one will not get best results; can cause him to resent counsel or discipline and not give it serious consideration it deserves; or it could crush him, as he may already feel very bad about what he has done

Mildness is in order when erring one was not deliberate but got caught unawares in Satan's trap (2 Tim. 2:24-26)

Domestic animal caught in trap can be freed by being ripped out, but such action would further injure it

Better to free animal from trap as gently as possible; same is true of Christian caught in Devil's snare

Jesus set kind example in handling a heated dispute (Luke 22:24-27)

Good not to be severe with older ones (1 Tim. 5:1)

In giving help, elders must be careful 'to keep eye on themselves, for fear they also may be tempted'

Elders cannot allow themselves to condone wrong or minimize it; must continue to hate what is bad (Jude 22, 23)

If someone of opposite sex involved, elder has to be very careful that he does not yield to temptation to become emotionally involved with erring one

WHAT TO DO "IF YOUR BROTHER COMMITS A SIN" AGAINST YOU

Certain minor wrongs can and ought to be overlooked and forgiven (Eph. 4:32)

Nevertheless, if a brother is doing something that might injure his relationship with Jehovah, the loving thing would be to help him

Deliberate failure to reprove a brother when that is definitely needed to restore him is tantamount to hating him, not caring about his life interests (Lev. 19:17; 1 John 3:15; Prov. 27:5)

Deliberate failure to give needed reproof can cause one to become bloodguilty before Jehovah, as individual is being deprived of something necessary to gain salvation (Acts 20:26, 27)

Certain sins committed against you personally cannot be overlooked

Such serious sins may involve fraud, slander, etc. When certain that a serious sin has actually been committed against you, you are under obligation to go to erring brother and "lay bare his fault between you and him alone" (Matt. 18:15)

Should he recognize his error, agree to rectify it and repentantly seek your forgiveness, you would rightly forgive him; your action would result in 'gaining him' in the sense of aiding him to remain in the congregation rather than being disfellowshipped therefrom

Should erring one refuse to make amends, you would be under obligation to try to show him the error of his ways at the "mouth of two or three witnesses"; his genuine repentance could settle the matter (Matt. 18:16)

Should the erring one still remain unrepentant, the matter would have to be brought to the attention of the congregation's judicial committee (Matt. 18:17)

If erring one does not rectify matters even when talked to by committee, he would be expelled from congregation

Since procedure outlined at Matthew 18:15-17 could lead to expulsion from congregation, manifestly reference is, not to minor matters or imagined sins, but to actual and serious sins against you that simply cannot be ignored

ASCERTAINING WHERE THE ERROR LIES WHEN ACCUSATIONS ARE MADE

When approached by someone with an accusation against a brother, consider the evidence

Is it reliable and can it be backed up by witnesses?

Sometimes may not be eyewitnesses, but circumstances may indicate that matter needs further investigation

Determine whether accuser is judging someone by his own conscience or has actually observed wrongdoing serious enough to warrant attention of judicial committee

If accusation is well founded and requires attention of committee, follow through accordingly

If accusation involves minor matter or cannot be backed up, no need to take matter further, but help accusing one get right view of matters (Col. 3:12-14; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19)

If two individuals have heated dispute, try to get to bottom of matter by having them speak directly to you one at a time; usually better than allowing them to argue in front of you

Ascertain whether minor matter or serious sin is involved

Often both will need counsel on maintaining self-control and letting love predominate in their handling of matters (Jas. 3:13-18; 1 Pet. 1:22)

ENCOURAGE ALL, THOUGH IMPERFECT, TO GO ON GROWING SPIRITUALLY

In view of repeated failings, brothers could easily become discouraged and downhearted (Rom. 7:21-25)

Scriptural encouragement is often needed to help them get right view so as not to lose freeness of speech in approaching Jehovah in prayer (1 John 3:19-24; 4:18)

Sin-atoning value of Jesus' sacrifice covers transgressions when one is truly repentant and enables one to retain clean conscience (Heb. 9:13, 14; 1 John 2:1, 2)

To make progress, brothers need to have in mind Jehovah's view of failings and shortcomings

He does not take critical view of our human failings; yet he does not condone wrong (Ps. 130:3, 4; Mal. 3:5)

Sin should be recognized for what it is—a failure to act in harmony with Jehovah's personality, standards, ways and will; should not seek to justify self

Desire should be to imitate Jehovah to greater degree, keeping self in check (1 Cor. 9:27; 1 Pet. 2:11)

Sincere regret should be in evidence when there is failure to live up to Jehovah's requirements, and efforts should be put forth to do better (Ps. 38:3-8; 51:3, 10, 11)

In helping others to make progress, elders should not allow selves to become upset with erring ones, treating them as enemies (Compare 2 Thessalonians 3:13-15)

Erring ones are not enemies, but Devil is (1 Pet. 5:8)

All of us must stand unitedly against Devil and combat desires of sinful flesh (Eph. 6:10-18; 1 Pet. 5:9; Jude 3, 4, 20-23)

Encourage brothers to appreciate Jehovah's mercy

Jehovah warmly appeals to sinful humans to change ways to gain his favor (Isa. 55:6, 7; Ezek. 33:11; Mal. 3:7; 2 Pet. 3:9)

Jehovah's merciful forgiveness well illustrated in cases of Manasseh and spirit-anointed Christian in Corinth (2 Ki. 21:5, 6, 16; 2 Chron. 33:11-13; 1 Cor. 5:1, 7-13; 2 Cor. 2:6-8)

Jehovah's mercy should not be presumed upon and used as excuse for wrongdoing (Heb. 10:26-31; 2 Pet. 2:12-22)

When brothers are disturbed about shortcoming (real or apparent) of others, elders should aid them to take Jehovah's merciful view

Should not begin doing what one conscientiously feels is wrong just because other brothers are doing it; conscience would be injured (Rom. 14:23)

Continue hating what is bad (Ps. 97:10; Rom. 12:9)

Avoid finding fault with others, judging them according to personal standards; one being judged may be strong in certain areas where one doing judging is himself weak (Matt. 7:1, 3-5; Rom. 2:1)

Rather than looking at and dwelling on faults, rejoice in progress brothers are making in cultivating fruitage of spirit, encourage them and take humble view of self (Phil. 2:1-4)

APPRECIATE WHERE RESPONSIBILITY LIES

Elders recognize that they are not to run affairs of other families

Husband and father is divinely appointed head of family (1 Cor. 11:3)

Elders can give help when asked or when need arises, but husband and father, not elders, is one held accountable by Jehovah for way he discharges responsibilities

Elders should cooperate with father and husband to build up spiritual strength of family (or do so through mother, if no father in home or if father is an unbeliever)

When proper to do so, elders offer loving assistance

Imitate Jehovah's example as a shepherd (Ps. 23:1-6)

Show concern for flock, putting its welfare first (Acts 20:28-35)

Do not become discouraged when others fail to respond to counsel of God's Word

Elder's responsibility is to offer help; he cannot force anyone to apply what Bible says

Heart of individual must motivate him to make application (Rom. 10:10; 2 Thess. 3:5)

Good for elder to examine whether his counsel and admonition were based solidly on God's Word and presented in such a way as to appeal to person's love for Jehovah (2 Tim. 4:1, 2; Heb. 4:12)

Motive for rendering help should always be to uphold Jehovah's ways and to show loving concern for and unselfish interest in welfare of brothers (1 Cor. 13:3)

MAIN POINT: Problems should be handled in such a way as to help brothers make progress and to prevent making them feel that they are being rejected

SOURCE: or 154-164

No. 33 - Second Tuesday, 9:10

Helping Women in the Congregation

THE WOMAN'S PRIVILEGES IN THE CONGREGATION

Hebrew word for woman, *ish-shah*, means female man; woman was meant to be complement or helper for man (Gen. 2:18)

Women have a long record of faithful service in the Christian ministry (Luke 8:1-3; Rom. 16:1)

Women received gifts of spirit at Pentecost, 33 C.E., to speak in tongues and prophesy (1 Cor. 11:3-5; Joel 2:28; Acts 1:13-15; 2:1-4, 14-18; 21:9)

Today women play a large role in the ministry (Ps. 68:11)

They are doing a large part in the work of Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making; the commission to "make disciples of people of all the nations" applies to women as well as to men (Matt. 28:19, 20)

Often they care for midweek arrangements for field service; sometimes they are used as substitutes in handling other congregational matters where there is a shortage of qualified brothers

By their conduct and attire they can provide a fine example of the effect of true Christianity
Women in the congregation should be "silent," that is, not disputing with men or trying to exercise authority over men in the congregation (1 Cor. 14:33-35; 1 Tim. 2:12)

Insofar as dress, hairstyles, and wearing of jewelry are concerned Christian women should be examples of modesty and dignity, appearing neither dowdy nor worldly, but recognizing that spiritual beauty is in good works and in "the secret person of the heart in the incorruptible apparel of the quiet and mild spirit, which is of great value in the eyes of God" (1 Pet. 3:1-6)

By your helping women in the congregation to appreciate their privileges and position, they will be aided to contribute to its spiritual strength

GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT AND COUNSEL TO WOMEN IN THE CONGREGATION

Encourage them in their field ministry

Response is usually good when helpful arrangements are made for group witnessing; adjust as circumstances change; show interest in what the group is doing

Many of the regular pioneers are women, both single and married; keep this privilege before the congregation; give personal attention to those showing desire to pioneer

Many more can be temporary pioneers; when anyone's application is accepted, quickly notify the congregation; others may do it too if they know they will not be alone

Much encouragement may be needed by some women due to their emotional and physical makeup or family circumstances

Commend for their good efforts in getting children to the meetings, in commenting, in field service, in helping to clean the Kingdom Hall, etc.

Counsel should always be loving and kind, yet firm and appropriate, with consideration for the makeup of the woman (1 Tim. 5:1, 2)

It is best to offer suggestions or counsel to women in the presence of their husbands, or perhaps give counsel through the husband if this is possible

It is not a good practice for an overseer (or any other brother in the congregation) to make personal calls on sisters in their homes, unless their husbands are present or someone accompanies the overseer

If married, it is good for the overseer to take his wife along, or if a personal problem is involved it may be good to take another brother, when making the visit

Often matters can appropriately be handled at the Kingdom Hall

Elders should use discretion in having private discussions with sisters

PROPER VIEW

OF THE HEADSHIP ARRANGEMENT

Wearing of head covering is required in only a few situations, though a Christian woman should recognize the principle of headship at all times (1 Cor. 11:3-6)

The woman must wear a head covering when caring for matters pertaining to worship that would ordinarily be handled by her husband or a dedicated brother

Reasons for a woman to wear a head covering when the occasion calls for it: (1) recognition that her husband is God's representative toward his wife and children, (2) recognition that the men in the congregation have the God-given responsibility to teach and preside, and (3) because of the angels (1 Cor. 11:7-10)

This does not mean that angels learn from good example of Christian women, but they can draw encouragement from the fine example of women with the right view of headship; also angels direct work, and are concerned with theocratic attitude and action of all in congregation (Compare 1 Timothy 5:21)

If the Christian wife prays aloud in behalf of herself and others or conducts a Bible study with her children or others *in the presence of her husband*, she rightly wears a head covering

This is a demonstration of her recognition that she is serving in her husband's place

She would not ordinarily wear a head covering in teaching her children at home when her

husband is not present, as she is divinely authorized to teach the children (Prov. 1:8; 6:20)

However, if a son is present who is a dedicated and baptized Christian, she would wear a head covering, as the dedicated son is a member of the congregation and ordinarily should receive instruction as to worship from male members of the congregation

When any meeting is conducted by congregational arrangement, a dedicated, baptized male should preside if at all possible

If for some reason (such as illness, incapacity or no qualified and willing baptized male being present) a baptized female Witness conducts the meeting, she would rightly wear a head covering, acknowledging thereby that a brother would ordinarily give instruction in such a circumstance

A head covering is not required when a woman has to interpret into another language a Bible discourse or publicly read the paragraphs from a Bible study aid that is being used at a congregation meeting, as this is not presiding or teaching

If for conscience' sake the sister prefers to wear a head covering, she may do so

No head covering is required for a woman in house-to-house preaching, not even when working with her husband or another brother; she is not taking the place of a man in such activity; it is properly part of her service to God

However, if her own husband (even though not a Witness) is present at a home Bible study she conducts, she needs a head covering out of respect for his position; a prearranged session for a Bible study is a small meeting for teaching; if any male member of the congregation is present it becomes an extension of the congregation, so a head covering would be appropriate for her when conducting

RESPONSIBILITIES AND QUALITIES

OF WIFE IN FAMILY ARRANGEMENT

Primary duties of Christian women: (1) to serve Jehovah in true worship, (2) to love and obey their husbands and (3) to love and care for their children (Eccl. 12:13; Titus 2:4, 5)

Qualities of a good wife described at Proverbs 31:10-31 include being industrious, wise, kind, respectful and loving

The mother plays important role in education of the children; training needed constantly in all of life's daily activities

Wife responsible to train children in righteousness, respectfulness, and industriousness (Prov. 31:1; 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14, 15)

Children need to be taught to obey and follow father's discipline

Mothers can do much in training daughters to be good wives by teaching them the arts of cooking, sewing and general household management

Women are kept safe through childbearing, as those busy with family have less time to gad about, gossiping, meddling into other people's affairs (1 Tim. 2:15; 5:11-15)

Reasonable attitude toward material needs on part of wife can help husband to have more time to care for spiritual needs of family (1 Pet. 3:3, 4)

Husband to dwell with wife "according to knowledge," being considerate of her vicissitudes and cycles, making allowances for her as weaker vessel (1 Pet. 3:7)

Wife owes husband the marital due, but unselfish and loving husband should always cherish the health and happiness of his wife and not expect more of her than her physical strength and well-being permit (1 Cor. 7:3-5)

Wives should be free to express themselves to their husbands and respectfully aid husbands in arriving at right decisions (Gen. 21:9-13; 27:46-28:4; 31:4-16)

WIFELY SUBJECTION WHEN HUSBAND IS AN UNBELIEVER

The 'law of the husband' is his authority as head of wife; wives should be encouraged to be submissive, respectful, faithful and devoted (Rom. 7:2; Eph. 5:23-25)

To have unity in family a head is required; man properly has this position since created first; woman contributes to family happiness by respecting this arrangement of Jehovah

Where unbeliever endeavors to cause wife to disobey God's plainly stated commands, she must obey God as ruler (Acts 5:29)

Wife can help unbelieving husband in the following ways: (1) by keeping her own integrity and showing appropriate subjection, (2) by speaking the truth with mildness, as this can break down opposition, (3) by good planning, which will aid wife to be well balanced in activities and not irritate husband, (4) by having friendly calls made on husband with a view to getting a study started to unite the family, (5) by continuing to pray, not giving up hope. Wife may be able to 'save her husband' by providing influence for good; also by enabling him to have many good contacts with Jehovah's people and organization (1 Cor. 7:16)

If husband is an unbeliever, the responsibility may fall upon the wife to teach and instruct the children through home Bible study at a time that is convenient

Women with opposing or unbelieving husbands may arrange for field service (including regular or temporary pioneer service) during times when it will not interfere with family association; it may be good to take advantage of the congregational midweek service arrangements

Continue commending women in the congregation for their good support of pure worship

MAIN POINT: All women in the congregation, whether married or single, can, by their conduct and ministry, serve to Jehovah's praise. We want to encourage them to do so

SOURCES: ad 565, 724-726, 1137, 1664, 1665; qm 252-255; w72 445-447

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Inquire if students have had opportunity to encourage or counsel women in their congregation, and if so, regarding what and with what results? What encouragement have students been able to give those desiring to share in the full-time preaching work, and do they make any special arrangements for group witnessing with a view to giving them support in the field?

No. 34 - Second Tuesday, 10:40

The Theocratic Ministry School and Public Meetings

PURPOSES OF THE THEOCRATIC MINISTRY SCHOOL

The entire congregation receives valuable information that increases the spiritual appreciation of all attending

This school provides instruction and training in public speaking to praise God

Students are aided to gather, develop and present information logically

Brothers are trained to give public talks or handle parts on meetings

It aids brothers trying to qualify as elders and ministerial servants

It helps all to make fine comments or share otherwise in meetings

It equips us to make fine defense before courts or rulers

It develops our ability to speak to school or social groups

It helps students eliminate poor speech habits

A prime purpose of the Theocratic Ministry School is to furnish training for field ministry. Improved ability in preaching results from this training

Material presented in the school is useful in answering questions on return visits

Principal concern of those enrolled in the school should be gaining Jehovah's approval, not impressing others

Newly interested ones may be enrolled; however, if the known conduct or circumstance of a person is such that his presence on the platform would disturb the congregation or raise serious questions in the mind of a newcomer, it would be wise not to enroll him

THEOCRATIC MINISTRY SCHOOL OVERSEER AND SOME OF HIS DUTIES

He is an elder, unless serving as a substitute, and should have a good knowledge of the language of most of the students

He has at heart the spiritual interests of all attending the school, and he wants them to get full value from the material covered, focusing their attention primarily on God's Word

It is important to prepare in advance for each session, as he must understand the material to highlight it effectively

Assignments are usually made in writing at least three weeks in advance

Assignments are made according to the current schedule with good judgment, having in mind the students' ages, education levels, etc.

Some subjects may be too difficult for certain students, also overseer tries to give suitable topic to one of tender years

He endeavors to give all students an equal opportunity to speak

As shepherd, he aids all in congregation in any way he can

While not usually preparing others' talks, he can help students understand the material assigned to them

It is good to encourage prayer by students for God's guidance and assistance

His duties are not limited to overseeing the school for one year, but he aids others with Scriptural advice and counsel as an elder and accompanies some in field ministry

The library is under the school overseer's supervision

It should contain all available publications of the Society and may have various Bible translations, exhaustive concordance and other helpful reference works

Care of the library is supervised by the school overseer, even if he assigns another person to do some of the work

He can demonstrate the library's use to new ones

CONDUCTING THE SCHOOL IN AN EFFECTIVE MANNER

Briefly review procedure outlined in current year's schedule

Instruction talk given by an elder, or, if necessary, by a better qualified ministerial servant

Oral review of previous week's instruction talk usually starts the program

The periodic written review is not competitive,

as each person checks his own paper and thus learns any key points he missed

Overseer appropriately introduces and concludes program

In introduction he might briefly outline what the audience can expect to learn

In conclusion he may briefly mention what we can expect the following week or points of significance from past hour

For student talks, overseer may give the subject and setting, if one is used, also the source of material so audience can follow if they desire

Overseer should highlight key points of the material, thus emphasizing the spiritual aspect of the school; do not just offer counsel

He should encourage Bible reading as outlined in the school course

At the meetings of the body of elders discuss ways in which the teaching quality at the school can be improved

The school may be divided into two or more sections for student talks, where enrollment is large

Where possible, elders should counsel in these additional groups

Additional counselors are selected by school overseer

In a congregation comprised entirely of women, the material can still be covered by informal reports, discussions between two sisters, questions and answers, or reading from the publications

No counsel is given on their presentations, since no qualified brother is available

OFFERING BENEFICIAL COUNSEL

The school overseer should have the students' interest in mind and not be overly critical

He should try to encourage all, including those having limited education or speech difficulties (Acts 4:13; Ex. 4:10-12)

He considers their abilities, not trying to fit each into the same mold

He wants all to make progress according to personal ability

He wants students to enjoy their privilege of speaking in the school, and so lovingly upbuilds them

To maintain the schedule, a signal is given when the student goes overtime; student may complete sentence and then leave the platform

Overseer may employ variety in presenting counsel

He might start with commendation on a point not even up for counseling, for example, commending on sincerity, friendliness, etc.

Thus even if work is needed on a speech quality under observation the student will have been commended

It is not necessary to announce to the entire

audience what mark (G, I, or W) student is given, but when commending him on a point, it is often good to say *why* it is good; this helps everyone present

If further work on a speech quality is recommended, kindly encourage that; show *how* this can be done and *why* it will be effective

Reference to or excerpt from the school textbook may be helpful

The school overseer's objective is to aid all to be better praisers of Jehovah

PUBLIC MEETINGS INFORM AND UPBUILD SPIRITUALLY

The public meeting is generally presented in the form of a discourse, although slide presentations are also used on occasion

It is called a *public* meeting because often extensively advertised with view to inviting the public

If talks are given with the public in mind, speaker should use terms that they can understand, even though material is weighty

However, they should also be informative and spiritually upbuilding for regular attenders

It is beneficial for all Witnesses to attend, to have their understanding of Bible truths both sharpened and broadened, equipping them to be better Christians and more effective teachers

Some talks focus attention on application of Bible principles to problems of life, others on doctrine, prophecy, etc.

Speakers are elders, to extent possible

Where elders are few, it is especially true that they "work hard in speaking and teaching" to provide this regular instruction (1 Tim. 5:17)

The body of elders occasionally may assign ministerial servants of their own congregation to give public talks, if not enough elders are available

Congregations will not send a brother not yet an elder as a speaker to another congregation

Presiding overseer or one whom he assigns may invite elders from other congregations to give public talks

This is arranged first through the presiding overseer of the other congregation, then details are confirmed in correspondence to speakers

It is helpful to coordinate plans of congregations; thus not as many different talks need to be prepared by each elder, and they have opportunity to give their talks several times

Excellent outlines supplied by the Society cover many subjects and provide fine material for the public meetings

Other talks can also be given on subjects in harmony with the Bible and Society's publications
A subject may be selected dealing with congre-

gation's spiritual need or a topic of special interest in the community

Slide presentations should not be simply entertainment or travelogues, but should have as their main purpose instruction in God's Word and the spiritual interests of His people

In a very small congregation, if no speaker is available, the group can read the outline provided by the Society, looking up scriptures

Public meetings are usually held weekly at the Kingdom Hall, but sometimes at other places, as in rural sections or outlying towns

Other locations may include private homes, community houses, schools, parks, etc.

Efforts should be made to witness beforehand in this territory, and public talks may be advertised with handbills

THE PUBLIC MEETING CHAIRMAN

The chairman should be sure the meeting starts on time

A brief welcome is appropriate, after which the congregation may join in song (to be selected by the chairman unless the speaker makes a special request)

Prayer is then offered, usually by the chairman

The speaker is introduced by name and as a minister; the title of the talk is given (but chairman should not discuss subject); audience can be advised who is sponsoring the talk

If the scheduled speaker is not available, brothers locally can decide how to proceed

They may wish to read the outline and discuss scriptures shown; or a brother who has material prepared may deliver another talk

The chairman's closing remarks should be brief; avoid any review of the contents of the talk; do not eulogize the speaker

Provide information about other meetings and encourage new ones to attend

If no meeting follows, the program is closed with song and prayer

Where public meeting is followed by the *Watchtower* study, a final song and prayer come at the end of the entire program

When there is no intermission, it is good to invite the audience to stand and sing a song

If there is an intermission, public meeting is concluded with needed announcements, and when the group reconvenes, a song may be sung before the *Watchtower* study starts

PREPARATION AND DELIVERY OF PUBLIC TALKS

The speaker tries to present information in accurate, spiritually strengthening, interesting way

He may use pictures, maps, outline of points on blackboard, etc.

Other features may include questions for audience, scriptures read and commented on by

audience, relating experiences, discussion between two or three on platform, brief skits, etc.

Material may also be presented by a symposium of speakers

In preparing a public talk, study the outline carefully to grasp main points and effectively tie in supporting scriptures and arguments

Additional points may be written in margins of the outline, or material may be retyped for easier reading

Develop one section at a time, rather than viewing talk's preparation as one big job

Some material can be deleted if there is too much

Keep the outline up to date with progressive revelation of truth

Deliver the public talk in a way that glorifies God

Keep the presentation on a high plane Scripturally, encouraging audience to use the Bible (1 Cor. 2:1-6)

Discuss scriptures, showing application or meaning

Present material with reasonableness and simplicity

Avoid slang or inappropriate humor; maintain Christian dignity

Be enthusiastic, seeking to teach and motivate the audience; stay within the time allotted

Spiritual aspect of the meeting will impress sincere ones (1 Cor. 14:24, 25)

MAIN POINT: The purpose of both the Theocratic Ministry School and public meeting arrangement is to instruct and qualify all in the congregation as praisers of Jehovah

SOURCES: or 79-81, 95, 96, 98-100, 102, 103; sg 9-13

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Have two brothers who are school overseers assigned in advance to give counsel as they would for student talks in the Theocratic Ministry School on an assignment of their choice, discussing briefly some point of counsel from the Speech Counsel form and highlighting points from the material to show how it could be done. (2 minutes each) (Do not give the student talks.) Ask students for examples of how they have kept public talk outlines up to date with progressive revelation of truth

No. 35 - Second Tuesday, 2:10

Our Responsibility to God and Caesar

JEHOVAH'S SERVANTS

HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES TO TWO SETS OF GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

Since 607 B.C.E., when Jehovah's nation of Israel lost sovereignty, all of Jehovah's people have had to live in lands governed by worldly rulers. Bible calls these worldly rulers "superior authorities" (Rom. 13:1)

Because of living in different lands, Christians have to cope with wide variety of laws and customs

However, Jehovah's servants are also accountable to God as ruler and to his Christ

Bible shows that Jehovah and Christ are 'supreme authorities' (Dan. 7:13, 14, 18)

No matter where servant of Jehovah lives, he must adhere to laws and principles of divine rule (Ps. 83:18)

Jehovah's servants need to determine clearly their duties toward both sets of governmental authorities

Basic principle governing this is given by Jesus at Matthew 22:17-21: "Pay back, therefore, Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God." ("Caesar" represents the secular state)

This sound principle grants that secular governments have right to set certain duties upon Christian subjects

It also shows that a Christian has duties to God; these take priority

Thus, authority of rulers over Jehovah's servants is only relative and also very tempo-

rary, as at Armageddon "superior authorities" of this world will cease functioning forever

PAYING BACK CAESAR'S THINGS TO CAESAR

Subjection: Every Christian must be in subjection to all the laws of the government under which he lives as long as those laws are not in conflict with God's laws (Titus 3:1; Rom. 13:1; 1 Pet. 2:13-15)

Since Jehovah permits secular governments to exercise authority for a while, if we opposed this arrangement we would put ourselves in opposition to God, who has allowed it (Rom. 13:2)

It is not the duty of elders to enforce laws of the secular state within the congregation, but they should encourage obedience to such laws. If illegal activities result in reproach being brought on congregation, this may bring congregational action

Fear: Worldly rulers are an object of fear in that God permits them to act as his "ministers" in punishing lawbreakers, even putting to death those who commit serious crimes (Rom. 13:3, 4, 7)

We should have proper fear of breaking laws of secular state and coming under its adverse judgment; but our fear of Jehovah exceeds our fear of secular rulers; our conscience is involved (Rom. 13:5)

Many secular laws for our good, such as those regulating traffic, sanitation, business practices, property, fire prevention. Punishing of law violators protects Christians too

When unscrupulous men try to hurt Jehovah's people, we can even appeal to government for protection. For instance, married Christian woman can take to court husband that deserts her

Honor: It is proper to show honor and respect to worldly rulers, even using their secular titles. (Rom. 13:7) It shows respect for office, not just person

Paul addressed King Herod Agrippa II with deep respect, counting himself happy to be before Agrippa in making his defense, acknowledging that Agrippa was expert on Jewish affairs

On same occasion, Governor Festus was present, and Paul addressed him as "Your Excellency," a mark of respect (Acts 26:1-3, 25)

Explains why we would call a judge "your Honor" and stand when he enters courtroom. It is part of respecting the secular authorities and their appointed officials for what they represent, namely, authority allowed by God and fulfilling certain beneficial purposes

Religious leaders do not deserve to be called by flattering titles they have taken; God is not using them as his "public servants," and his Son spoke against such use of flattering religious titles (Rom. 13:6; Matt. 23:8-10)

Taxes: Christians to pay all taxes that secular governments require, whether they consider them unfair or not (Rom. 13:7)

—Jesus, in giving principle of paying back Caesar's things to Caesar, used it in reference to a question over paying taxes. He showed it was right to pay taxes

It would be violation of God's law if we tried to use illegal means to avoid taxes

Government performs services from which we benefit, so has a right to collect taxes. Since we do pay taxes, we can take advantage of various benefits governments give, such as social security payments, free or reduced-cost health programs, financial assistance to aged, etc.

Secular rulers may use large part of tax money for wrong purposes, but that is their responsibility and they will have to answer to God for it

Social Distinctions: In some parts of world, governments set up barriers in regard to social or racial groups

Jehovah's servants do not believe in such distinctions, but are not authorized to agitate against this, as that would violate our subjection

In first century, Christians did not fight governments on issue of slavery; rather, slaves were encouraged to do good work so that name of God and teaching of Christ might not suffer (1 Tim. 6:1, 2; Titus 2:9, 10; 1 Pet. 2:18)

However, God's Word says that where slaves had legal right to do so, they could seize opportunity to become free (1 Cor. 7:21)

There is no point in Christians' trying to reform social systems, which are part of Satan's world; God is going to annihilate all these bad arrangements, and his kingdom will provide true justice for all

Registrations: Government may require various registrations, such as national service or automobile registrations, for business or social reasons

Caesar Augustus required all to register at their own cities. Although inconvenient to do all that traveling, Joseph and Mary complied (Luke 2:1-5)

If laws require registration of all who are eligible to vote, we register; this is not the same as being required to register in a political party. If they demand we vote, some do, but they vote for Christ as King; however, many prefer to avoid any appearance whatsoever of being part of this world (John 17:16)

Governments usually require that marriages be legalized; we register and get license to marry. In some areas, local authorities request that we notify them when preaching from house to house, so we comply

Most nations require certain documents for leaving or entering country, so, aside from times of grave religious persecution, or fleeing as refugees from war zones, Christians do not try to avoid this legal responsibility by leaving or entering country in any way except that which rulers have authorized, otherwise they would not be "irreprehensible" (2 Cor. 4:2; 1 Tim. 3:2)

PAYING BACK GOD'S THINGS TO GOD

Our subjection to earthly governments is limited by recognition that Jehovah's laws are superior. We cannot give worldly rulers what belongs to God: our lives, our worship, our loyalty to his kingdom

Whenever there is a conflict between man's law and God's law, we must "obey God as ruler rather than men" (Acts 5:29)

This is the only way to continue having Jehovah's spirit (Acts 5:32)

Some governments forbid Jehovah's witnesses to preach. But that is same as telling us to stop worshiping Jehovah, so we cannot obey

When apostles were ordered to stop preaching, they refused (Acts 4:18-20; 5:28-32)

However, if government merely says we cannot go from door to door, we can discreetly alter our methods, calling at only one home in an area at a time; also we can invite people to our studies and meetings

Better to do preaching in another way and keep out of prison, than to persist in one aspect and be confined, severely limiting our entire Christian activity

BENEFITS FROM OBEYING GOD FIRST AND THEN CAESAR

Even in this system, by obeying God's laws first, his people have solved problems nations cannot, showing superiority of God's laws. His servants have solved problem of war, are not divided by nationalism or racism, have no rising crime and venereal disease rates among them, face future with confidence

Obeys Caesar's laws to extent possible provides good training in abiding by laws governing daily living. In new order, all civil matters will come under jurisdiction of Kingdom and its

earthly representatives. So obeying such laws now will make it easier for us to be obedient as regards whatever arrangements are made for governing such matters in new order

MAIN POINT: Jehovah's servants are to make every effort to be peaceful and abide by the laws of the land where they live, even if they do not like some of the laws. But anytime a government asks us to do what God has forbidden, then we refuse, 'obeying God as ruler rather than man'

SOURCES: *ms* 59-62; *li* 280-288; *tr* 157-162; *pm* 350, 351

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture

No. 36 - Second Tuesday, 3:00

The Issue of Sovereignty—How It Affects Us

BY REASON OF HIS CREATORSHIP JEHOVAH IS SUPREME SOVEREIGN

All creation owes its existence to Jehovah (Gen. 1:1, 27, 28; Eph. 3:9)

Upon the operation of his laws we are dependent for the sustaining of our lives (Acts 17:28; Matt. 5:45)

Jehovah's authority as Creator is illustrated by a potter working with clay (Jer. 18:1-6; Rom. 9:19-21)

All creation was brought into existence by God for his purpose; fulfilling that purpose requires recognition of Jehovah's sovereignty, or right to rule (Rev. 4:11)

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY CHALLENGED IN EDEN

He exercised sovereignty toward Adam and Eve in a loving way

Only few simple, positive commands were issued, permitting them to use their physical and mental powers and personal initiative in wholesome way (Gen. 1:26-30)

God's one prohibitory command was reasonable and showed respect for man's dignity, attributing no bad inclinations to him (Gen. 2:17)

Adam and Eve had no reason to rebel, as they had received only good things from Jehovah

The tree of knowledge of good and bad symbolized the right to set standards of good and bad, which right God reserved for himself

Using the serpent, Satan encouraged Eve to rebel against God's sovereignty by eating of forbidden fruit and thus determining for herself what was good and what was bad (Gen. 3:1-5)

What Satan did in contradicting God's command raised questions about God's sovereignty: Was God truthful so that his word could be depended upon? Did man's life and happiness really depend on obedience to God? Did God

rule in a worthy way, righteously and in best interests of subjects? Did God have the right to rule?

The *fact* of God's sovereignty was never at issue

The point at issue was the rightfulness, righteousness and deservedness of God's sovereignty

Since Satan and first human pair rebelled, another question was raised: Would all other intelligent creatures become disloyal if that seemed advantageous to them?

Satan's claim was that they would do so (Job 2:4, 5)

This being a *moral* issue and not one of sheer might, time was needed for its settlement

Had Jehovah destroyed the rebels immediately, the question would have remained as to whether Satan would have been able to prove his charge

Jehovah did not doubt that the issue would be settled in his favor

He knew himself and knew his rule was good and in best interest of subjects

He had made intelligent creatures in his image, giving them the capacity to develop fine qualities, especially love; he knew that his organization would never withdraw *en masse* (1 Cor. 13:8; Col. 3:14)

JEHOVAH'S ALLOWING ISSUE TO BE TRIED BENEFITS HIS CREATURES

Satan's claim, as voiced in connection with Job, charged God's servants with selfishness; he maintained that Jehovah could not put a man on earth who would prove loyal when his person or his possessions were endangered

By allowing the issue to be tried, Jehovah was giving creatures the opportunity to disprove Satan's slander concerning God's name, also to clear their own name and that of other loyal servants

In letting Satan use every means possible to induce creatures to rebel, Jehovah would determine whom he would want as his servants. Jehovah wants persons to serve him, not merely out of fear of his almightiness, but out of love for him and appreciation for what he has done (Ps. 84:10; 119:104, 128, 163). Even if independence were possible to them, those whom God wants as his servants would willingly choose his sovereignty, recognizing it to be wiser, more righteous and better than any other rule (Jer. 10:23). Trying of this issue has revealed true motives of individuals (Rom. 9:22-24). Pressures have shown which "called ones" are deserving of entrance into heavenly kingdom by proving to be unselfish, lovers of right. Unworthy ones are "weeded out" by pressures, ensuring best government for mankind, one where authority will not be abused. Pressures reveal what kind of persons are deserving of being spared during "great tribulation". Many people would want blessings of new order—good health, security, freedom from economic worries—but may not want to do anything themselves to take a stand on Jehovah's side. Under test those who do not have right heart are "weeded out" so that those remaining form a good foundation for "new earth" that will survive "great tribulation".

GOD'S SON SERVES AS CHIEF VINDICATOR; OTHERS SHARE IN VINDICATION

Not just humans, but also invisible spirit creatures, including God's only-begotten Son, were affected by issue. Satan was allowed to use his influence in heaven and succeeded in causing a considerable number of angels to fall (Rev. 12:3, 4). As most prominent among angelic sons of God, Michael, God's only-begotten Son, could not easily be induced to join in rebellion of an inferior. Question was, Would only-begotten Son remain loyal to God's sovereignty if brought into lowly position and submitted to test? Of all creatures serving God, he should be faithful and anxious to serve for vindication of Father's name. Meaning of "Michael" ("Who is like God?") implies that he would be foremost one upon whom duty would devolve to silence any challenger of his Father. Jehovah selected his Son as his chief Vindicator, causing him to be born as a man on earth (Luke 1:35). Son willingly accepted assignment out of loyalty to Father and deep love for mankind (Prov. 8:31; John 8:29; Heb. 10:5-7). Jesus' flawless course of integrity, including his sacrificial death, proved him to be completely just and righteous (Rom. 5:18; Matt. 26:38-

44); in a perfect way he proved that Satan's claim respecting God's loyal servants was false.

Many imperfect humans from days of Abel onward have shared in and continue to share in vindication of God's name by keeping integrity—"great cloud" of pre-Christian witnesses, members of Christian congregation and "great crowd" (Heb. 11:4-12:1; Rev. 6:9; 7:9).

To Christ as Jehovah's chief Vindicator is given the assignment to abyss Satan and his demons, and finally they will be destroyed, thus settling forever the issue of universal sovereignty (Gen. 3:15; Rev. 20:1-3, 7-10).

HOW TO MAINTAIN LOYALTY

Only persons who know God, that is, know him as a person—his fine qualities, ways and dealing—will remain loyal despite all pressures brought against them (1 John 4:8).

His creative works and written Word (the meaning of which is revealed by God's spirit) are among means by which we can come to know God (Rom. 1:20; 1 Cor. 2:7-13).

One must take time to consider Jehovah's creative works and Bible with a view to increasing in love and appreciation for Him.

Adam and Eve failed to cultivate such love and appreciation for Jehovah.

Eve listened to voice of one inferior to God, ostensibly a serpent, and thus showed she had not given proper consideration to evidence by which she could have come to know God as truthful, dependable, loving, and interested in the welfare of his earthly children.

Adam, by rebelling, showed he had failed to give due consideration to evidence that God gives good gifts to obedient children; he seemingly took offense against Jehovah for having given him his wife (Gen. 3:12).

Also come to know God by entering into relationship with him, by his dealings with us (Ps. 34:8; 37:4-6).

Faith is needed, but faith in Jehovah's existence alone is not enough (Jas. 2:18, 19).

One must have faith that Jehovah rewards devoted servants (Heb. 11:6).

Wrong desires must be kept in check to avoid becoming practitioner of sin (1 Cor. 9:27; Jas. 1:13-15).

When imperfect humans commit sin, they should avail themselves of Jehovah's provision for forgiveness of sins.

Becoming a practitioner of sin, and spurning Jehovah's arrangement for forgiveness, is rebellion against his sovereignty and leads to destruction (Heb. 10:26-31; 1 John 1:9).

It is good to consider examples of faithful ones in past and present, particularly Jesus Christ (Heb. 12:2, 3; 13:7).

We should each ask ourselves, Do I want my life to honor Jehovah like Christ's and like that of those who remain faithful?

We should remind ourselves that rebellion is always calamitous

LIVING IN FULL RECOGNITION OF JEHOVAH'S SOVEREIGNTY

Elders ought to be alert to aid brothers to appreciate this issue and how it should influence life

The period of time in which we live makes it urgent to uphold Jehovah's side of the issue, for in 1914 C.E. Jehovah took power to rule as King over world of mankind (Rev. 11:15); we should be living accordingly

Brothers may need help to reason on their attitude toward this issue

Some youths may feel they should be able to do as they please

If they respect Jehovah's side of the issue, they will be obedient to Jehovah's representatives, including their parents, for this is righteous (Eph. 6:1)

Youths who live in recognition of Jehovah's sovereignty will not insist on personal rights, but will do the loving, upbuilding thing in matters of conduct, entertainment, dress and grooming; they will not try to be like world, experimenting with drugs and engaging in loose conduct

Not only youths, but all of us should appreciate that our support of Jehovah's sovereignty involves every aspect of life

How can a wife who disregards her husband's

headship claim she can be submissive to the invisible King?

How can a person who ignores traffic and other laws that in no way conflict with God's law claim he is submissive to Jehovah's sovereignty when God's Word commands obedience to "superior authorities"?

How can a person who is lazy or does not care about his work claim he would do better in new system?

BENEFITS FROM LIVING IN RECOGNITION OF JEHOVAH'S SOVEREIGNTY

God's law is designed to promote man's happiness and welfare (Rom. 13:8-10)

One's family life and relationship with others are improved

One is protected from following a calamitous course (Prov. 2:10-19)

One's life is made purposeful and meaningful by living in recognition of Jehovah's sovereignty

Though present blessings are grand, one has the grander prospect of surviving the "great tribulation" and gaining everlasting life under perfect conditions, thanks to the exercise of Jehovah's sovereignty (Rev. 7:14-17; 21:3-5)

MAIN POINT: By our loyalty living every day in a way that shows our recognition of Jehovah's sovereignty, by our applying his law in our lives, we show whose side of the issue we take

SOURCES: *ad* 1535-1538; *tr* 65-74

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Have student prepare five-minute talk for service meeting showing how conduct of Christian youths upholds Jehovah's sovereignty (Assignment may be made previous Saturday, or day before on volunteer basis)

No. 37 - Second Tuesday, 4:30

Preparation for Baptism and Field Ministry

'MAKE DISCIPLES, BAPTIZING THEM'

Jesus commanded that only "disciples" be baptized (Matt. 28:19, 20)

A disciple is one who not only believes but also follows closely Christ's teaching, his example (John 8:31)

Jesus had a heartfelt desire to do God's will in every aspect of his life (Heb. 10:7)

A Christlike desire to do God's will must be developed and acted upon for any to be properly prepared for baptism and field ministry

Anyone lacking the desire to give of himself in serving God as Christ did does not qualify for baptism; such a one is not a disciple of Christ (Matt. 10:37, 38; Luke 14:33)

A hearing of "the word of Jehovah" is needed first to become a disciple

To build proper foundation of faith, appreciation, devotion and love for Jehovah, one must also

accept the "implanting of the word" (Acts 16:30-32; Rom. 10:13, 14; Jas. 1:21, 22)

REPENTANCE AND CONVERSION MUST PRECEDE BAPTISM

Repentance is a change of attitude toward one's past course, a feeling of regret; it marks a halt in a person's wrong course, rejection of wrong and determination to take a right course; if genuine, it will be followed by conversion (Acts 3:19)

In Greek two verbs are used in connection with repentance, highlighting the involvement of both mind and heart

Meta-no-e'o stresses changed viewpoint, disposition (Rev. 2:5; 3:3)

Me-tame'lo-mai emphasizes the feeling of regret (Matt. 21:30)

These two terms are closely related; a changed viewpoint often brings a feeling of regret and vice versa (1 Sam. 24:5-7)

It includes more than repentance for such sins as adultery, theft, etc.

Does individual see sinfulness of using life selfishly for one's own interests, that this 'misses the mark' of reflecting God's "image"? Is all badness recognized as sin against God himself, for which repentance must be directed toward Him? (Acts 17:30; Rom. 3:23; Gen. 39:7-9; Ps. 51:3, 4)

Has mental and heart attitude really changed? Is there real regret over past course? Does the person hate it?

Conversion is a 'turning around' from a course leading away from God to one leading to him. Conversion implies more than an attitude or a verbal expression; it involves works that give evidence of the changed course (Acts 26:20). Taking this new course requires faith that God indeed resurrected Jesus Christ and made him Lord, as well as faith in the ransom (Acts 2:36, 38)

Teacher should help new disciple understand full meaning of repentance and conversion

To help individual further to acquire needed knowledge and qualities for a meaningful dedication, it may be necessary to consider more than one Bible publication

DEDICATION IS A WILLING DECISION TO DO GOD'S WILL FOREVER

God does not force any of us to be his servants; he wants only willing service (Deut. 30:19, 20; Ps. 110:3)

None of us are born as God's servants (Ps. 51:5); we must make a decision as to whether we are going to serve Jehovah, submitting ourselves to his will without reservation

To be a disciple of Jesus Christ one must disown oneself; it is this disowning of oneself that we today call "dedication" (Matt. 16:24)

He is thereby saying that it is his earnest desire to conform to Jehovah's will in every aspect of his life (Rom. 12:1, 2; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15)

Such a decision, freely made, is binding for one's entire life; one cannot later take up practices that are contrary to God's will (1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 7:23; Jude 4)

HOW ELDERS HELP THOSE PREPARING FOR BAPTISM

When any persons express their desire to get baptized, the presiding overseer will arrange meetings with them to be sure they truly understand the meaning of dedication and baptism, using the eighty questions in the *Organization* book. Real perception by elders and application of the Scriptures by person to his life are called for in these meetings

Elders have a fine opportunity in this way to get better acquainted with newly dedicated ones and to assist them with anything they do not understand or with adjustments that are needed in their lives

These meetings assure congregation that those baptized understand what it means to be one of Jehovah's witnesses, that they qualify

BAPTISM, THAT WHICH IS NOW SAVING YOU

Baptism is the passing through the water by immersion therein, not the water itself

It is a symbol of one's dedication to do God's will, just as the ark was a tangible expression of Noah's dedication and saved him

Faithfully carrying out the meaning of baptism, that is, dedication to do the will of God, will save one

Baptism, as *symbol of dedication*, is associated with the "request made to God for a good conscience" (1 Pet. 3:20, 21)

When person repents, turns around, exercises faith in God and Christ, does God's will in being baptized, God is faithful and makes available the benefits of Christ's sacrifice, relieving one of sin's condemnation and giving one a good conscience toward Him, a consciousness of pleasing Him (Heb. 10:19-22; 1 John 1:7-9)

PROPER PREPARATION AVOIDS ANY NEED FOR REBAPTISM

If a person had acquired a basic knowledge, repented of his past course, turned around and taken up the doing of God's will, then he was in position to make a dedication, and later developments would not invalidate his baptism

It is to be expected that he will continue to grow in both knowledge and faith, but the increase in these does not change the validity of his baptism (Col. 1:9, 10; Luke 17:5)

There may be some few situations that require rebaptism (Acts 19:1-5)

If a person had not repented of his grossly sinful conduct, or was willingly supporting an organization the entire purpose of which is contrary to the will of God, then he did not truly make a dedication, and his baptism meant nothing before Jehovah

Such situations will rarely arise if the elders give adequate attention to the scheduled meetings with persons who are preparing for baptism

TEACH DISCIPLES TO RELY ON JEHOVAH, HIS SPIRIT AND THE CONGREGATION

New disciples should be taught to "pray incessantly" for God's help in doing His will (1 Thess. 5:17; Eph. 6:18; 1 John 5:14)

All disciples need to appreciate the importance of God's spirit, which gives understanding, acts

as a remembrancer, provides guidance in application of the Bible, aids one to give a good witness (John 14:26; Matt. 10:18-20; Luke 21:13-15)

Congregation meetings are important in preparing one for Christian ministry

They provide a principal channel of direction for all in praising God; new disciples in the first century attended congregation meetings immediately and received great benefits spiritually (Acts 2:41, 42, 46, 47)

Elders are responsible to see that service meeting parts are designed to prepare one for various features of field ministry, are truly effective and practical, that spiritual things such as a desire to please God, sharing the good news, bringing "reconciliation" to nonbelievers, are highlighted—not matters of little importance (2 Cor. 5:18-20)

PREPARING BIBLE STUDENTS FOR THE FIELD MINISTRY

Like preparation for dedication and baptism, preparing Bible students for field service involves stimulating a desire in the individual to honor Jehovah and to share in the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work (1 Cor. 3:10-13; Rev. 22:17)

Preparation might well begin with the first Bible study, and training for both field ministry and baptism can be accomplished together

As the newly interested one begins to understand properly and exercise faith in the things he is learning from the Bible, he should be encouraged to share them with his family, relatives, friends, neighbors, associates

By informal witnessing he will begin to feel the happiness of sharing good things with others (Acts 20:35)

His interest will be further stimulated as he hears experiences from the one conducting the study with him, or reads them in the Society's publications

Prepare him for opposition, as not everyone will be receptive or will appreciate his zeal and this may discourage him from speaking or even studying further (John 15:20, 21)

Commend him so that he sees that he is having a share in the work that Jehovah has commanded all disciples to do, encouraging him to appreciate that what he is doing is pleasing to God (Heb. 13:15, 16)

Certain qualifications must be met to be identified publicly as one of Jehovah's Christian witnesses and recognized as such by the congregation. These include belief in the Bible and its doctrines, meeting attendance (as circumstances permit), honesty, sexual morality, no drunkenness, no affiliation with false religion or unscriptural involvement with this world's affairs (John 18:36; Isa. 2:2-4)

Does one truly *want* to be one of Jehovah's witnesses? (Ps. 110:3)

One conducting the study should make sure qualifications are understood *before* invitation is extended to share in field ministry

When a person qualifies, invite him to share in the regular features of service

Usually the house-to-house service is the best. He can share by reading a scripture and feel an accomplishment in the witness given

However, another feature may be better for the individual or the circumstance

Before inviting him to accompany you, review your presentation with him; show him what he can do, such as reading a scripture, or commenting on it, or inviting the householder to the public talk

Explain and rehearse what you wish him to do, why it is good for him to learn to do this and how he can best do it; this preparation will give him confidence

For the first few doors, you might let him observe as you demonstrate your presentation, even the part he will have

When he is ready, let him share in the presentation with you, doing what he has prepared

Commend him for good effort, progressively giving him something additional to do; he will eventually learn to deliver the entire presentation

When he desires to and is ready to report, the field overseer will discuss the matter with the person who has been conducting the study, also with the one newly reporting, and after consulting with the presiding overseer, a Publisher's Record card may be made out if the new disciple qualifies

A child will be viewed as a Kingdom-preacher by the congregation only when he gives personal expression in the field ministry and is motivated to do so from the heart

By word and example, parents should concentrate on building up their child's love and appreciation of his Creator, following the same procedures as outlined for any newly interested ones

Thus, the child will be motivated by a *desire* to be a proclaimer of the "good news" rather than being such because his parents require that he accompany them

PERSONS VARY IN WHAT THEY CAN DO IN PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS

When striving to help others to become effective preachers and teachers, we should not expect all to be able to learn some special presentation, make return visits or conduct Bible studies with equal skill or success (1 Cor. 12:14-18)

Consider each person's circumstances and abilities; help him develop his particular gifts (1 Pet. 4:10)

If willingness is present, God makes up for any lack (2 Cor. 4:7)

The important things are to help new disciples to speak the "word of the kingdom," and to be whole-souled in serving Jehovah, that is, to have a life fully in harmony with the good news they are proclaiming (Matt. 13:19; Col. 3:23; Luke 10:27; Titus 2:10)

MAIN POINT: Preparation for baptism and for the field ministry is primarily a matter of helping

new disciples to worship Jehovah and to build a heartfelt appreciation for His righteous requirements

SOURCES: ad 451, 836-838, 1332, 1333, 1385-1388, 1579; or 74, 75, 107-109, 128-132

TEACHING SUGGESTION: The following problems may be considered in class discussion: (1) Suggestions for a father whose ten-year-old son wants to be baptized; (2) What to say to an individual who was baptized when quite young and wonders if he should be rebaptized; (3) Whether to count the field service report from an undedicated person who attends very few of the meetings

No. 38 - Second Wednesday, 9:10

Family Training for Life

FAMILY TRAINING —A MATTER FOR ATTENTION BY ALL ELDERS

Most elders are married, many being fathers, so family training is a matter of personal interest. Your good example in this will encourage other families (1 Tim. 3:2, 4, 5; 1 Pet. 5:3)

It deserves your attention because your effective service as an elder also includes helping others be successful in family training

In dealing with brothers, you may see areas where they need to improve in their family training; also, individuals or families experiencing problems may seek your aid; you should be ready and able to offer effective help

ALL MEMBERS OF A CHRISTIAN FAMILY ARE INVOLVED IN THIS TRAINING

Family members should work together, each one making a worthwhile contribution, having in mind not only the present life but eternal life

The husband is entrusted with headship and general oversight; he should be aware of his own spiritual needs (1 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 4:13-16)

He ought to take the lead in spiritual instruction of wife and children, and also engage in personal study for own spiritual health

Other responsibilities toward the family include teaching the Bible, training children as to how to do things, providing material needs, arranging recreation, all of which can bring joy and satisfaction

The father is also responsible to administer discipline to disobedient ones in the family; this may be done in various ways (Prov. 22:15; 23:13)

However, if these things are viewed as a burden, entire family will suffer

Wife, too, makes valuable contribution to family, showing love and respect for her husband, working hard in the home and sharing in training children (1 Tim. 2:15; 5:14)

She can assist greatly by helping children to

apply in daily life what her husband teaches (Prov. 6:20-22)

It is beneficial if they discuss together their goals in family training, so they can work at unity. She is an 'heir of life' with her husband; he should deal with her as such (1 Pet. 3:7)

Much of the family's training for life is focused on children; it requires a great amount of time and thought, but can be richly rewarding (Eph. 6:1-4)

Need to fight the common worldly view that caring for children is an unpleasant, but required, duty; it is a challenge today because so many influences oppose Christian teachings

RESPONSIBILITY FOR FAMILY TRAINING RESTS WITH THE PARENTS

Elders rightly are interested in young ones in the congregation, but must remember that prime responsibility belongs to the parents (Prov. 1:8)

Not all in the congregation train children in same way or to same extent

Avoid setting rules on what parents should do or judging methods they use; that is their God-given responsibility

If parents seek your aid, or you see they are having problems, you can offer assistance, mentioning ways others have been successful in applying Bible counsel

If youths ask for your spiritual help, be willing to assist, speaking encouragingly to them

When you have aided a youngster by private counsel, the good effect may be multiplied by informing the parents so they can follow through

The way a child turns out depends to a great extent on parents; God holds the parents responsible until the child reaches the age when he is free to make his own decisions (Prov. 22:6)

Generally family ties are stronger if parents provide close personal supervision, instead of relying largely on training from schools, relatives, nurses, etc.

If parents are considering having children live with relatives or away from home for extended period, encourage parents to think about the spiritual welfare of their children, not just physical well-being; in the end, though, parents (particularly the father) decide

In successful family training for life, an essential factor is spending time together

Good results when father spends time with both sons and daughters in working around home—repairs, painting, cleaning, etc.

Can share in similar things in caring for Kingdom Hall

Mother (and father) can advantageously work with youngsters in preparing meals, altering and making clothes, cleaning home, etc.

Sharing in recreation together trains family to enjoy things with others, not just pursuing personal interests

Effective family training requires free communication between parents and children

Spending time doing things together makes communication natural; helps parents to get youngster's views and helps him to share parents'

It is beneficial for family to share their meals together rather than developing the habit of eating separately; regularly conversing at meals improves family communication

Even where parents learn truth when children are in teens, steady effort will help to reopen lines of communication; takes time to undo the past

(Discuss realistic ways of doing this)

Close communication will facilitate training on matters of sex (Prov. 5:1-13)

Before puberty, can discuss bodily changes and how to react; elder might tactfully mention the need for this to parents

Parents truly help children if they discuss self-abuse and why it should be avoided (Col. 3:5)

Both parents can help children understand changes taking place in their bodies as they grow and the great responsibility that goes with use of the ability to transmit life

Family training for life should include clean and accurate information

A PRIMARY GOAL OF FAMILY TRAINING —REAL CHRISTIANS

A close, well-adjusted family is not sufficient; some worldly parents accomplish that, but family not trained for eternal life

What worldly families lack is spiritual training (1 Tim. 4:8)

Early training from God's Word will benefit children in the future; they need to know the Bible, not just human wisdom (Prov. 4:10-13)

Regular family study will help, though more is needed

Bible precedent of providing for spiritual instruction of children should encourage such family study today (2 Tim. 3:15; Gen. 18:19)

Important to give spiritual instruction regularly, emphasizing that study of God's Word is not an optional part of life, but vital (Matt. 4:4)

Flexibility in material keeps study interesting, practical

Need not invariably prepare *Watchtower* or study a book; can include reading a portion of the Bible, discussion of articles in magazines, preparation of talks, adapting to needs of family

Length of study should also be adjusted to fit circumstance and age of children

Think ahead to problems children may face; employ study to train family progressively to face problems of patriotic ceremonies, dating, school involvement (clubs, dances), fads, immodest dress, etc.

Such matters need to be covered a number of times and well in advance of the problem or temptation

(Ask for suggestions as to how brothers have adapted home studies to the needs of the family)

The Bible shows that child training that results in true worshipers involves inculcating Bible truths and principles, and love of Jehovah, at all times (Deut. 11:19-21)

Daily discussion of text provides an opportunity for training

Can be made most interesting and beneficial if matter can be seen to relate to the family; one leading the discussion may elicit comments on how topic or counsel applies to them

Many valuable lessons in life that contribute toward eternal life can be made daily part of family training (Ps. 34:11)

Try to weave these into conversation and comments on daily occurrences, not just isolating them to family study period or when child has erred and must be corrected

Help all family members cultivate fruits of spirit

Can bring individual fruit of spirit up in discussion; have various members of the family pursue matter from different angles, one looking in *Watchtower*, another watching for examples during the day, etc.

Show that honesty is not just a subject, but a way of life

Be alert to examples of dishonesty; when shopping, working, etc., with children call attention to situations that would test one's honesty; make it real

Teach and manifest proper viewpoint toward material things (1 Tim. 6:6-10)

Greatest success will be gained if parents speak and act in harmony with what they teach children from the Bible

If parents constantly emphasize material things (new clothes, car, appliances) or money (overtime work, bills) in conversation, children will likely develop same interests in life

Helpful to show generosity with what material things one has—making gifts to needy ones, contributing at Kingdom Hall

This realistically trains family to view these as things to be used, not the goal in life; also encourages generosity (2 Cor. 9:11)

Instill respect for those in authority and elderly ones (Lev. 19:32; Heb. 13:17); compassion for those afflicted (Lev. 19:14; Job 29:12, 15, 16)

Parents must set example: How does wife speak to and about her husband? Does wife or husband speak disparagingly about mate to children? Do parents criticize elders in congregation? What comments do they make about school, civil authorities?

As a family undertaking, do things for elderly ones—help with garden, prepare meal, take along on outing, etc.

Help family understand meaning of being “no part of the world” (John 17:16)

From early years aid children to know that true Christians do not slave to have approval of world by copying its ways (Jas. 4:4)

Instead of just being critical of youthful styles of grooming or music, tactfully help children to realize that worldly youths are slavishly copying one another (Rom. 6:16; 12:2; 1 John 2:15-17)

Family association will help children avoid seeking outside ‘bad associations that spoil useful habits’ (1 Cor. 15:33)

Parents need to warn their children against being in company with those who have evil intentions, dishonest and hurtful desires (Prov. 1:8-19)

Providing family training of this type is a real challenge, but can be rewarding now and lead to entire family gaining life

In addition to inner satisfaction of doing what is right, parents can have reason to expect children to be a praise to the family and to God (Ps. 127:3-5; 2 Tim. 1:5)

Elders ought to be constant source of encouragement to parents; set good example, and provide words of commendation and guidance

IN DIVIDED HOUSEHOLD TRAINING IS MORE DIFFICULT, BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE

Elders should be source of encouragement to brothers and sisters in this situation, but cannot make rules about working out problems

Woman in this situation faces a number of obligations—to God, to husbandly head and to beloved children (Acts 5:29; 1 Pet. 3:1)

She must make final decisions as to how to balance these; circumstances vary greatly

Encourage those who inquire to consider overall view, doing what will be for the *eternal* good of those involved

Even if unbelieving husband does not cooperate, Christian wife can provide valuable training for life

By tactful and respectful reasoning she may be able to overcome his reluctance to her studying with the children or taking them to meetings; appeal to his interest in their becoming moral and respectful, not like worldly children

If he does not want children to be taken to meetings, wife must determine what to do, mindful of respect for his headship

Likely she has legal right to practice her religion; if he will not supervise the care of children while she attends meeting, wife may feel obliged to take them with her instead of leaving them home alone and unprotected

In any case, she may be able to provide much home training

Few husbands would object to wife’s teaching children good morals, respect, obedience and willingness to work

Whether a formal Bible study seems possible or not, she can inculcate belief in and love for Creator (Prov. 31:26-28)

Husband with unbelieving wife has obligations to her; he must decide how to balance these with his activity in the congregation

If elder is asked by a minor whether to disobey parents and attend meetings, they can discuss it together, but elder ought not to make the decision

Call attention to command to be ‘obedient to parents in union with the Lord’ (Eph. 6:1)

Christian has obligation to God (Acts 5:29; Heb. 10:24, 25)

Along with privileges and joys of Christianity, come responsibilities and decisions; inquirer must weigh obligations and then decide what course to follow (Matt. 10:16, 34-39)

MAIN POINT: By good example and by kindly counsel help families in your congregation to appreciate how they can successfully equip the members of their household both for everyday living and for eternal life. Successful parents are willing to spend *time* with their children

SOURCES: *ad* 564, 565; *tr* 174-178; *w71* 593; *w72* 359-365; *g* 7/8/65 16-19; *g* 12/8/68 16-19

TEACHING SUGGESTION: (1) A group of five brothers in class who have families discuss practical suggestions for family study and recreation. (10 minutes) (2) Another group of five, representing the body of elders in a congregation, discuss ways in which congregation can assist efforts being made by family groups to build up youths in congregation spiritually, doing so by special parts on the meeting, giving them assignments of service, helping train them in the Theocratic Ministry School and in field service. (Problems brothers may have encountered in their own congregations in this regard may also be discussed along with their solutions.) After discussions, other suggestions may be entertained from class as time permits. (10-15 minutes)

Christian Conscience and Spiritual Maturity

WHAT CONSCIENCE MEANS

Conscience literally means "co-knowledge" or "having knowledge of something with [one-self]," the voice of "the secret self" (Ps. 51:6; 1 Pet. 3:4)

It is an inner moral sense that testifies for or against our conduct as measuring up to moral standards and thus accuses or excuses (Rom. 2:15; 9:1)

BIBLE SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIES CERTAIN THINGS AS RIGHT OR WRONG

Certain specific acts, practices or courses, such as adultery, murder, theft, worship of idols, homosexuality and eating blood, are condemned (Acts 15:29; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; 10:14; 1 Pet. 4:15)

While doing them would wound conscience, rule is so explicit that rightness or wrongness presents no particular questions of conscience; simply a matter of *obedience* to clear-cut law

NUMEROUS MATTERS CALL FOR CONSCIENTIOUS APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES

Bible does not give Christians a detailed law code with multitude of specific rules covering all possible situations; if it did, then we could just memorize and follow rules

Many things are governed by *principles*; individual conscience is called on to play larger role in deciding rightness or wrongness; this reveals more clearly what is in our heart

It is not just a matter of obedience to specific rules, but we are called on to exercise powers of knowledge, understanding, discernment and wisdom, displaying love and faith to greater extent (Compare Matthew 15:1-9; Galatians 3:5, 11, 12)

Christians are responsible, not just for knowledge of things directly stated as laws, but for all we know about God and his personality and standards. All such knowledge should affect and guide our conscience so that we properly reflect God's "image" (Gen. 1:26; 2 Cor. 3:18)

It is good to keep in mind that many things are a matter of degree

The difference between merely drinking alcoholic beverages and being one who is 'given to a lot of wine' or being an outright drunkard is one of degree (1 Tim. 3:3, 8)

Somewhere between the extremes of not drinking at all and being a drunkard there is a 'gray area' where personal conscience plays large role

There is a difference between applying a principle of Mosaic law and being "under the law"

Consider, as an example, sterilization

The Law was against mutilation of the body.

Where an organ is not diseased, surgery intended to cause sterilization is mutilation. But even if Christian is sterilized we do not disfellowship him, since we are not under the Law; yet he is not a good example for others

In another case a woman may have been a shop-lifter before baptism

The Law required repayment for all things stolen, with an extra amount added. This would be fine if she could do it, but she might not even remember all the thefts or where things came from; stores may have changed ownership, etc. Additionally, living "in the world," her circumstances differ considerably from those of ancient Israel. (John 17:11, 15, 16) Persons cannot possibly go back and rectify all the wrongs they have committed before coming into the truth. Individual conscience must be exercised in many matters as to course to take

ELDERS HELP BROTHERS SEEKING COUNSEL ON QUESTIONS OF CONSCIENCE

Always strive to give Scriptural reasons, applied properly

Much of what is published in Society's publications is not to be viewed as law but as wise counsel from "faithful and discreet slave"

If problem presented is one requiring personal decision of inquirer, direct attention to Scriptural principles; the more principles he applies to his problem the better; do not attempt to tell him what to do

Help him see the long-range view, to what it could lead and how it could affect his future and his relationship with God. Urge him to consider possible effects on others, not to stumble weaker ones (Phil. 1:9-11; 1 Cor. 10:23, 24; Rom. 14:13, 19; 15:1, 2)

Encourage him to consider his motive, as Jehovah searches hearts; warmly emphasize blessings from clear conscience

QUESTIONS OF CONSCIENCE AS REGARDS EMPLOYMENT OF BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS

Anyone in direct employ of false religious organization is supporting it as its 'servant.' (2 Cor. 6:17; Rev. 18:4; Rom. 6:16; Ps. 101:3) Overseers would not approve such for sharing in field ministry or reporting. If he is baptized and does not change employment within a reasonable period (possibly three months), he would be disfellowshipped

If one is employed by a *commercial firm exclusively* devoted to producing or handling articles for false religious use, or if his *full* assignment is providing some services for false religious organizations, he is not clean of Babylon the Great. (Isa. 52:11) Committee would not dis-fellowship him, but he is not "free from accusation"

If one who has his own business produces articles for a false religious organization or does work on property of such an organization, he is not exemplary. One who *advertises* or *promotes* false religious items or holidays is apostate

If work for a *commercial firm* involves *occasional* jobs in connection with false religious supplies or establishments, this is a matter for personal decision. The same is true of employment in a hospital, factory or school incorporated by a church but controlled by a corporation and not directly by the church. The elders would determine whether such a person could be used in the congregation

A similar viewpoint would be taken in the case of one whose employment violates the principle of Isaiah 2:4

A Christian could not identify himself with business wholly in conflict with God's Word; for example, one devoted to prostitution, theft, making idols or a blood bank

One doing such things would not be acceptable for field ministry. If he did not change, then he would be liable for dis-fellowshipping

It would certainly be in opposition to a Bible-trained conscience for one to accept employment involving gambling

Gambling indicates greediness, and practitioners of greediness are classed with fornicators, extortioners and idolaters as worthy of dis-fellowshipping. (1 Cor. 5:9-13; Eph. 5:3-5) It can become a form of idolatry, involving the worship of money and selfish desires

It is permissible for a Christian to belong to a labor union, if it is necessary to obtain secular employment; this is up to one's conscience

Membership may be viewed as "job insurance," and dues that are paid may be considered as a fee for services rendered

Christian not responsible for actions of union's leaders or how they use funds

Membership in union is different, however, from sharing in administrative operation of the union

The Scriptural viewpoint that employees ought to have toward their employers is found at Ephesians 6:5-8, Colossians 3:22-24 and 1 Peter 2:18, 19; but labor unions do not agree with the counsel set out in these scriptures and they do not act in harmony with it

Therefore, a Christian should not get involved in union activity to the extent of holding an

official position, such as an officer, shop steward, etc.

In the event of a strike, he may heed the instructions to stop work, but should not take part in picketing or otherwise supporting the strike or agitating for the cause of the strike; in such economic warfare the Christian will remain neutral (2 Tim. 2:24; Rom. 12:18)

QUESTIONS OF CONSCIENCE REGARDING WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

Attending church weddings or funerals of relatives or friends not in the truth is a personal decision for individual's conscience; but, of course, a person attending such may easily commit a serious wrong by getting involved in false religion

As Jehovah's witnesses, we do not conduct funerals for disfellowshipped persons, but relatives must make a personal decision as to being present for burial

Suicides may raise questions. Is there proof it was a suicide? An accident can look like suicide. There may have been mental illness involved; thus officiating at or attending such a funeral would be a matter for personal decision. Congregation may prefer not to sponsor it because of effect on community. Relatives may decide to have private funeral, and a brother whose conscience allows *may* decide to give presentation of Bible truths (1 Sam. 31:4, 12, 13; 2 Sam. 1:17-27)

Similarly, if there are certain undesirable factors in connection with a wedding, it is up to the elder to determine if he will perform it, but it is still up to the service committee to decide whether or not they can use the Kingdom Hall

USE AND PRODUCTION OF HARMFUL ADDICTIVES

Addiction to betel nut, coca leaves, tobacco, etc., is recognized as damaging to mind and body. Their use violates the principle at 2 Corinthians 7:1 and also the command to love God with one's whole heart, soul, mind and strength (Matt. 22:37, 38)

The responsibility for damage is not solely on the user but stretches back to the seller and the producer; they violate the command to love one's neighbor as oneself (Matt. 22:39)

Those involved should weigh the harmful effects on one's own conscience and spirituality in making gain at the cost of others' health; weigh effects on outsiders as regards progress of preaching and disciple-making, also the effect on brothers within the congregation

Elders must be guided by their own conscience as regards recommending for congregation responsibility or privileges persons connected with production of additives

As an example, elders may not be able conscientiously to recommend as "free from accusation" and as having "fine testimony from people on the outside" a worker on tobacco farm whose conscience does not move him to change employment (1 Tim. 3:7-10; Titus 1:6)

On other hand, if work is such that it is not linked with actual production (perhaps serving as family cook, housecleaner, etc.) they may or may not feel they can recommend him. Effect on congregation and community must also be considered in conscientiously deciding (Acts 24:16)

SPIRITUAL MATURITY AND MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE

After having reached maturity, Christians do not stop growing in knowledge, wisdom, faith and love (Phil. 3:15, 16)

Immaturity describes those who, usually due to being new in the truth, are unstable, not firmly grounded in the truth (1 Cor. 3:1-4)

It is erroneous to classify a Christian as "immature" solely because of his committing a certain wrong, such as marrying out of the truth, or accepting employment of a questionable nature. Immaturity *may* be involved. But it may be also a case of a mature Christian failing to exercise sufficient faith or wisdom or patience or love. Not good to use the word "immature" as a 'catchall' to describe persons committing minor wrongs. These acts may be deliberate due to letting a measure of selfishness enter in; they might be evidence that a mature Christian (possibly long in the truth and even an elder) has become spiritually ill (not "immature"). Or problem may be due to momentary weakness or poor judgment

As example, some might classify Peter's actions described at Galatians 2:11-14 as evidence of his being "immature," but Paul gave him reproof as to a mature Christian

In considering any case of wrongdoing or considering persons for recommendation, elders should look at the present standing of the *individual*, rather than just the act committed, possibly years ago

It should be noted that to qualify as an elder,

a Christian should be an "older man" in a spiritual sense. Many Christians are spiritually mature but do not have the qualities of depth of wisdom and knowledge and discernment that elders should have

KEEP GOOD BALANCE IN APPROACH TO MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE

Should not try to superimpose our conscience on those of others in matters of personal preference or taste as to dress, appearance, etc.

We do not criticize or condemn if persons make decisions of conscience that are not precisely as we think best. There is no need to let others pressure us into making rules nor trying to draw a line where the Bible does not do so

When considering rightness or wrongness of certain course, do not leave out importance of love as guiding force. Elders can stress this in dealing with brothers whose acts, circumstances or appearance raise questions of conscience

No one should be unloving in exercise of conscience, insisting on "rights" instead of showing love (Rom. 14:15, 21; 15:1-3; 1 Cor. 8:11, 12; 13:4, 5)

We have an obligation toward our brothers, particularly the weaker ones, not to offend their consciences. We also have an obligation toward those in the world, to appeal to and avoid unnecessarily offending their consciences

The success of our preaching and disciple-making work is heavily dependent on this (2 Cor. 1:12)

Major changes are worth while to ensure a clean conscience before God and men

MAIN POINT: As Christians we do not have rules covering every aspect of life. We need to help our brothers to learn to apply Bible principles, while respecting the role of conscience in the decisions made

SOURCES: *ad* 373, 1125; *ms* 117-119; *w72* 556-567, 588-600

TEACHING SUGGESTION: In presenting this material, effort should be made to avoid merely setting forth a list of rules or "policy." Class should be helped to reason Scripturally on points, see *why* situations involved differ and *why* they call for different degrees of treatment

No. 40 - Second Wednesday, 2:10

Kingdom Hall—Center of Pure Worship

THE KINGDOM HALL, A SUITABLE PLACE FOR WORSHIP

In early days of Jehovah's worship by Israel, the tabernacle was the center of worship

Great care was taken in its construction and upkeep; fine craftsmen were used to build it (Ex. 35:34, 35; 39:42, 43)

The same was true of Solomon's temple, with

the finest ability and materials being used (1 Ki. 7:13, 14; 2 Chron. 2:11-16)

Jesus taught in synagogues in his day

They were less elaborate structures, though sometimes of considerable size, located in each town of sufficient population, and used for instruction, praise, prayer, reading and exhorting (Luke 4:16-21; Matt. 4:23)

Paul used synagogues too as places in which to teach and preach (Acts 13:14-16; 17:1-4)

In our day Kingdom Halls serve as centers from which Jehovah's pure worship is directed locally. Some congregations rent meeting places, but others have built their own Kingdom Halls; they should be adequate in size, well kept.

An attractive meeting place that is clean, furnished in a practical manner, and maintained properly is one that reflects well on Jehovah and His people.

Arrangements must be made to care for the upkeep of the Kingdom Hall inside and out. It should be cleaned regularly, in accord with its use and needs.

All may have a share in caring for the Kingdom Hall, even the children. In this way all will learn the responsibility attached to the upkeep of the Kingdom Hall, and will appreciate it more.

The times of meetings are determined locally. Since the whole congregation is affected by this, times should be convenient for the majority yet seeking to avoid undue hardships on any, though in the minority.

It is good to have a sign saying "Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses," also one showing the times of the meetings.

Any arrangements for a display outside or inside should be neat, attractive, and featuring up-to-date literature.

A telephone number listed under "Jehovah's Witnesses" in the telephone book can be helpful. Free advertising by local newspapers is sometimes offered.

PROPER CONDUCT AT THE KINGDOM HALL

Strangers and visitors from other congregations, as well as regular attenders, should be welcomed (1 Pet. 4:9; Heb. 13:2).

The Bible study overseer especially will want to welcome newcomers and visitors, introducing them to others.

A ministerial servant, assigned to be an attendant, can do much to help in welcoming those who come to the hall.

All have a responsibility to show love in this matter (1 Cor. 16:14; John 13:35; Titus 1:7, 8).

Parents should control their children at the Kingdom Hall; disorderly children, "let on the loose," cause shame (Prov. 29:15).

Unnecessary trips to the rest rooms or playing before or after meetings should be discouraged.

In case of problems along these lines, speak to the parents, as they are responsible for their children's conduct.

Wearing suitable clothing at meetings shows our respect for the Kingdom Hall as a place of worship.

Overseers and their families should set a fine example in this.

Where problems exist, these may be discussed with the congregation; a respectful attitude should be encouraged, but it is not our responsibility to make rules beyond what the Bible says as to acceptable styles of clothing. Persons who want to learn Jehovah's ways, but who are poorly dressed, are not to be looked down upon (Jas. 2:1-4).

The Kingdom Hall should not be used for transacting business.

Jesus stopped the money changers in the temple in his day (Matt. 21:12, 13).

It should not be used for wedding receptions or personal pursuits; however, with the permission of the congregation committee, it may be used for weddings or funerals at times that will not interfere with congregation meetings.

The Kingdom Hall is a place devoted to matters pertaining to worship.

ARRANGING FOR A NEW KINGDOM HALL

As a congregation grows, it may be advisable to move to a new location, renting or purchasing, or building a Kingdom Hall. The congregation should decide which would be best, as their contributions will pay for it.

There are advantages to ownership, but local circumstances may necessitate renting.

The elders should carefully consider the prospects for a move and make their recommendations to the congregation. They may consult with those experienced in such matters. Weigh all the facts and present suggestions to the congregation, with enough detail so they know what is involved.

If the congregation decides to build, it is usually best for the elders to appoint a building committee of several men who have good judgment, who are experienced or interested in construction, and at least some of whom are good businessmen; spirituality and humility, however, are even more vital for the work to go smoothly. If a loan is necessary, consult the branch office for advice.

To own land or arrange a loan, it may be necessary to form an association or legal corporation in harmony with local laws (Rom. 13:1).

Keep the congregation informed of its financial situation and have advance approval for use of congregation funds.

Building committee decide whether to hire a builder or to arrange for brothers to build it.

Be very careful with the money entrusted to you in connection with the Kingdom Hall; avoid waste. View the offers to work as valuable contributions by the brothers, using their help as much as possible to cut costs and organizing matters carefully so their time is not wasted. Encourage as many as possible to share. The construction is related to our worship, and time

spent on the Kingdom Hall should be viewed as a part of our service to Jehovah.

Sisters may help by preparing food for the workers. Some may wish to help in the construction too, performing lighter tasks, cleaning up, etc. Many sisters appreciate having a share in the work.

It is important to keep the field ministry going during construction work. If some are not able to spend as much time in the field as a result of Kingdom Hall work, no one should criticize them, but encourage them, and help them get the work done.

Watch that none are working so hard at the Kingdom Hall that their families are neglected, or their ministry in the field is abandoned. Work out a good schedule to leave some time for family study and field service, as well as regular meeting attendance for all of the workers.

Some of the sisters, younger and older publishers, and all others not able to help out extensively on the Kingdom Hall can be encouraged to carry more of the load in the field.

Brothers may desire to push building work for a few months to get it done during good building weather.

Long hours of hard work may be needed to finish the project, but Jehovah blesses those who serve him whole-souled (Col. 3:23, 24).

When building is finished, it would be appropriate for local elders to arrange a dedication program.

FINANCING JEHOVAH'S WORK BY VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

It is Scriptural to give financial support.

Voluntary contributions from the heart are encouraged (2 Cor. 8:12; 9:7).

The English word 'contribution' (2 Cor. 9:13) comes from the Greek word *koino-ni'a*, which means "put fellowship into activity" or 'sharing of things with others'.

Christians contribute both time in the ministry and material things (Phil. 1:3-5; 4:16-18).

We do not enrich Jehovah with our contributions to his work, but he gives us the opportunity in this way to show our love for him, blessing those who contribute voluntarily (Prov. 3:9, 10; Matt. 6:1-4; 1 Chron. 29:14-17).

Contributions are needed today for payments on building costs (or rent), upkeep, lights, water, heat, etc.

There are times when extra money may be needed for relief of congregations in distress (Rom. 15:26).

Within our own congregation some may need help in a material way, especially if the local government makes no provision for financial help.

Individuals may aid needy ones in the congregation, but the immediate family should especially provide such help (1 John 3:17, 18; 1 Tim. 5:8; Matt. 15:3-9).

Congregational assistance or relief efforts to deserving ones would be done under the direction of the elders and with the approval of the congregation (1 Tim. 5:9, 10).

Congregations or individuals may contribute directly to the Society.

Any matters that involve funds of the congregation, outside of normal operating expenses, should be presented to the congregation in written resolution form. Congregation funds need to be handled carefully, with neat, accurate records kept of all transactions.

It is appropriate to acknowledge contributions, whether by receipt, letter or reading the financial report. The reading of the Society's acknowledgment letter assures brothers that their money is being used as they directed.

The Christian way is to support the work by contributions from many, rather than large contributions from just a few.

We never pass a collection plate, however, the matter of contributing can be discussed from time to time at the meetings so that all are aware of the share they may have, but it should not be necessary to do it often.

Christians can be encouraged to set aside something regularly if they wish (1 Cor. 16:1-4).

Tertullian wrote of the early Christian congregation (*Apology* XXXIX, 5): "Even if there is a chest of a sort, it is not made of money paid in entrance-fees, as if religion were a matter of contract. Every man once a month brings some modest coin—or whenever he wishes, and only if he does wish, and if he can; for nobody is compelled; it is a voluntary offering."

Small contributions from the heart are just as pleasing to Jehovah as large ones (Mark 12:41-44; Ex. 35:20-29; 2 Cor. 8:12).

MAIN POINT: Whether large or small, our local Kingdom Hall should be well kept and inviting as a center of pure worship.

SOURCES: ad 374, 1522, 1564, 1565, 1569; or 103-105, 149, 150.

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture. Discuss practical arrangements for keeping a Kingdom Hall clean; also how brothers have overcome problems in building Kingdom Halls, such as in organizing the work.

Worldwide Organization to Praise Jehovah

'ASSOCIATION OF BROTHERS' UNITEDLY COOPERATES TO PRAISE JEHOVAH

Jesus' ministry saw the gathering of people who recognized him as Jehovah's Messiah, and the equipping and instructing of them to be preachers of the "good news"

Jehovah showed his favor on those following the lead of Jesus by pouring out his spirit on about 120 persons at Pentecost 33 C.E.; at that time Jehovah's Christian congregation was formed. Gifts of tongues helped further the preaching work (Acts 1:8; 2:4-11)

In 36 C.E. God turned his attention to the nations "to take out of them a people for his name" (Acts 15:14)

Though congregations met in various places, they were united; thus Peter could refer to these early Christians as, "the entire association of your brothers in the world" (1 Pet. 5:9)

They did not operate independently, but showed respect for guidance of governing body and concern for the needs of brothers in other congregations (Acts 15:1, 2; Rom. 15:26; 16:16)

"Association" refers to a group of people gathered together with a common purpose, and the purpose of the Christian congregation is to honor Jehovah by walking in the footsteps of his Son

Congregations of Jehovah's praisers are still being formed in our time, recognizing Jesus as their Head and serving under the direction of his "faithful and discreet slave" class (Matt. 24:45-47)

The congregations belong to God; being under his rule, they are part of a worldwide congregation, theocratically arranged and directed (Acts 5:29; 20:28)

DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL CONGREGATIONS

Formation of new congregations

From a Scriptural standpoint a group of baptized Christians who meet together are a congregation

To benefit from the services extended to other congregations, an application should be filed with the branch office; for such an application to be accepted, there ought to be a group of persons who are baptized proclaimers of the "good news," persons who truly are Jehovah's Christian witnesses and who recognize the "faithful and discreet slave" and who want to work under its direction to advance pure worship

Such new congregations may be formed in areas

isolated from previously existing congregations

Other congregations are formed due to growth of already established congregations; the size limitations of the Kingdom Hall may make a new congregation advisable, or problems of transportation or distance may make forming a new congregation advisable

If more than one congregation is to be affected, the recommendation for the division of an already existing congregation should be made by the elders of all the congregations involved

If elders wish to await the visit of the circuit overseer to hear his suggestions, they may

Recommendations to appoint elders and ministerial servants for the new congregation are made to the branch office by the elders in original congregation(s) when division takes place; in the case of isolated areas where no congregation previously existed, mature local brothers, along with the circuit overseer, make the recommendations

Naming congregations is done Biblically, using name of city or town (1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1)

When a congregation is divided inside one city, geographic or other designation describing the location is used for each congregation, and on correspondence to the branch office the name of the city is also shown

A city overseer is appointed for each city with more than one congregation; this appointment does not change each year

Branch office may communicate with the city overseer at times in connection with assemblies or other matters

He can give assistance to elders in other congregations in the city if requested

CIRCUIT ORGANIZATION

Circuit overseer is a traveling elder appointed through the branch office to visit the congregations

He meets with and cooperates with the body of fellow elders in caring for the flock, gives discourses and works with local publishers in the field

Local support essential for beneficial visit; this should be encouraged by all elders

Purpose of his visit is to upbuild brothers through Scriptural talks, build up appreciation for privilege of serving Jehovah, share suggestions and experiences

Preparation for his visit

Congregation is notified about two months in advance of visit

His visit a time of increased field activity, so

handbills and increased magazine supply may need to be ordered

Accommodations and meals to be arranged for him, and his wife if he is married

Presiding overseer arranges for circuit overseer to meet with congregation, pioneers and body of elders; locations for meetings for service and territory to be selected; records gathered at Kingdom Hall just before visit; enthusiasm stimulated for full support of field service, both mornings and afternoons, during his visit

A good time for some to plan temporary pioneer service

Activity during his visit

Tuesday afternoon he consults congregation records, may read last annual report by former presiding overseer, consult record cards

He examines territory file, accounts, literature supplies; that afternoon or evening he gets details of week's activities from presiding overseer

A meeting with the entire body of elders is arranged later in the week

Local presiding overseer acts as chairman, having in mind matters for discussion, and circuit overseer is invited to give observations or counsel on these or other matters

Chairman can introduce points or ask another elder to do so; all elders should contribute to the discussion

It is not expected that circuit overseer will have answers to all questions, but he will gladly share whatever information and experience he has

No set length of time for meeting; determined by what needs to be discussed

Circuit overseer is a shepherd; individuals should feel free to approach him for help and counsel

Meetings are held at customary times during the visit, conducted by ones normally assigned to do so; times for special meetings are set by the presiding overseer

The book study that circuit overseer visits may be concluded ten minutes early so he can offer words of encouragement (Acts 13:15)

Last half hour of service meeting is assigned to him for a discourse

Hour-and-fifteen-minute meeting near end of week will include new things learned from last six months' *Watchtowers*, Scriptural *Awake!* articles, or new books of the last year, and also a Scriptural talk

The circuit overseer will give the public talk, and, as conclusion of his final meeting with the entire congregation, another thirty-minute discourse

Field ministry is scheduled from Wednesday through Sunday

The circuit overseer has much experience and can share it with congregation in preaching and disciple-making

Any who want to work with him or have him go on a Bible study can arrange appointments through presiding overseer; otherwise he

works with the ones who are present for group witnessing, and may arrange for his wife to accompany sisters in the congregation in the field

He and his wife devote as many hours as possible to the field ministry

After meeting with elders he makes report to branch office about his observations, spiritual condition of the congregation, points considered with elders, and leaves a copy with presiding overseer

If there is any unhealthy spiritual condition, appropriate counsel and aid should be considered with elders, maybe with congregation; then included in his report

To follow up circuit overseer's visit, discuss with congregation how to apply beneficial suggestions made

Call on individuals who showed interest during his visit, conducting studies he may have started

If congregation does not cover expenses for transportation, food, lodging, the circuit overseer sends request for these expenses to the branch office with his monthly field service report

He receives a small monthly allowance; these overseers show they put Kingdom interests first by trusting in God to care for needs (Luke 12:31)

CIRCUIT ASSEMBLIES

Circuit assemblies are held twice a year for two days, usually Saturday and Sunday, including congregations served by same circuit overseer

Encourage all to be present for the full program

Sunday morning at assembly, circuit and district overseers meet with all elders in circuit, with district overseer as chairman

Consider shepherding and other needs of congregations, also important material provided recently by "faithful and discreet slave" class

Circuit overseer recommends and branch office appoints permanent assembly personnel: assembly overseer, assistant assembly overseer, and a news representative

Circuit overseer may assign others to care for various departments so he can give primary attention to program

Contribution boxes are provided to cover circuit assembly expenses

Circuit overseer assigns a brother (no regular change of appointment necessary) to care for circuit funds and pay bills circuit overseer approves

If funds to start assembly are insufficient, circuit overseer advises congregations so they can assist

Where a deficit exists at end of assembly, elders discuss what contributions congregations can make, and then this is handled by means of a resolution in each congregation

Any expenses out of ordinary are considered by congregation elders (using only available circuit funds), and they put matter in form of resolution and vote on it

May be announced if of interest and encouragement to brothers; for example, donation to Society could be announced

Usually after an assembly there are sufficient funds to start next one; money often deposited with branch office between assemblies

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

District overseer serves as traveling elder appointed through branch office to speak at circuit assembly programs and share in service with a congregation in assembly area

Branch office plans his schedule so he can spend one week in a circuit for each assembly held

Local congregation provides accommodations and meals, if possible, during his visit

Tuesday afternoon he meets with circuit overseer and wife and discusses their ministry (will work in field service with both during week); also discusses special needs the circuit may have

He usually works from Wednesday through Friday in field service with groups, sharing practical suggestions

He arranges his own schedule for working with individuals in field service according to who comes, but elders should encourage regular daily support during visit

He and wife devote as many hours as possible to field service

He gives a one-hour Scriptural talk to the congregation on an evening the presiding overseer determines

If the body of elders want his counsel they may arrange to meet with him; some evenings he will need for assembly rehearsals

District overseer is assembly chairman at the circuit assembly, being responsible for the program; he is assigned to give the public talk and other parts

He makes report to the branch office after the assembly, including points discussed with elders and circuit overseer; may submit expenses for transportation, room and board, if these have not been covered

Traveling overseers have assignment changes every two years; may be switched from district to circuit, circuit to district

Once a year a number of circuits gather for a district assembly

Program cares for spiritual needs of ones in attendance

Physical needs include accommodations (may mean doing house-to-house work looking for accommodations), food (usually available on assembly grounds and served for moderate price)

Many volunteer workers are needed for assembly to run smoothly (Ps. 110:3)

Spirit and cooperation of volunteers making up assembly organization indicate its theocratic direction

Service performed not for pay, but out of love for Jehovah and brothers

Congregation can support this arrangement if individuals or groups volunteer to work between or after certain sessions or to work during the whole assembly; good for elders to encourage such service

Conduct of those attending assemblies is reflection of training given in local congregations

At assemblies in your area, are children well behaved?

Is real Christian love shown in sharing seats with newly interested ones, elderly persons and others?

Do the majority remain until after the closing song and prayer?

Assembling with fellow Christians protects against spirit of world, strengthens faith, equips one to be better servant of Jehovah (Phil. 4:8; Rom. 12:2)

THEOCRATIC OVERSIGHT WORLD WIDE

The branch overseer, who is appointed by the Watch Tower Society, has general oversight of congregations in a country or group of lands; he arranges to supply literature and supervises preaching and disciple-making work so people in territory under the branch can hear the "good news"

Usually once a year the Society arranges for a zone overseer to visit branch offices, Society printing plants, and missionary homes on occasion

He examines records of branch, considers oversight of congregations and accomplishments in preaching and disciple-making work; he gives talks to local brothers, and shares with missionaries in field service as his schedule permits

Christian congregation world wide serves unitedly to advance pure worship (Col. 3:14)

Working closely with fellow servants brings us closer to Jesus, the one appointed Head of the congregation, and to Jehovah, whose spirit permeates the congregation and whose Word and spirit guide its operation in harmony with his righteous purpose (Prov. 3:5, 6)

MAIN POINT: Provisions made for us to assemble together, as well as the visits of traveling overseers, contribute to the unity of the Christian congregation world wide

SOURCE: or 82-90, 101-103, 105-107, 153, 154

TEACHING SUGGESTION: After class discussion of material, review (1) what presiding overseer does to prepare for circuit overseer's visit, (2) what can be done to ensure good support for field service and special meetings during visit of circuit overseer, (3) part presiding overseer plays during visit and how he cooperates with visiting brother, (4) practical points for discussion during meeting of elders, (5) what can be done to follow up on visit by circuit overseer

Marriage, Separation and Divorce

MAKING CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE "HONORABLE AMONG ALL"

Marriage is a close, binding, sacred union between man and woman

Christian arrangement to have one mate, as in Eden (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-6)

Woman made to be man's helper (Gen. 2:18; 1 Cor. 11:8, 9)

Marriage to be "honorable [*ti'mi-os*, "precious," as at 1 Peter 1:19] among all" (Heb. 13:4)

Individuals show 'honor' for marriage relationship by carrying out God-given roles; showing honor requires action (Compare Matthew 15:4-6)

Wife shows subjection to and love for husband; gives him marriage due (1 Cor. 7:3-5; Titus 2:4, 5)

Husband carries headship, displaying consideration, love for wife; gives marriage due (Col. 3:19)

Unmarried persons should abstain from fornication and loose conduct; seek mates "only in the Lord" (Deut. 7:3, 4; 1 Cor. 7:39; 1 Thess. 4:4-6)

Marriage 'honored' by obedience to God's law; He will "judge fornicators and adulterers" (Heb. 13:4)

Congregation cannot tolerate as its approved, baptized associates any who choose to practice fornication or adultery

Could not accept a polygamist person (Rev. 21:8; 1 Tim. 3:2)

Before baptism, we counsel polygamist to take Scripturally proper course; man's first wife (senior wife) is his actual wife. In eyes of God, she, as it were, has tolerated his adultery with other women. So, he should take her unless his first wife had died or chooses to divorce him. Then he might choose to live with *one* of his other wives (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:9)

Marriage 'honored' by recognizing law of secular state to the extent possible

State may properly make regulations as to granting legal recognition to marriage arrangements (Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:1-4)

Marriage should be legally registered, thus making parties legally responsible for each other. Recording children's births is legal protection, as in inheritance matters. Even common-law and consensual arrangements should be fully legalized by marriage *if at all possible* when persons come into truth

Common-law marriage defined by Webster as "an agreement not now recognized in many jurisdictions as a legal marriage between a man and a woman to enter into the marriage relation without ecclesiastical or civil ceremony that in many jurisdictions must be

followed by cohabitation to be legally valid and is provable by the writings, declarations, or conduct of the parties"

In consensual arrangement (actually fornication or adultery and not really marriage) couple live as husband and wife by mere consent without regard for any further act or writing and even if one or both are already legally married to other persons

If, before coming to a knowledge of the truth, a person got divorced on unscriptural grounds and then legally remarried, he does not have to alter his marital status in order to qualify for baptism; must rely on Jesus' sacrifice to atone for previous sins in regard to adultery and fornication (Eph. 1:7)

Anyone who got remarried without having a legal divorce is living in bigamy; before he could get baptized, he would have to separate from present mate, or get a legal divorce from the former mate and then legalize arrangement with present companion, if they continue to live together

When marriage vows are taken a couple become husband and wife; sex act is not needed to make it binding

Kingdom Hall must be used in way that recognizes honorableness of marriage

Service committee decides if it may be used for wedding by those Scripturally and legally free and morally clean

If committee allows, undedicated person may use Hall, though must additionally have good report from persons outside organization

Committee decides what preparations for use of Hall for weddings will be allowed. Showers, shower announcements and receptions are not permitted

Preferable for elders (or, when necessary, ministerial servants) to perform marriages

Customs of bride price and dowry exist in many countries

Bride price is what a man pays for his wife; was customary in ancient Israel (1 Sam. 18:20-27)

Dowry is something of value that father gives with his daughter when she gets married as a "parting gift" of assistance for newly married couple (1 Ki. 9:16, 17)

HONORING MARRIAGE BY AVOIDING SEPARATION

Christians should be determined to make their marriage last; this shows appropriate respect for it as God's arrangement

Most vows taken include showing love, honor, respect and staying together till death; indifference to vows is lying to God, detestable (Lev. 19:12; Rom. 1:31, 32)

Believer should seek to stay with an unbelieving mate. Bible's teachings should improve marriage, even if only one partner is Christian and home is religiously divided

Discuss 1 Corinthians 7:10-16:

If a Christian leaves his mate, contrary to apostolic advice, he should seek reconciliation with same mate or remain unmarried; not free to 'date' others (Verses 10, 11)

The believer's worship may possibly give excuse for unbeliever to depart. In any event note that the Bible says, "Let [the believer] not leave." Christian knows marriage is to last (Verses 12, 13, 15)

Aid for believing wife with an unbelieving husband found at 1 Peter 2:18-3:5

Note willingness to suffer even physically for righteousness' sake as did Jesus. Emphasis on "subjection," "chaste conduct" and "deep respect"

Staying together brings definite benefits: Relationship is honorable; possibility of salvation for whole family; Christian wife has provider, sexual partner; two parents for children; Christian husband would have similar advantages

Children considered "holy," that is, under divine care and with life prospects in new system (Verses 14, 16)

Nevertheless, child expected to show "pure and upright" conduct consistent with its age (Prov. 20:11)

SCRIPTURAL GROUNDS FOR DIVORCE (DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE)

Matthew's accounts of Jesus' words clearly give one Scriptural grounds for divorce: "On account of fornication [*porneia*]" (Matt. 5:32; 19:3-9); death, of course, also dissolves marriage (Rom. 7:2, 3; 1 Cor. 7:39)

Mark 10:11, 12 and Luke 16:18 understood only in light of Matthew's qualifying phrase

Porneia ("fornication") as used in first century C.E. refers to "illicit sexual intercourse in general" (Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*); "unlawful sexual intercourse generally" (*The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament* by Moulton and Milligan)

It is a broad term (like the term "pornography" drawn from it)

Therefore other Bible translations use such terms as "gross immorality," "sexual immorality," "sexual sins," instead of "fornication" in their renderings of *porneia*

It is not restricted to extramarital sexual relations between male and female in a natural way

Jude 7 uses *porneia* with regard to the unnatural sex acts of the men of Sodom and Gomorrah

Of its use by Greek-speaking Jews around the start of the Common Era, the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Vol. VI,

p. 587) says: "*πορνεία* [*porneia*] can also be 'unnatural vice,' . . . sodomy"

Under Law covenant certain immoral sexual relations brought death penalty and thus any marital relationship with the guilty one was dissolved. These included:

A man's having sexual relations with another man's wife (Lev. 20:10-12)

The woman sharing in the adultery was also put to death (Deut. 22:22)

A man's having sexual relations with another man (Lev. 18:22, 29; 20:13)

While lesbianism (homosexual relations between females) is not mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures, the apostle's words at Romans 1:24-27, 32 show that it is as worthy of death as male homosexual relations

A man's having sexual relations with a beast (Ex. 22:19; Lev. 18:23, 29; 20:15)

A woman's having sexual relations with a beast (Lev. 18:23; 20:16)

None of these were trivial matters; they were grossly immoral

Any such immoral sexual relations, whether with one of the other sex or not, natural or unnatural, come within the Bible meaning of "fornication" (*porneia*)

Therefore all such illicit sexual relations provide grounds for Scriptural divorce

One who obtains a divorce on such Scriptural grounds is also Scripturally free to remarry

Bigamous 'marriage' with another person would provide Scriptural grounds for divorce

Divorce of sexually unfaithful mate *not* obligatory (Hos. 3:1)

Degree of sexual immorality may affect decision Christian love, high regard for marriage arrangement, concern for children as well as other factors, may move person to *want* to preserve marriage if possible (1 Cor. 13:4-8; 1 Pet. 4:8; Matt. 6:12, 14, 15)

Depending on circumstances, it may be advisable to encourage innocent mate to forgive, but it has to be that one's personal decision

Innocent mate could ask self: Did I by attitude or conduct partly influence mate to do wrong?

If innocent one willingly resumes relations with guilty one after learning of sexual unfaithfulness, this cancels basis for Scriptural divorce as far as what was confessed is concerned

If innocent mate had relations not knowing of the sexual unfaithfulness, whether it took place recently or some time ago, when the sexual immorality is uncovered the innocent mate could forgive or could refuse forgiveness and get a divorce based on Scriptural grounds

Innocent mate may obtain legal divorce on any truthful grounds, but should clearly establish with the congregation committee evidence of "fornication" in the Scriptural sense before action is taken, if this is not the legal ground

What evidence of sexual unfaithfulness is allowable by judicial committee if divorce and remarriage are to be pursued?

- (1) Admission of guilt by accused party to the committee. (2) Strong circumstantial evidence (testified to by at least two witnesses). For example, evidence that mate stayed all night in same house with person of opposite sex (or in same house with a known homosexual) under improper circumstances. (Deut. 19:15; Prov. 5:8-11) (3) If charged one is unbeliever, his oral confession to believer will suffice. In such cases, the burden may be allowed to rest with the conscience of the innocent one. Committee will take believer's signed testimony

Legal divorce where Scriptural grounds are not involved does not dissolve marriage from God's standpoint

Man or woman divorced on other grounds is exposed to danger of adultery; though may be free to marry by permission of secular law, not by God's (Matt. 5:32)

What if law of land does not allow divorce on any grounds, including sexual unfaithfulness?

Recall that God has final say in matters of marriage; we do not want to be considered unclean by him

Secular authority secondary, relative. To extent possible, we should abide by such law on marriage matters also; who wants to be considered adulterer or adulteress by his countrymen?

However, where there is proof of sexual unfaithfulness, innocent party may go to another country, get a legal divorce and marry in that country. Marriage will be recognized anywhere by the Christian congregation, even in his original country

If innocent mate cannot afford to leave country, (1) must present elders with definite proof of "fornication" in the Bible sense, (2) fully exhaust whatever legal steps can be taken, such as legal separation. Then if innocent one wants to remarry, he is *Scripturally*

free to do so. (3) Both new partners may submit to the congregation a signed statement vowing faithfulness to the new mate and stating their willingness to obtain legal certificate if it becomes possible

Such persons would now be considered married according to the law of God. Thus if one partner later commits "fornication" in the Bible sense and this is proved to committee, innocent one is free to remarry. Again, signed statement by the new couple would be necessary

A person "married" under such circumstances where secular law is more restrictive than God's, must be prepared to accept any legal sanctions brought by Caesar; this is not the congregation's responsibility

ELDERS, BY WORD AND EXAMPLE, SHOULD SHOW 'MARRIAGE HONORABLE AMONG ALL'

This can be done by taking care of their own families in proper way; handling selves respectfully around other members of opposite sex not their mate

When acting in a judicial way, treat each case on its own merits

Above points are *guidelines* based on Bible; they do not cover every possibility

Seek to find motives, weigh circumstances in every person's case, with a view to holding marriage in 'honor'

MAIN POINT: Once anyone enters into marriage it is to last. It is sacred. Problems will arise in all marriages, but every Scriptural and practical effort should be made to preserve the union

SOURCES: *li* 219-242; *tr* 178-180; *ms* 332-335; *ad* 458-461, 1114-1117; *w*68 255, 256, 575, 576; *w*70 511, 512

TEACHING SUGGESTION: After discussion of material, class may comment on: (1) What Scriptural counsel might be given a Bible student making good progress in truth but living without benefit of marriage? (2) When would a person be Scripturally free for remarriage?

No. 43 - Second Thursday, 9:10

Pursuing the Way of Love

THE WAY OF LOVE IS BASED ON KNOWING THE GOD OF LOVE

God is love, the personification of love, as shown in all his dealings with mankind (1 John 4:8)

He demonstrated his love by sending his Son Jesus Christ as ransom, thus giving prospect of everlasting life to believing men (John 3:16)

He created in us the ability to love, so we can copy his way of showing it

As a Person he has other qualities or attributes:

justice, wisdom, power, etc. (Deut. 32:4; Job 36:22; Rev. 7:12)

His love of righteousness requires hatred of wickedness (Prov. 6:16)

The more we know about Him, the closer we are drawn to Him

His love is ever sure, never fails (Rom. 8:32, 38, 39)

Our showing love for God and for fellow humans is a result of our knowing Him (1 John 4:7-9, 19)

"AGAPE" LOVE GOVERNED BY PRINCIPLES LEARNED THROUGH STUDY OF GOD'S WORD

Agape love is guided or governed by principles; it may or may not include fondness, thus Christians show love even for those for whom they have no fondness (Gal. 6:10)

One must be careful that his love is guided by *right* principles

Wrong principle says, 'Do good to me and I will do good to you.' (Luke 6:32-34) Right principle says, "Love your enemies" (Matt. 5:44; Rom. 5:8-10)

Parent has natural affection for his child, but must be guided by right principles in training, as he may make mistake of indiscriminately satisfying all child's desires, not giving needed discipline (Heb. 12:7-10)

Supposed love may be actually family pride, which is selfishness

Godly love is a fruit of Jehovah's spirit (Gal. 5:22)

Love builds up the one who has it; it is firm, strong, directed by godly wisdom, adhering first of all to that which is chaste and right (1 Cor. 8:1; Jas. 3:17)

Love never fails but continues to grow stronger as added to through knowledge of God and his wise arrangements and loving provisions, revealed through the congregation (1 Cor. 13:8-13; Eph. 3:10)

HOW LOVE IS DEMONSTRATED

(Discuss description of love and its actions at 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; ask students in what ways they note problems in the practical application of the various aspects of love in their congregation. As time permits, discuss outstanding situations)

"Love is long-suffering and kind" with brothers and with other people

It continues putting up with unfavorable conditions or wrong actions of others, but not out of indifference or approving the wrong (Eph. 4:2)

This may work to other's eventual salvation and will bring honor to God's name (2 Pet. 3:15)

It is generous and considerate, following example of God, who makes rain fall on righteous and unrighteous (Matt. 5:45)

"Love is not jealous," is not envious of good things coming to others, but is content with lot in life, not seeking position occupied by another or displaying constant suspicion without cause (1 Tim. 6:4-8)

"It does not brag, does not get puffed up"

One who loves exalts God, upbuilds others, not pushing others down to appear greater himself, or constantly telling of own accomplishments (Rom. 12:3)

The Christian viewpoint makes a person realize that all he does is due to strength from Jehovah (Ps. 34:1, 2; Isa. 12:2; Zech. 4:6) and from his Son (2 Cor. 12:9)

"Does not behave indecently"

This aspect of love prompts one to walk honorably in the view of those inside and outside God's congregation, never engaging in sexual abuses, indecent behavior, being rude, vulgar, discourteous or ill-mannered (Rom. 13:13; 1 Thess. 4:11, 12)

Love avoids disturbing Christian brothers by appearance as well as actions

It keeps us from participating in unrighteousness or condoning it

"Does not look for its own interests"

Love follows principle: "Let each one keep seeking, not his own advantage, but that of the other person" (1 Cor. 10:24)

Take time to study and associate with members of own family; consider how you can assist others in congregation (Gal. 6:10)

A person having love does not demand that everything be done his way, but is concerned with the spiritual welfare of others rather than just his own "rights" (1 Cor. 9:22, 23; Rom. 14:13, 15)

"Does not become provoked"

We should exercise self-control, avoiding outbursts of anger

There is no need to be easily offended by what others say or be afraid personal dignity may be injured; make allowances for shortcomings of others (Prov. 14:29; Eccl. 7:8, 9)

"It does not keep account of the injury"

Love gives benefit of doubt, is not overly sensitive or touchy

We should not exercise vengeful spirit, putting something on "account" to be settled with an individual later (Lev. 19:18; Rom. 12:19-21; Matt. 18:21, 22)

"It does not rejoice over unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth"

Love sides with right, finding no pleasure in wrong or in lies, or in any form of injustice, not even if the victim is one's enemy

Love would rather suffer wrong than commit another wrong in an attempt to get even

Agape love does not side with one chastised or find fault with the correction; we might gain corrected one's favor, but would be harming rather than helping him

We are not loving if we do not care for our responsibility to handle a problem involving wrongdoing (Heb. 12:6)

"It bears all things"

This shows willingness to put up with unpleasantness, to suffer for righteousness' sake and overlook minor offenses; it shows our forgiveness is real (Prov. 17:9; 1 Pet. 4:7, 8)

"Believes all things"

This includes faith in all things God has said in his Word of truth, even though others scoff. We must be intensely loyal to Jehovah, and his Son, the congregation's Head, following direction based on God's Word coming through his theocratic arrangement (Phil. 2:9-12; Heb. 13:17).

Love is not gullible but tests the "inspired expressions" to see their source (1 John 4:1; Acts 17:11, 12).

Love includes confidence in faithful Christian brothers, not disbelieving them unless there is good evidence they are wrong (2 Cor. 2:3; Gal. 5:10; Philem. 21).

"Hopes all things"

Hope in all things Jehovah has promised, continuing to work, patiently waiting for Jehovah to bring fruitage (Rom. 12:12; Heb. 3:6).

Be patient with weak ones, hoping for best for Christian brothers and encouraging interested ones to be moved by God's spirit to serve Him (2 Pet. 3:15).

"Endures all things"

Willingly endure hardships in expending oneself on behalf of others in God's service (2 Cor. 4:8-12, 16; 11:23-28).

Keep integrity no matter what the Devil may do; this course brings blessings (Rom. 5:3-5; Matt. 10:22; Rev. 2:10).

"Love never fails"

God's love for us is unbreakable; we want to show the same love for him, his Son, his Word and for our brothers (Rom. 8:35, 38, 39; Col. 3:14).

MANIFESTING LOVE AS AN ELDER IN THE CONGREGATION

We show love for Jehovah as well as for our neighbors by congregational shepherding and taking the lead in preaching and disciple-making work.

Build up love for field ministry.

Not a matter of putting pressure on brothers (there are no rules on how much each should do and when and how); but emphasize that, as there is urgency in preaching the word within the congregation, there is similar urgency outside thereof (2 Tim. 4:1, 2); the field service is part of the "fine works" for which to show zeal (Titus 2:14).

Recognize the limitations of others as well as their varying abilities and do not expect too much from them.

Lovingly assist others in various features of the field ministry.

Particularly offer assistance to new ones, talking with them to see that they know what to do and are given assistance by others as needed.

Show deep concern for each one in the congregation, through home visits where practical. Contribute to their spiritual enlightenment in private and congregational conversation. Always be available to talk with the brothers. Help them to feed their hearts and minds on God's Word (Ps. 1:2; Phil. 1:9, 10).

Be concerned with all, whether old or young, sick or well, newly associated or long in truth. Visits to older ones can be source of strength to them and often provide fine opportunities for a mutual exchange of encouragement.

Arrange loving assistance for those having need, whether physical or spiritual.

Much can be done with youth if they are drawn into activity in the congregation and given things to do, with parent's consent.

Visits to brothers should never be perfunctory or so scheduled that elder is just following a routine; should be visiting out of both *agape* and *phili'a* love, with a sincere desire to help.

Discipline is also a means of showing love.

Those whom Jehovah loves he disciplines (Heb. 12:6).

Discipline involves teaching along with giving correction.

May use questions to draw out the person so as to understand his thinking.

Do not give your own opinion, but base counsel on God's Word.

When handling problems, small or great, be loving and kind.

Object is to help people stay safely inside the Christian congregation and prevent Satan's overreaching them.

Be tactful, reasonable and impartial in harmony with Jehovah's wisdom (Jas. 3:17).

By praying for peace of entire association of brothers world wide we demonstrate love (Ps. 122:6-8; 1 Thess. 5:23, 25).

PURSUING THE WAY OF LOVE IN THE FAMILY CIRCLE

Treat others as you like to be treated yourself, showing consideration and helpfulness (Matt. 7:12).

Love is shown not only in spiritual matters but also in conduct, manner of speech, many other practical ways.

Train children to show love by assisting with chores in home, showing appreciation for things done, respect for others.

Consider wishes of mate in connection with vacation plans, entertaining brothers, schedule of family activities.

Let headship be with same love Jesus showed for the congregation (Eph. 5:28, 29).

The two greatest commandments require showing love (Mark 12:28-31).

This quality must be cultivated, shown both by word and deed, but it is a principal way in

which we can imitate God and it brings great happiness to those associated with us

Even under great pressure from Satan, love will enable you to maintain integrity
Demonstrate your love for Jehovah by your reliance on Him

MAIN POINT: The way of love is pursued by developing a close relationship with Jehovah and his organization and showing we love our brothers through our following right principles and performing unselfish acts in their behalf

SOURCES: ad 1079-1083; ms 325-329; w64 489-501

No. 44 - Second Thursday, 10:40

Safeguarding the Cleanness of the Congregation, Part 1

REASONS WHY THE CONGREGATION MUST BE KEPT CLEAN

Being pure and holy, Jehovah does not tolerate uncleanness among his servants; they must be spiritually and morally clean to represent him properly (1 Pet. 1:14-16)

Requires constantly working against desires of the flesh, influences of the world and temptations of the Devil

Elders have responsibility to safeguard the good spiritual condition of the congregation (1 Cor. 5:3-5)

When cases of serious wrongdoing come to your attention, with concern for the congregation and for the individuals involved, follow through on the matter

Endeavor to restore spiritually the erring ones, if possible

Unrepentant wrongdoers must be removed from the congregation

HEARINGS BEFORE THE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE

Matters that must come before the judicial committee for handling: (1) Sins that have brought congregation into public disrepute. (2) Loose conduct of gross nature, bordering on fornication; or fornication, adultery or other serious sexual immorality (even if only one offense). (3) Repeated acts of lying, stealing, drunkenness or similar sins

In other cases that are not of so grave a nature, if the wrongdoer approaches an elder and openly confesses the wrong and manifests sincere repentance, good counsel from the elder may suffice to "readjust" the individual; the elder should also inform the presiding overseer of the matter and tell him what was done to handle the situation

Where accusation involving something of a nature that would require committee attention is made against another, committee decides if accusation has substance

If so, invites accused to meet with them

Best to send invitation in writing, informing him what his course of action is supposed to have been

Advise that he can bring witnesses

If time set proves inconvenient to the accused one, another time can be selected

If he repeatedly fails to come to hearing, committee will go ahead with meeting, but not judge the person until evidence and testimony are considered; should not take action against him unless evidence proves person's guilt

Avoid demanding attitude; treat kindly

If he has sinned, objective is to help him get restored spiritually, if possible, rather than drive him away

Judging of matters is a heavy responsibility

Direct matters and make investigation so as to get all the facts (Deut. 13:12-15)

Must be two or three eyewitnesses, not just persons repeating what they have heard; no action can be taken if only one witness (Deut. 19:15; 1 Tim. 5:19)

Can accept confession as conclusive witness against self without other corroborating evidence

Before taking any action, be sure that there is sound *Scriptural* reason for doing so, also that the action contemplated is what is actually required

Where one associated is implicated by confession of another, if the one so implicated denies being involved, charge cannot be accepted against him unless there is more than one witness; the one so implicated could be innocent as claimed. Person confessing and making charge would be disciplined as needed for the sin confessed or for lying as to the sin's actually having occurred

More serious action likely would be necessary if found later that he was lying in implicating the other person (Deut. 19:17-21)

If person implicated is guilty, Jehovah knows (Heb. 4:13)

If he is found guilty later, appropriate action can be taken, as he would be guilty not only of the sin charged, but also of lying in denying it at first and letting the other person be viewed as a possible liar

ASCERTAINING THE REAL ATTITUDE OF A WRONGDOER

Since there are degrees of wrongdoing, responsibility rests on elders to determine action needed

Avoid trying to fit case into set of rules; think in terms of principles

What has person done? What does the Bible actually say about such conduct? How has the wrongdoing affected the congregation? Is the wrongdoer genuinely repentant? What judicial action is required?

Reproof can be given "with mildness" (2 Tim. 2:24-26; Gal. 6:1)

Some people need to be reproofed "with severity"; (Titus 1:10-13; or 165-168)

In cases where it is established that a serious offense was actually committed, the committee should also consider these factors: (1) What were the circumstances leading up to the wrongdoing? (2) Was there evidence of the person's craving wrongful things or 'courting trouble'? (3) Had he been admonished before that his course was leading toward danger? (4) Was it a single offense or was it committed more than once? (5) Was his confession voluntary or did he have to be accused by others before confessing? (6) And, above all, does he show true repentance and manifest a heartfelt desire to avoid repetition of the wrong?

Neither gravity of wrong nor bad publicity is what finally determines if the person should be disfellowshipped; rather the determining factor is the individual's sincere repentance or lack of it

How can true repentance be identified?

Not all show true feelings by outward emotional manifestations; in contrast, crying does not always indicate godly sorrow

Has individual contritely prayed to Jehovah and sought his forgiveness and mercy? Has he perhaps voluntarily come and confessed to "older men," seeking their help in line with James 5:13-16, 19, 20?

What motivates whatever sadness, remorse and regret he shows? Is it worldly sadness or godly sadness? (2 Cor. 7:8-11)

Should not be just regret over being found out or damage to reputation; naturally one regrets losing privileges

Should be deep regret over damaged relationship with Jehovah, a heartfelt wanting to come back into God's favor, remorse over reproach brought upon His name and people (2 Cor. 7:11, 12)

Repentance also involves a 'change of mind' or 'change of will'

It must include heart-motivated rejection of bad course as repugnant, hated; conversion to right thinking and conduct (Ps. 97:10; Rom. 12:9)

Love of right and hate of bad create positive force to bring forth "works that befit repentance" (Acts 26:20)

Some manifest repentance right after sin and take steps immediately to confess; others do so later Some even do so at meeting with judicial committee

Is in person's favor when he voluntarily con-

fesses, but still the important factor is, Is he repentant?

HANDLING CASES INVOLVING UNANNOUNCED RESTRICTION OF PRIVILEGES

The committee decides if a case requires public reproof or not

General conditions allowing for handling without public announcement: (1) Single offense; *not a practice* of sin. (2) Had not ignored earlier admonition or reproof; had not 'pursued' wrong, but was overtaken in sin. (3) Must be truly repentant. (4) Wrong course has not brought congregation into public disrepute or is not such as will be readily known by congregation or the public

In seeking to "readjust" such a one, be sure he clearly understands Jehovah's viewpoint of the wrong; also help him to appreciate Jehovah's mercy and how to avail himself of it (Gal. 6:1)

While there may be no public announcement, special privileges are removed

Appointments as elder, ministerial servant or pioneer, or assignments of subordinate nature are canceled

Committee decides if best for him not to comment at meetings or to give student talks for a while; likely will not be called on to offer prayer on behalf of congregation

Presiding overseer notifies others who conduct meetings as to restrictions imposed

Can share in field ministry and freely attend meetings, but no requirements set

Committee may strongly recommend discontinuing certain associations or habits, where these contributed to wrong course; terms of recommendation should be reasonable and Scriptural

No prohibitions on eating and drinking or other things Scriptures allow, but recommendations can be given on moderation as needed

Arrange to visit and otherwise talk with him to build up spiritually

Restoration of privileges is done gradually as committee sees evidence of his regaining spiritual stability and appreciation for Jehovah's righteous ways

Commenting at meetings might be first, then handling student talks; later he might share in a part on the service meeting, assist a ministerial servant, read at meetings and, when well adjusted, offer prayer

When privileges can be fully restored depends upon gravity of wrong and progress individual makes in becoming spiritually strong and in gaining respect of the congregation

May require several months only, or a year or even more; the committee's concern should be: What is best for the erring one and the congregation?

Before recommending him as a ministerial servant, he should be "free from accusation" and "irreprehensible," which may take several years or longer

If one under restriction as to privileges moves to another congregation, the judicial committee *there* follows same procedure in helping erring one get spiritually strong again, and in restoring privileges

The committee of the first congregation can acquaint new committee with the case to extent necessary; but there is no need to contact first committee when full restoration of privileges is made

HANDLING CASES THAT REQUIRE PUBLIC REPROOF

Some serious cases of wrongdoing require public reproof in line with 1 Timothy 5:20 (Read and consider in class)

Conditions either requiring or allowing for public reproof: (1) If serious sin was committed more than once, thus a "practice of sin." (2) Even if single act of serious wrongdoing, person may have failed to heed past admonitions as to consequences of going in the way he was headed, and thus may have been 'courting trouble' by a measure of loose conduct prior to getting into serious trouble. (3) Wrong may have become public knowledge or is of such a nature that it would readily become subject of discussion in the congregation. (4) In all cases, must be sincerely repentant and have turned away from wrong course

Announcement made that person named has engaged in "conduct unbecoming a Christian" (Do not mention specific sin, to avoid possible legal difficulties)

Show what privileges will be restricted for a while

Make no mention of specific time period; this depends upon progress person makes in becoming spiritually restored

Some do not respond as readily to discipline and need more severe reproof to cause seriousness of situation to be deeply impressed on their heart

Public reproof thus has several purposes: Person reproofed with severity that he "may be healthy in the faith" (Titus 1:13); all in the congregation can assist erring one, not putting temptation before him; reduces likelihood of gossip or questions as to whether committee has handled the problem or not; knowledge of the action puts other members in position to defend the congregation before critics as upholding the Bible's standard of conduct; and announced so 'that the rest may have fear,' to make each one stop and think seriously about his own conduct, to see whether he needs to make changes in his own life so as not to lose Jehovah's favor

When person progresses to point where privileges can begin to be restored, no need to announce this; members of the congregation will become aware of it

If person moves to another congregation, the judicial committee *there* supervises further caring for the matter, including gradual return of privileges

Branch office should be notified in every case where wrongdoer is publicly reproofed, if person was appointed as elder, ministerial servant or pioneer; such appointments are canceled

One thus removed as a pioneer should not be recommended again for at least a year and only if he has a good recommendation from the judicial committee

Whether the case is handled with or without public announcement, the individual should understand that a repetition of sin or otherwise getting involved in serious wrongdoing could result in his being disfellowshipped

ADMONISH THOSE "NOT OBEDIENT TO OUR WORD"

Paul instructed that certain ones should be "marked" for failing significantly in responding to apostolic exhortation and instructions

(Read and discuss 2 Thessalonians 3:14, 15 in class)

They do not act in an orderly manner, perhaps letting others in the congregation support them when they are able to work to support themselves, or idly meddling in matters not their concern

"Marking" does not indicate any public announcement; but rather that others recognize individual to be poor company and a poor example

Not associating with him intimately should make him ashamed, to motivate a change in heart and conduct

Not viewed as expelled, however, as others, particularly elders, would "continue admonishing him as a brother" (1 Thess. 5:14, 15)

AVOID ASSOCIATION WITH DISFELLOWSHIPED PERSONS

When a person is disfellowshipped, he is cut off from the congregation; it goes further than 'stopping their association with him' as in 2 Thessalonians 3:14, 15

Heed the divine counsel to "remove the wicked man from among yourselves" (1 Cor. 5:5, 11-13; 1 Tim. 1:19, 20)

The admonition at 2 John 9-11 applies to those who unrepentantly practice immorality or other conduct resulting in disfellowshipping

These people reject the teachings of the Bible just as much as those who reject it doctrinally; hence, none should greet any who have been

disfellowshipped or welcome them into their homes

Blood relatives not living in same home with disfellowshipped relative should avoid contact with this one just as much as possible

If living in same home, such as with a disfellowshipped mate or child, faithful ones should cease spiritual interchange and fellowship

It is hoped that wrongdoer will be impressed with sinfulness of his course and begin to crave spiritual fellowship, inciting him to repentance

At the same time, this action upholds good reputation of the Christian congregation and protects Jehovah's people from the bad influence

Disfellowshipping a child does not prevent parents from counseling or disciplining on basis of God's Word, as necessary

Child could quietly sit in on family studies, not as approved sharer, but as a listener, hoping that this would benefit him in attaining repentance

To participate in family study, child would have to be reinstated on basis of his repentance

Faithful person may encourage his or her disfellowshipped mate to turn around and seek reinstatement

This does not mean sitting down with this mate in Bible study, but rather encouraging repentance

Family members should not listen to disfellowshipped persons if such attempt to justify themselves or influence the faithful ones to their way of thinking or acting

They should refuse to listen to objections to the way their cases were handled; appeals should go to the committee

ELDERS TO SHOULDER RESPONSIBILITY

If elders are careful to get all the facts and weigh these as well as the evidence of repentance in the light of Bible principles, it should be evident in most cases what should be done

If additional advice is thought necessary, they can confer with other elders in the area

Do not be quick to write the branch office; the obligation rests upon the local judicial committee, not the branch office, to make the decision

They are on the scene and are able to get the facts, see the manifestations of repentance and otherwise get acquainted with all that is involved

It is difficult to place all vital factors before brothers in the office by correspondence

The office does not have any special instructions you do not have in the Bible and the Society's publications

Always look to Jehovah and follow carefully the instructions in his Word, so as to imitate him and his Son in clearing out what is bad, while showing mercy to the repentant

MAIN POINT: Congregations must be kept clean. Mercy can continue to be shown to wrongdoers who are truly repentant, but unrepentant ones must be put out if the congregation is to represent Jehovah properly

SOURCES: or 164-170, 172, 173; ms 420-423; ad 1385-1389; w70 351, 352

No. 45 - Second Thursday, 2:10

Helping Others to Make Advancement

THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN ADVANCEMENT

Genuine advancement in the life of a Christian involves drawing closer to Jehovah, deepening our relationship with him

In doing this we more closely imitate Jesus, whose entire purpose in life was the doing of his Father's will (Heb. 10:7; John 5:30)

Such advancement involves growth in knowledge of Jehovah, in appreciation of his ways and in responsiveness to his direction

True Christian advancement will never cease; we will never come to the point where there is no more to learn about Jehovah and his ways (Rom. 11:33, 34)

Christian advancement is manifest basically in two ways: (1) By progress in conforming our conduct, speech and attitude to God's Word. (2) By taking hold of privileges of service that afford opportunities to serve Jehovah in fuller measure

MAKING ADVANCEMENT IS NOT MERELY A MATTER OF ATTAINING TO CERTAIN POSITIONS IN THE ORGANIZATION

The apostle Paul urged Timothy to think in terms of advancement, but in what way? (Discuss 1 Timothy 4:11-16)

Timothy was already an elder; Paul was not writing about getting a new appointment of service or a change of assignment

Even though an elder, Timothy could make progress in more fully conforming his conduct, his speech and his attitude to God's ways (Verse 12)

He could continue to progress in his personal knowledge of God's Word and his ability to use it (Verses 13, 16)

He could also apply himself to improve in his handling of the service assignment entrusted to him by the body of older men (Verse 14)

If "advancement" were limited to attaining cer-

tain positions, then a housewife who could not pioneer could not advance; an elder who was presiding overseer and then was assigned to be a book study conductor might feel that he had moved backward; etc.

To the contrary, all of us need to advance and there is ample opportunity for us to do so; congregation publishers, pioneers, those who go to Bethel, and others, need to be helped to see opportunities for advancement that are open to them

In putting on the new personality there are matters in which all can progress

In what ways might one's conduct be made to conform more fully to Jehovah's requirements?

Obedience to law, Titus 3:1; honesty, even in little things, Eph. 4:28; diligence in caring for one's family responsibilities, Eph. 6:4; Titus 2:4, 5; avoiding associations and entertainment that can corrupt morals, Phil. 4:8; Matt. 5:28; putting the welfare of others ahead of one's personal convenience, 1 Cor. 10:24; Rom. 14:19, 20; Phil. 2:1-4; keeping material interests secondary to spiritual pursuits, Matt. 6:31-33; 1 Tim. 6:6-8

In what ways might one make better use of the faculty of speech?

Avoiding uncontrolled outbursts when irritated, Eph. 4:31, 32; commenting at meetings, Heb. 10:23-25; improving one's ability to answer questions about our beliefs, Col. 4:6; conversing in a manner that upbuilds, Eph. 4:29; not ridiculing, belittling others, 2 Ki. 2:23, 24; Rom. 14:3, 19; 1 Cor. 16:14

In what ways might one's personal attitude and desires become more pleasing to Jehovah?

Always relying on Jehovah, not on self, Prov. 3:5, 6; having a humble estimate of oneself, Rom. 12:3; freely forgiving the shortcomings of others, Col. 3:13; taking genuine pleasure in applying oneself to study of God's Word, Ps. 139:17; Prov. 2:3-5

There are opportunities to make the activities in which all of us share more meaningful or more productive

Attending meetings: Do we offer comments? Are our comments in our own words? Is our singing heartfelt?

Preaching the good news: Do we share regularly? Are there ways in which we could improve our presentation? Do we truly follow up on all who show interest? Are there other features of service in which we could share? Could we make better use of opportunities for informal witnessing?

Showing loving concern for others in the congregation: Are there persons who come to the Kingdom Hall and with whom we have not yet got acquainted? When others are ill, do we show personal concern? If we are able to do so, do we invite others to our home to enjoy Christian fellowship?

Prayer: Do we really keep our mind focused on what is being said when others represent the congregation in prayer? Do our own prayers show proper concern for the name and purpose of Jehovah, not only for personal problems and needs? Do we include other persons in our prayers in a personal way?

Elders can help others to make advancement in these matters by showing personal interest and giving Scriptural counsel

Matters needing attention can be brought up at meetings, or emphasized when they appear in scheduled study material

Personal help is most effective when you know the publishers well

You will discern needs, be aware of limitations, and be able to offer helpful suggestions; patience may be needed in discussing a matter over a period of time

You will realize it when the person makes special effort or shows signs of improvement, and you can thus offer commendation

Do not frustrate people by giving them too many things to work on at one time; but encourage them to work on the important things first

By setting a good example, you encourage others to imitate you in applying God's Word to their lives and sharing fully in congregation activity (1 Pet. 5:3)

ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO REACH OUT FOR ADDED PRIVILEGES OF SERVICE

Help is needed, not only to cultivate a desire for certain privileges, but also to appreciate the need of qualifying for them

As an elder you need to know the qualifications for these service privileges in order to give proper guidance, encouragement in reaching out, and not cause frustration to brothers

Encourage those in the congregation to demonstrate fully their willingness to be used by Jehovah in whatever way he directs (Isa. 6:8)

He will not force any of us; through his organization he makes opportunities available; it is up to us to 'offer ourselves willingly' (Ps. 110:3)

Personal circumstances may limit what we can do, but sometimes these can be altered; lack of knowledge and experience can limit us, but if we apply ourselves, these can be acquired

If we seek to meet needed qualifications for privileges, Jehovah will use us—not always in the way that we personally may have in mind, but in ways that will accomplish his will and bring much satisfaction to us

Brothers in the congregation should be encouraged to make themselves available for service as an elder or as a ministerial servant by meeting the Bible's requirements (1 Tim. 3:1-10, 12, 13; Titus 1:5-9)

If some show good potential, it may encourage them if you discuss it with them; show them where they are doing well, where further development is needed and how to achieve it

With encouragement, many brothers and sisters, young and old, will apply for temporary pioneer service during the year

To qualify, they must be baptized and have a reputation for good Christian conduct; they should also have made plans that will enable them to devote 100 hours to the field service, if for a full month, or 75 hours if they will be serving for two weeks

Many elders have set a fine example by enrolling as temporary pioneers from time to time, and this has encouraged others in the congregation to do the same

Regular pioneer service should be enthusiastically advocated

Much can be accomplished by a *truly earnest* presentation of material provided by Society for service meetings; offer personal encouragement to those who show desire to pioneer; do not put pressure on anyone, but build up appreciation and desire for it

To enroll, one must be baptized for six months; must have participated in field service each month for past six months; must be able to devote 1,200 hours a year to field service (an average of 100 hours per month); must have reputation for fine conduct, be clean in body and spirit, being free from habits that contaminate the body or impair the mind, not given to extremes in dress and grooming; one's conduct, attire and attitude should reflect favorably on the congregation

Pioneers who are able to serve anywhere they are needed can be encouraged to reach out for special pioneer service by improving in making return visits and conducting Bible studies, also by endeavoring to develop capacity to meet special pioneer requirement of 150 hours of field service each month

Missionary service, following training at Gilead School, is open to persons who have been baptized 3 years, pioneering for past 2 years, are between 21 and 40 years of age; are single, or, if married, then married at least 2 years, with no dependent children or relatives; know English well; are in good health and willing to serve anywhere assigned

Missionary service is, to a considerable extent, like special pioneer work, but the missionary is in a foreign land and usually has to learn a new language. The Society provides a home, food and a small monthly allowance

Some young persons set their hearts on missionary service before they finish their secular schooling; help them to see what steps to take

in order to reach their goal and make a success of it

Circuit and district overseers are traveling elders appointed by the Society to their circuit and district positions; those who serve in this way have had much experience in positions of oversight and in the field ministry, usually having been pioneers for some time

There is a constant need for willing workers at Bethel

To qualify, one must be baptized for a year; preference is shown for those who are pioneers; most of those invited are between the ages of 17 and 35, some up to 40; must be in good health and willing to work hard

Single brothers are particularly desired; married couples may apply if they have been married for three years and have no family members dependent on them; single sisters too are called, but the opportunities for single sisters are usually greater in the field

Those who apply must agree to stay at Bethel for at least 4 years; but encourage applicants to think in terms of making a career of Bethel service

From time to time, speak in the congregation about the work that is done by the brothers at Bethel, how it contributes to the advancement of pure worship, the need for willing volunteers, etc.

When asked by the branch office for your comments about a Bethel applicant, please be straightforward in what you say; if someone is not a hard worker, is independent or disrespectful, or is of questionable moral standing, he will not be an asset at Bethel; do not recommend anyone for Bethel simply because you think 'it would be good for him.' The question should be, Will he be good for Bethel?

Be balanced in offering encouragement to reach out for these special opportunities of service. Encourage all who are able to do so to view them as opportunities to serve Jehovah with greater freedom from the world and to the full extent that their circumstances allow; others should rejoice with those able to lay hold of these opportunities, while they themselves serve Jehovah whole-souled in their particular circumstances

Do not make others feel unfaithful because they are not doing the same; circumstances may differ; some may need further help to grow in knowledge, experience and appreciation

Our seeking advancement should not be motivated by personal pride, a competitive spirit, the seeking of prominence or to please men (1 Tim. 3:6; Gal. 5:26; 1:10)

Because of desiring to bring praise to our heavenly Father, we should all ever seek to reflect his qualities in fuller measure (Matt. 5:16)

As we come to know Jehovah better, more fully

appreciate what he has done for us and the rightness of his ways, it is only natural that we feel moved to give of ourselves more fully in doing his will

MAIN POINT: Elders should encourage those able to take up added privileges of service to do so,

but all of us can make advancement in conforming our lives to God's Word

SOURCES: *sg* 188-192; or 136-147

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Either during the lecture or at its conclusion discuss with students how persons in the congregation might be encouraged to reach out for temporary or regular pioneer service, Bethel or other opportunities of full-time ministry

No. 46 - Second Thursday, 3:00

Handling Congregation Records and Correspondence

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE BRANCH OFFICE

Correspondence to and from each congregation is usually handled through the presiding overseer

Other elders or ministerial servants prepare reports, orders, subscriptions, remittances, etc.; the presiding overseer checks them and adds his signature

Letters written to the branch office should show full congregation name, including city, state and number, if assigned, as well as complete mailing address of presiding overseer in upper right-hand corner of letter

When replying to a letter received from the branch office include date and office desk symbols in opening paragraph

Elder and ministerial servant recommendations should be addressed to the Governing Body in care of the branch office on the form provided Include the person's name, age, date of baptism, whether of the anointed or "other sheep," whether recommended as an elder or ministerial servant and notation as to previous appointment of service

Other correspondence is simply addressed to the branch office

All cases of disfellowshipment or disassociation should be reported in writing to the branch by the judicial committee

A letter should be submitted to the office immediately after the decision is reached, all three on the judicial committee signing the letter

Give full name of the individual, date of and reason for the action, and a brief review of the evidence

Retain carbon copy in congregation's permanent file

Additionally, a written record should be submitted to the branch about any elder, ministerial servant, regular pioneer or special pioneer whose privileges are restricted because of wrongdoing

When recommending the removal of elders or ministerial servants for any other reason, a

brief explanation should be submitted to the Governing Body

The outgoing presiding overseer should submit the "Presiding Overseer's Report on Congregation" (S-10)

This report will include presiding overseer's personal observations on spiritual condition of congregation, congregation's accomplishments during the year and apparent future needs

It should be read to all elders at a meeting early in September; send original to the branch and put carbon copy in congregation file (Discuss S-10 with class)

Elders should review qualifications of regular pioneers (if any) each December

Submit Personal Qualifications Report (S-326) for only those who have potential for enlarging their service privileges or whose circumstances would allow them to move elsewhere to serve as regular or special pioneers

Reports are not required for pioneers whose marriage mate is not pioneering, infirm pioneers, pioneers with family obligations that would prevent them from moving, pioneers who will soon leave that service

Reports should be submitted on those who have the desire to expand their service to Bethel, Gilead or special pioneering, etc., and who are in position to do so (Discuss S-326 form)

MAGAZINES, OTHER LITERATURE, SUBSCRIPTIONS AND HANDBILLS

Total *distributors' copies* of magazines desired should be ordered on a Distributors' Order (M-202)

Quantities can be determined by having publishers place a standing order for a set amount for each issue

Publishers may get their study copies through the congregational arrangement

Encourage regular pickup of magazines to keep account balanced

Check that magazines received equal amount shown on label

Presiding overseer should write the branch when a discrepancy exists

Each week submit money received to brother caring for accounts

The quantity of *literature* to be ordered should be determined by checking the movement of the same or similar items during the previous year. Order only once a month whenever possible.

Encourage all publishers and pioneers to order literature, including *Yearbooks*, through the congregation.

(Review information in opening pages of *Cost List* [S-15])

When you receive shipments they should be checked for completeness.

Discrepancies should be reported promptly to the branch by the presiding overseer.

Each week submit money received to the brother caring for the accounts.

A progressive inventory of literature is kept for the congregation.

Actual-count inventory is taken September 1 each year and the special form (S-18) is sent to the branch by September 6.

Subscription slips (M-1 and M-101) should be submitted in *duplicate* by the publishers to the brother caring for the accounts for forwarding to the branch weekly.

The brother responsible should check for legibility, neatness, accurateness and completeness. The congregation name, and number if assigned, should be shown on each slip.

The subscription slips, together with Remittance and Credit Request (S-20) form and covering remittance, should be given to the presiding overseer to be checked and sent to the branch.

The duplicate slips, marked "COPY," are clipped together, dated as to when they were mailed to the branch and filed.

Handbills should be ordered on the Handbill Order form (S-16).

Presiding overseer and field overseer should carefully check the order form for completeness.

Special instructions under "Points to Remember" should be followed each time an order is submitted.

Payment should accompany each order; use a separate form for each style of handbill.

A minimum of six weeks should be allowed for printing and receipt.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACCOUNTS RECORDS

Contributions received at congregation meetings should be entered on the accounts records after each meeting.

Contributions received at the Kingdom Hall will be collected by the brother caring for the accounts, at which time he will make out a receipt.

Contributions received at the study groups will be collected at the end of each study and turned in regularly to the brother caring for the accounts, who will issue a receipt.

A bank account in the name of the congregation may be opened.

All checks drawn on the account should be signed by two persons designated by the body of elders.

All expenditures must be approved by the presiding overseer.

Magazine, literature and remaining subscription remittances should be submitted to the branch office by the 6th day of the following month.

A Remittance and Credit Request form (S-20) should be used.

The proper remittance should accompany the form.

The brother caring for the accounts should prepare a monthly financial report, which should be read to the congregation.

The form for such a report is shown in the Instructions for Congregation Accounting (S-27).

The presiding overseer should see to it that the congregation accounts are audited every three months, in September, December, March and June.

Any irregularities found should be reconciled before the next audit.

Financial contributions to the Society will be used for the advancement of the Kingdom work.

Some brothers contribute a specific sum annually, others contribute at other periodic times (1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 9:7).

None should feel his contribution is too small to be sent (2 Cor. 8:12).

Funds and property can be willed to the Society. Those desiring to do this may write to the branch for details; however, the Society does not draw up wills for individuals.

In some countries the Society accepts "conditional donations" from the brothers, which funds may be returned to the individual on request.

Brothers may inquire for details if such an arrangement is available locally.

Congregations may resolve to contribute money to Society at times if circumstances permit.

The contributions received are used wisely by the Society to cover expenses of operating branches, printeries and farms, and to cover missionary, special pioneer and circuit and district expenses.

Contributions are also used at times to assist needy brothers and sisters who are victims of persecution or some disaster such as a flood or an earthquake (Rom. 15:26).

Care in handling records, funds and correspondence in connection with congregational matters shows appreciation for privilege of service.

Accurately Teaching the Way of Truth

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO TEACH THE TRUTH ACCURATELY

Changes in the thinking and the lives of people depend on their getting accurate knowledge (Col. 3:10)

Only when a person sees clearly what is required, and appreciates why it is right, will that one be moved to change his personality

Hazy ideas do not have the same effect, as they leave one in a state of uncertainty

In faithfulness to our God, we should accurately convey his words (1 Tim. 2:3, 4)

Accurately conveyed teaching provides a solid foundation for faith and stimulates to activity (Phil. 1:9-11)

Accurately conveyed teaching honors the Source of the teaching, the Grand Instructor, Jehovah (Isa. 30:20)

"PREACH THE WORD," NOT SOMETHING ELSE

Elders have the responsibility to "preach the word," God's message (2 Tim. 4:2)

They should avoid preaching their own opinions on matters that are up to one's conscience and avoid speculating on world events and other matters, not trying to stir up others through sensationalism (1 Tim. 1:3-7; Titus 3:9; Rom. 14:3, 4, 10)

Nothing we might say is as effective in accomplishing God's will as the Bible itself (Heb. 4:12)

Be sure that any counsel you give is fully in harmony with God's Word; wrong advice (e.g., on matters of marriage and divorce, also on Christian neutrality) can lead a person into serious sin

If you are not sure, consult with other elders; check the Society's publications for Scriptural guidance

CONVEY ACCURATE KNOWLEDGE WHEN DEALING WITH AN INDIVIDUAL

Your teaching may be accurate, but the other person may draw wrong conclusions; you cannot completely avoid this, but there are suggestions that may be of help

Early in the discussion, endeavor to find out what the other person thinks on the subject being considered (Matt. 16:13-16)

Give him opportunity to express himself; ask questions

This puts you in position to emphasize the points needing special attention (Luke 24:13-27)

Have the other person read certain scriptures and then ask him what they mean; in this way you

find out whether he really is drawing accurate conclusions

At the end of your discussion, review key points; having heard your arguments in support of them, his mind may be more receptive to them; also, repetition helps one to get details clearly in mind

ACCURATELY TEACHING THE TRUTH FROM THE PLATFORM

Prepare well so that you really know what you are talking about

Good preparation does much to prevent one from making inaccurate statements; inaccuracy in details undermines the confidence of your hearers in what you say

Lack of clarity may result from inadequate preparation; as a result the audience may draw wrong conclusions

Teaching involves more than simply reading Bible texts; help your audience to understand them

Emphasize key portions of the texts under consideration (Rom. 10:6-10)

Make application to the argument that is being developed

Do not try to cover too much

Though you may have the points clearly in your mind, will the audience come away with accurate understanding?

Take time to use contrast to help clear out misconceptions they may have

Ask rhetorical questions to prepare their minds for important ideas; then state them

Key thoughts often need to be repeated

Enthusiasm in your delivery does much to keep audience alert, interested, so they really hear and remember good material that you present

DRAW ATTENTION TO THE CONTEXT TO SHOW REASON FOR SCRIPTURE EXPLANATION GIVEN

Who are the "superior authorities" referred to in Romans 13:1? (See verse 6)

Does Matthew 24:7 apply only to "the conclusion of the system of things" since 1914 C.E.? (See verses 1-3, 16)

At Romans 15:1, what are the "weaknesses" that strong ones ought to bear and how? (See Romans 14:1-4, 13-15, 20, 21)

Who are "God's children" as referred to at Romans 8:16? (See verse 17, also Romans 1:7)

Where did Cain get his wife, as referred to in Genesis 4:17? (See Genesis 5:4; 3:20)

Who were the bad associates that Paul had in

mind when he wrote the words of 1 Corinthians 15:33? (See verses 12, 32 and 34)

At Matthew 5:48, what did Jesus mean when he said, 'You must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect'? (See verses 43-47)

In the days of Jesus' earthly ministry, who was the "rich man" referred to at Luke 16:19? (See verses 14, 15)

From what are we to 'buy out the opportune time,' as stated at Ephesians 5:16? (See verse 11)

When Paul wrote, at Titus 2:14, that we are to be "zealous for fine works," to what works did he refer? (See Titus 2:1-10; 3:1)

EXPLAIN SCRIPTURES BY USING OTHER BIBLE TEXTS

What is meant by Jesus' words at John 10:30 that 'he and his Father are one'? (John 17:20-23)

What is the "founding of the world" before which Jesus was foreknown, as stated at 1 Peter 1:20? (Luke 11:50, 51)

What did Jesus mean when he said, as recorded at Luke 21:33: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will by no means pass away"? (Matt. 5:18; Luke 16:17)

Does 2 Peter 3:7 show that the literal earth is going to be destroyed by fire? (Ps. 104:5; 37:29; Matt. 5:5)

What is the "wild beast" referred to at Revelation 13:1, 2? (Dan. 7:1-7, 17, 23; 8:3-8, 20-22)

EMPHASIZE THE KEY PORTION OF SCRIPTURES TO MAKE CLEAR THEIR APPLICATION TO THE SUBJECT UNDER DISCUSSION

Christ died on a stake, not a cross (Gal. 3:13; Acts 5:30)

It is not necessary to be "born again" in order to have God's spirit (Ex. 35:30, 31; Judg. 6:34)

The soul is the creature himself, and earthly souls are not immortal (Gen. 2:7; Ezek. 18:4)

Christ's one sacrifice was sufficient; it is not repeated in the Mass (Rom. 6:10; Heb. 9:25-28)

Christ's second presence is in spirit (John 14:19; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16)

A Christian must have no part in interfaith movements (2 Cor. 6:14-17)

Taking blood into one's body in any way violates God's laws (Gen. 9:3, 4; Acts 15:28, 29)

Christ's congregation is built upon himself, not upon Peter as the foundation (Eph. 2:20; Isa. 28:16; Matt. 21:42)

Prayers must be directed to Jehovah through Christ, not through "saints" (John 14:6, 13, 14; 1 Tim. 2:5)

Observance of a weekly sabbath day is not required of Christians (Deut. 5:15; Ex. 20:1, 2, 8; Rom. 10:4; Gal. 4:9, 10; Col. 2:16, 17)

MAIN POINT: To convey accurate knowledge, be sure that what you say is in full harmony with the Bible, and use appropriate means to make sure that your hearers really grasp what you say

SOURCES: *ad* 1578-1580; *sg* 49-54

TEACHING SUGGESTION: High points of material may be discussed with class for about an hour. Remaining time may be used for a number of three- to five-minute scenes with brother explaining on return visit one of concluding doctrinal points. Select teachings for discussion that particularly apply in your area, assigning material to students in advance. Use scriptures shown. Students should not spend much time on preparation, but consider it like any return visit where one is prepared to talk a few minutes on a subject of interest to householder

No. 48 - Second Friday, 9:10

Safeguarding the Cleanness of the Congregation, Part 2

DISFELLOWSHIPING THOSE WHO ARE UNREPENTANT

Persons who commit serious sins and are unrepentant must be disfellowshipped

Elders must show respect for Jehovah's standards of righteousness and holiness; also protect congregation from willful sinners (1 Cor. 5:9-13)

Care should be exercised by judicial committee in accepting profession of "repentance" where evasive lying, deceit or collusion had been involved

If decision is to disfellowship, judicial committee should draw up announcement for reading to

congregation. To avoid legal difficulties, do not state specifically in the announcement why person was disfellowshipped. Simply state that he or she was disfellowshipped for "conduct unbecoming a Christian." It is a protection to the congregation not to give anything in writing to disfellowshipped person

If baptized person joins a secular organization the entire purpose of which is opposed to the Scriptures, he thereby repudiates the congregation and disassociates himself from it (Matt. 4:8, 9; John 6:15; Isa. 2:2-4)

If investigation of elders proves that he has done this of his own accord, then an announcement

is made to the congregation so that all will know the decision he has made, announcing that the person named, "by his course of conduct, has disassociated himself from the congregation of Jehovah's people"

The judicial committee should notify the branch office in each case, whether the individual was disfellowshipped or disassociated himself

Each member of the judicial committee should sign letter, which should give the date of the action (or date of recognition of disassociation), the ground and a brief review of the evidence for it

Disfellowshipped or disassociated one may attend meetings open to the public if he conducts himself properly; he may not attend meetings held in a private home (2 John 10)

He should not try to speak to others in attendance, just as they will not greet or talk to him

Territory will not be assigned, neither will field reports be accepted from him, as he is not sponsored by the congregation in any preaching he might do. Copies of the Society's publications may be obtained for personal use

If elders learn of recent wrongdoing on part of a baptized one who has not associated for some time, they should do what they can to clear the name of the congregation and to keep it in right standing with God

NONBAPTIZED ASSOCIATES WHO ARE WRONGDOERS

Unbaptized ones who have been regularly associating and who become involved in serious wrongdoing should be dealt with in a way similar to that in the case of those who are baptized

They may not fully understand the Bible's standards, and kind counsel and assistance may help them to adjust their lives

If they are unrepentant, the congregation should be advised that their conduct is "unbecoming a Christian"; but since they are not members of the congregation, they are not formally expelled from it

Nevertheless, elders recommend that none in congregation associate with such a one, in line with 1 Corinthians 15:33. Service reports not accepted; but he can attend meetings if he behaves himself

Association can be accorded him again when he gives up the practice of wrongdoing and shows he wants to live by Bible principles. This may take several months or longer, depending on the circumstances

DEALING WITH MINOR CHILDREN

If a young person gets baptized, thereby becoming a member of the congregation, it shows he wishes to be an obedient disciple of Christ

While a minor, he is still subject to his parents, but now he also comes under the headship of Christ, Head of congregation, and if guilty of

gross disobedience, would have to answer to the elders who have responsibility to deal with such conduct on the part of any members. Being a minor would not shield him from congregational reproof

Parents are responsible to care for minor trespasses on the part of all their children, without trying to shift load upon elders (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:20; Heb. 12:9)

If baptized minor makes a practice of wrongdoing, or does something of a serious nature that might lead to disfellowshipping, or that brings congregation into a bad light, this should be brought to the attention of the elders

Judicial committee will then meet with baptized minor; it is advisable for parents to be present to hear what is said

Primary objective of elders, as with any who commit serious sins, is to "gain" the young brother or sister. In doing so, seek cooperation of parents, in harmonious coordination of authority

As necessary, discipline is administered: May require public reproof, depending upon gravity, extent congregation is affected or sin is known; if, even despite loving but firm help given, unrepentant baptized child persists in wrong course, he should be disfellowshipped

In handling situations involving unbaptized minors who regularly associate with congregation, elders will follow same principles and procedure as with baptized minors

No formal disfellowshipping where unbaptized minor is unrepentant, but congregation should be advised of the situation by announcement, enabling the congregation to safeguard itself against harm

Parents have obligation to cooperate fully with elders in caring for spiritual purity of congregation, placing the spiritual interests and safety of congregation above family relationships, not covering up or excusing flagrant sinning on part of their children

HANDLING CASES INVOLVING MARRIED COUPLES

Unless serious wrongdoing, elders should be careful not to intervene unnecessarily in marital affairs; can help where asked to do so

If serious wrongdoing comes to light, the judicial committee could counsel, reprove or disfellowship either mate as necessary

If wife is wrongdoer, they seek to coordinate their oversight with baptized husband's exercise of headship over wife

If husband is offender, admonition and correction will be given by judicial committee, in view of wife's subordinate position

Restrictions on either mate would be governed by same factors as when any others are counseled or reprovved by committee

REINSTATING REPENTANT DISFELLOWSHIPIED PERSONS

If elder is approached by disfellowshipped one, elder may give general comments on what person needs to do to be reinstated

This would not mean a review of his case, as this must be done by the current judicial committee; elder should direct disfellowshipped one to committee for help toward reinstatement

Genuine repentance and turning away from wrong course are the chief determining factors in deciding when a person may be reinstated, not the specific act committed nor merely the time elapsed

It may be several months, a year or even years after disfellowshipping before reinstatement is possible

A precedent is established by Paul's instructions to the congregation in Corinth in handling the case of a serious wrongdoer there. (Discuss 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 9-13 and 2 Corinthians 2:6-8. Second letter likely written only few months after first one)

Judicial committee should exercise special care to see that one is truly repentant if lying, deceit or conspiracy was previously manifest by individual

If committee decides that person can be reinstated, an announcement is prepared for the congregation; branch office is advised

As in Corinth, all in the congregation should "kindly forgive" and "comfort" repentant one. Since he is not spiritually strong, he will need help as he also applies self to grow spiritually

Privileges will be restored gradually

In time, committee may decide he can comment in meetings and still later do more as he makes spiritual progress. A year or even more may pass before he is called on to share in parts on the meetings or otherwise serve in representative capacity, possibly even offering prayer

Must be "free from accusation" and "irreprehensible" before recommended for appointment as ministerial servant or elder. (1 Tim. 3:2, 7, 10; Titus 1:6, 7) Must 'live down' reproach and build up convincing record of righteousness. May take five, ten or fifteen years, depending upon gravity of wrongdoing. Some may never do so sufficiently in their lifetimes

If disfellowshipped person moves, announcement should be made of his disfellowshipped status at new congregation where he attends

Any plea for reinstatement could be made to judicial committee of congregation where he now attends meetings; they consider evidence of repentance and right conduct and write recommendation to the judicial committee that first took the action

The decision as to reinstatement would be made by the now-existing committee of the congregation where the disfellowshipping took place

APPEALING DECISIONS OF A JUDICIAL COMMITTEE

An appeal can be made to local body of elders for a rehearing of one's case, if one believes an error in judgment was made

A new judicial committee can be made up of different elders from same congregation or from neighboring congregations, if necessary

It is recommended that the presiding overseer write the branch office and have the office recommend elders who can help in hearing the appeal

All previous evidence should be reheard, along with any new evidence

Wherever possible, members of the judicial committee who previously heard the case should be present. They can point out any discrepancies they observe and testify as necessary

Appeal committee may wish to question the first committee on reasons for reaching conclusion they did

The testimony of all witnesses who have pertinent testimony and any written records should be considered

Decision of appeal committee is final, whether they affirm or reverse the former decision

If disfellowshipping is upheld, appeal committee does not determine when offender is reinstated but that responsibility belongs with committee of congregation where offender was a member

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL ELDERS A WEIGHTY ONE

Not just elders on judicial committee but all elders are responsible to shepherd flock, teaching, reproving, reprimanding and exhorting as necessary (Titus 1:9-14; 2 Tim. 1:7; 4:1-5)

Great care should be exercised in order to avoid partiality, never letting fleshly relationships or personal friendships cause favoritism or bias in judgment (Deut. 1:17; 1 Pet. 1:17)

If an elder is personally involved in a case, perhaps needed to serve as a witness or related to a wrongdoer, it may be advisable for him to step down from judicial committee and let another elder take his place to avoid any appearance of partiality

Seek to imitate Jehovah and his Son in showing mercy, dealing "moderately with the ignorant and erring ones," as the high priest of Israel was instructed to do (Heb. 5:2; Matt. 5:7)

Seek to "gain" erring ones, "instructing with mildness those not favorably disposed," or who show wrong thinking or understanding for a time (2 Tim. 2:23-26)

Paul did not prefer to act with severity (2 Cor. 13:10)

Elders must never be disloyal to God or show disrespect for his holiness, nor manifest lack of love for brothers they serve by allowing wrongdoers to go uncorrected or unproved; cannot tolerate corrupting influences (Compare 1 Samuel 2:12-17, 27-30; Malachi 2:8, 9; Jude 3, 4)

Elders can request assistance and counsel from fellow elders in a neighboring congregation. This can be done without first corresponding with the branch office

Ministerial servants do not handle judicial matters

EACH ONE'S PART IN SAFEGUARDING THE CLEANNES OF THE CONGREGATION

All in congregation have responsibility to help keep congregation clean. (2 Cor. 7:1) This is done by: One's own personal conduct; resisting temptation; refusing to feed mind on wrong ideas; by parents' properly training and discipling their children; younger persons' being

obedient to parents and refusing to imitate world and its ways; and by properly teaching interested ones Bible's high moral standards

If one witnesses serious wrongdoing, or comes to know of it, loyalty to God and his Son will motivate him to bring it to attention of judicial committee. (Discuss Deuteronomy 13:6-8; Leviticus 5:1; Proverbs 29:24) We do not help wrongdoer by concealing his wrongdoing

Decisions of judicial committee should be respected and upheld by all in congregation. Living by Jehovah's requirements now is preparation for life in God's new system. Learning and impressing God's righteous precepts on mind and heart will help us go the right way and avoid great sorrow, leading to God's blessing and everlasting life

MAIN POINT: All have a responsibility to keep the congregation clean, in order to have Jehovah's continued favor and blessing

SOURCE: or 170-182

No. 49 - Second Friday, 10:40

How to Aid Those with Marital Problems

RESPONSIBILITY OF ELDERS TO HELP THOSE WITH MARITAL PROBLEMS

First-century elders helped persons with marital problems; under inspiration they provided counsel that elders today can use to help Christian couples (Eph. 5:21-33; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

The goal of elders is to help couples apply God's counsel so that they 'stick together,' and enjoy the happiness God purposed for marriage to bring (Matt. 19:4-6)

It is not the business of elders to butt into others' private marital affairs. However, when couples desire help, elders should be willing to provide it

WHAT ELDERS CAN DO TO HELP COUPLES RESOLVE MARITAL PROBLEMS

Whenever possible, talk with couple together about their problems, rather than listening to only one side

It is not your place to set rules, but simply show the Scriptural principles involved and how these can be applied

Be patient; remember that problems often are old and wounds deep, so the healing process may be slow

Try to help couple to look above their problems to see that marriage is Jehovah's provision, and that his name and reputation are connected with it (Gen. 2:18-24)

Marriage is an arrangement instituted by God; he blessed the union of the first human pair, and assigned them activities that would bring

them happiness if they faithfully carried them out (Gen. 1:28)

Satan and his wicked system try to downgrade marriage; Christian husbands and wives can bring honor to Jehovah's name by handling matters in His way, on the basis of love

Help them to realize that marital problems are due to failure to apply the counsel of God's Word; this may reflect failure to have regular Scriptural discussion or family study (Prov. 3:1-6)

Help them to appreciate value of such regular discussion or family study; perhaps you can invite them to join your family study a time or two to build appreciation for the arrangement

If there is screaming, lack of forgiveness, repaying of evil for evil, this is all due to failure to put on the new personality, which results from accurate knowledge of God's Word (Col. 3:7-10)

If they start to make strong accusations and counteraccusations and to raise their voices, ask that they direct their comments to you

Point out that one of their basic problems evidently is inability to communicate. What is the reason?

One problem is that they need to learn to cultivate the fruits of God's spirit, including kindness, mildness and self-control. God gladly gives his spirit to those who ask for it (Luke 11:9, 10, 13); so they need to learn to pray for Jehovah's help before they speak (Jas. 1:5)

The ability to discuss matters in an upbuilding manner will also be aided by their learning to be forgiving (Luke 17:4; Eph. 4:31, 32)

Use the Bible to remind the husband he is "head of his wife" and "ought to be loving her as himself," and try to help him see how he can improve in doing this (Eph. 5:23, 28, 29)

As head of his wife, does he really shoulder the responsibility of headship?

Does he show love for his wife by taking into consideration her feelings and desires in his decisions? Or does he think primarily of his own pleasure, be it in sex relations, how they spend their leisure time, where they go for vacation, or other matters?

Make clear that "loving one's wife as oneself" means to think of her happiness and well-being just as much as his own

In dealing with marital problems elder should show recognition of his headship

Use the Bible to remind the wife that she should "be in subjection" and "have deep respect for her husband," and try to help her see how she can apply this counsel more fully (Eph. 5:22, 23, 33)

She can show subjection by wholeheartedly co-operating with her husband's headship, working with him to make his plans for the family a success

Even where she feels that her husband is not doing his part, she can find pleasure in performing her wifely responsibilities in a way that honors Jehovah (Compare 1 Peter 2:18; 3:1, 2)

After discussing the problem at hand, ask them individually what they really believe can be done to improve their marital relationship; ask what Bible counsel they feel that they need to work harder to apply in their marriage, also what contribution they individually could make to improve the situation

PERSONAL DECISIONS NEED TO BE MADE ON CERTAIN MATTERS

Husbands and wives must personally decide and bear responsibility for the outcome of certain matters in their lives; elders should make clear that they cannot tell them what to do (Gal. 6:5)

Use of contraceptives is one of these; could point out what has been said in the Society's publications, but then leave the decision up to them

They must also decide whether to go through with an operation that, while it does not have sterilization as its objective, may result in sterilization

When questions are raised about the propriety of certain things that the husband and wife may do in sex play, encourage loving consideration for the health and happiness of the other person; of course, oral and anal copulation are gross perversions of what is "nat-

ural" in view of how their bodies are made (Rom. 1:26, 27; 1 Cor. 13:5)

In the matter of sex relations during the woman's menstrual period, due consideration should be given to what is stated in the Mosaic law, even though Christians are not under the Law (Lev. 20:18)

Parents of minor children who run away, lie about their age and then get married, have a personal decision to make

The parents can have the marriage annulled, in which case the judicial committee will handle the matter as fornication and lying on the part of the children

Or the parents can decide to let the marriage stand if law allows for marriage of persons so young, in which case the judicial committee will deal with the children's gross disrespect of parental authority and lying about their age

Should a member of the congregation forgive an adulterous mate? That is a decision that the individual must make; no one else can make the decision

If an innocent mate continues to live with a mate who practices adultery, even though disfellowshipped, for the sake of his (or her) own sexual satisfaction or, in the case of a wife, in order to have needed support for herself and the children, it is a personal matter; of course, as a Christian she cannot approve the immoral conduct of the wrongdoer

PROBLEMS THAT ARISE WHEN COUPLES CHOOSE DIVORCE

They may not be free to remarry; God's Word specifies only grounds for divorce (Matt. 19:9)

If a couple continues to have sex relations after the innocent one learns of the other mate's sexual unfaithfulness, it is an extending of forgiveness; a divorce cannot be obtained after that on the grounds of that "fornication"

Until final decree is issued by the divorce court, even where based on Scriptural grounds, the man and woman are still married and so should not seek close association of other persons of opposite sex

Persons who divorce on grounds other than "fornication" in the Bible sense are often put in circumstances in which there are powerful temptations to engage in sexual immorality (Matt. 5:32)

Once a couple is so divorced they should not have sex relations with each other, for this would constitute fornication under Caesar's law and would not be "honoring the marriage bed"; congregational action may be taken against them if they do this (Heb. 13:4)

Also, for either divorced mate to marry someone else would be adultery, because in God's sight their marriage is not dissolved. They could, however, remarry each other if both are

Scripturally and legally free (thus showing respect for Caesar's laws)

Divorce creates problems for any children of the couple; it leaves them without the guidance of either a full-time father or mother, and it sets a bad example that may hinder them from accepting the truth

ELDERS CAN AID UNMARRIED PERSONS AND THOSE WHO HAVE MARRIAGE IN MIND

Elders should be helpful to those who have marriage in mind, especially if such ones ask for advice

A couple considering marriage should be shown the importance of keeping morally clean, avoiding circumstances that could lead to loose conduct or committing fornication (1 Thess. 4:3-8)

Premarital misconduct is often the cause of marital problems later, and a bad conscience. When couples inform others of an agreement to marry, their word should stand. One-sidedly breaking an engagement without valid cause brings loss of privileges, including pioneering (Matt. 5:37)

The counsel to marry "only in the Lord" should be emphasized if a Christian is contemplating marriage (1 Cor. 7:39)

Can Jehovah's blessing be expected on a marriage when a dedicated servant ignores this counsel of God? Is it living in harmony with God's command, "Do not become unequally yoked with unbelievers"? (2 Cor. 6:14)

Is a marriage to an unbeliever worth throwing away one's life for? God's Word warns that this is a likely consequence (Deut. 7:3, 4)

An incestuous marriage is grossly improper, not only according to the principle of the Mosaic law, but according to the law of practically all lands (Lev. 18:6)

Governmental laws on marriage of cousins vary, so Christians will comply with such laws that apply where they live (Rom. 13:1)

At times elders can observe by the dress, speech, attitude or conduct of unmarried persons that they should properly be given assistance, even though they may not ask for it

An unmarried couple keeping close company may be warned about the danger of loose conduct, fondling each other's sex organs, noting that this is a Scriptural ground for disfellowshipping (Gal. 5:19, 21)

Also, occasion may arise when young people need to be helped to see that masturbation engaged in with another person of the same sex is a form of homosexuality, and can lead to disfellowshipping

Masturbation of oneself is also, unclean, and young persons may need counsel to appreciate how God views the matter

PATIENTLY HELP MARRIED COUPLES TO MAINTAIN BALANCE

To make their marriage a success, married persons must be balanced, caring for marital responsibilities while also giving due attention to other duties in serving God

A married minister cannot devote himself to an unlimited extent to marriage, home, and family (1 Cor. 7:29-31)

However, a married minister should give first consideration to the spiritual interests of his own household (1 Tim. 5:8)

In handling all cases dealing with marital problems, supplicate Jehovah for his spirit; show patience and consideration, and encourage close adherence to Scriptural guidelines for greatest happiness and Jehovah's blessing

MAIN POINT: In aiding those who have marital problems, elders should direct attention to the counsel of God's Word, not making decisions for others that are their personal responsibility

SOURCES: tr 178-180; ad 519, 1041, 1042; w69 765-768; w72 575, 576

No. 50 - Second Friday, 2:10

Resurrection Magnifies God's Power and Love

WHAT THE RESURRECTION IS

"Resurrection" means a raising up, and is understood in the Scriptures as applying to raising persons who have died

It does not require the reproducing of the identical bodies

The soul (the person) is what is resurrected; the body at death decays and goes back to the dust (Ps. 16:9, 10)

Resurrected ones will be recognized and identified by their life pattern or way of life, not necessarily by identical bodies

God has the individual's life pattern in his memory, and in the resurrection will implant it in a body that he provides

WHY GOD MADE PROVISION FOR THE RESURRECTION

The resurrection was not part of God's original purpose for man, since man, if obedient, would have lived forever (Gen. 2:17)

Death was introduced through the transgression of Adam (Rom. 5:12)

Jehovah lovingly made provision by means of the resurrection to overcome the sting of death

in the case of Adam's offspring desiring to be obedient (1 Cor. 15:55-57)

Jehovah could have let Adam and Eve die childless, and so avoided what shortsighted, faithless men have described as untold ages of suffering and pain

But the race of men that started with Adam and its grand potential was close to the Creator's heart; so, out of love, he purposed to provide the way out for multitudes from sin's deathly effects (John 3:16; Rom. 8:20, 21)

Jehovah's power to provide a resurrection enables him to let Satan go even to the point of killing some faithful servants in a vain attempt to support his false accusations (Matt. 24:9; Rev. 2:10; 6:11)

The willingness of Jehovah's servants to give up life itself in God's service proves their service is not for selfish considerations but for love; it also proves their faith in God's almighty power and in his love toward them

Jesus' example of faith (Matt. 16:21; Heb. 12:2)

Since the resurrection can undo all the damage resulting from Adam's transgression and the sufferings brought about by Satan and his wicked seed, the resurrection is essential for God's purpose toward the earth to be realized and for humans to be truly happy (Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 15:19)

SURETY OF THE RESURRECTION HOPE

We can have confidence in God's ability to keep the life pattern of people in his memory and bring them back to life

Even men, with imperfect mental powers, can preserve on a phonograph record or a magnetic tape the speech and singing of a person; they can preserve and reconstruct visible and audible scenes by means of videotape

Jehovah's ability in keeping records is far greater. He calls all the countless stars by name (Ps. 147:4)

Because of his perfect memory of life patterns, Jehovah could count faithful men like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as being alive (Luke 20:37, 38)

Jehovah's great power demonstrates that the resurrection is not too difficult for him

Jehovah's power sustains the entire material universe; hence that power is enough to restore individuals to life (Ps. 148:3-6)

Resurrection is no more difficult for the Creator to bring about than the creation of man originally

Jehovah miraculously restored the reproductive powers of Abraham and Sarah, which was comparable to a resurrection and made it possible for Abraham's family line to continue through Sarah (Heb. 11:11, 12)

Resurrections that occurred in the past and were confirmed by reliable witnesses add weight to the reliability of the resurrection hope (1 Ki.

17:21-23; 2 Ki. 4:32-37; Mark 5:35, 41-43; Luke 7:11-17; John 11:43-45; Acts 9:36-42; 20:7-12)

The resurrection of Jesus Christ furnishes a guarantee that there will be a resurrection for both the righteous and the unrighteous (Acts 17:31; 24:15)

Jesus became "firstfruits" from the dead and his anointed followers become 'certain firstfruits of God's creatures' (1 Cor. 15:20; Jas. 1:18)

Jehovah's blessing, as represented by the firstfruits of Israel's literal crops, guaranteed a bountiful harvest to follow; likewise the resurrection of Christ and his anointed followers guarantees a bountiful harvest of persons yet to be raised from the dead

Jesus' resurrection was historically confirmed by many witnesses and it is therefore unreasonable to reject it (1 Cor. 15:3-8)

RESURRECTION

BY JEHOVAH'S CHOSEN AGENT

Jehovah God, in rewarding his Son for faithfulness to death, granted him all authority in heaven and on earth, including authority over those in mankind's common grave (Matt. 28:18; John 5:21-23; Phil. 2:9-11)

During his earthly ministry Jesus could therefore refer to himself as "the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25)

He promised to raise to life his own joint heirs of the heavenly kingdom (John 6:39; 14:2, 3; 1 Thess. 4:15, 16)

As God's chosen agent he could promise the time when all those brought out of the grave and who obediently heard his "voice" or teaching would get everlasting life (John 5:28, 29)

As God's chosen agent he also held forth to evil-doer the hope of resurrection to an earth restored to paradisaic conditions (Luke 23:40-43)

WHAT RESURRECTION MEANS FOR THE DEAD

Those restored to life in time of Hebrew prophets and in time of Jesus' earthly ministry and of his apostles had their life extended temporarily. They died again because ransom benefits were either not available or were not being applied to release them permanently from inheritance of death

A resurrection with the prospect of everlasting life in view is "better" (Heb. 11:35)

Resurrection of Jesus Christ and his anointed followers is a resurrection to immortal, incorruptible spirit life (1 Cor. 15:42-54)

Earthly resurrection opens up opportunity for those raised to gain everlasting life in human perfection

Persons will be judged as to how they adhere to the "scrolls" setting forth God's requirements for those living on earth then (Rev. 20:11, 12)

Basis for granting or denying everlasting life to resurrected ones will not be acts of their past life; their imperfection had already condemned them to death and their death was the wages paid for this (Rom. 6:7, 23)

Obedience will result in everlasting life for them as tried, tested subjects of God's kingdom under Christ; for obedient ones their resurrection will thus prove to be "resurrection of life" (John 5:29)

Any resurrected ones who fail to meet those just requirements will die again, a second death from which there can be no resurrection; this "second death" corresponds with the outcome to those whose resurrection proves to be "of judgment" (Rev. 20:14, 15; John 5:29)

Viewpoint of John 5:28, 29 is different from Paul's words at Acts 24:15 about the resurrection of "the righteous and the unrighteous" Acts 24:15 refers to those who are righteous or unrighteous before their death and resurrection under Christ's Kingdom rule

John 5:28, 29 speaks of condition as viewed at end of judgment period after resurrected ones have had opportunity under Kingdom rule to obey or disobey God's commandments

No willful sinners against God, such as Adam, Eve and Judas, nor any others who have sinned against his holy spirit, will be resurrected (Matt. 12:32; John 17:12)

Aside from those mentioned in God's Word as not coming back, there is no point in speculating as to whether certain notoriously wicked people in past or modern times will be resurrected or not

Jehovah God, not humans, knows whether people have sinned against his spirit

Rather than speculating, we should take to heart the warning examples of those who will not be resurrected and do our utmost to remain faithful to Jehovah

It is good to remember that the earthly resurrection sets before people the prospect of everlasting life

We can be sure that God's gifts, including the resurrection, will wholly satisfy all our desires and needs, for his gifts are perfect (Jas. 1:17)

Some may feel that they would not be happy if they could not live together with former marriage mates (Luke 20:34, 35)

They should keep in mind, however, that the thing of supreme importance and the source

of greatest joy is life as a devoted servant of Jehovah

It is really an undeserved kindness that resurrection does not hold forth the prospect of restoring family relationships to the identical state that existed at the time of a person's death

Such a thing would create problems for people who remarried after the death of their mates

Even now it could work hardship on people who might consequently try to remain single in order to be reunited with former marriage mates (1 Cor. 7:8, 9)

God does not tell us where or with whom resurrected ones will live, but we can have confidence that the arrangements will result in genuine happiness for his people (Prov. 10:22)

HOW FAITH IN THE RESURRECTION AFFECTS US

We do not sorrow in the way that the world does over the death of loved ones, knowing that they will be resurrected (1 Thess. 4:13, 14)

We are in position to comfort others (2 Cor. 1:3, 4)

We are stirred to share our hope with others so that they might bring their life into harmony with the Scriptures and entertain the prospect of welcoming back the dead and of being used by the Lord Jesus Christ in educating resurrected ones

The resurrection hope can make us firm, unbreakable in our love for God, able to conquer the world and its god (Rev. 12:11)

The resurrection hope gives us the strength to face death, if necessary, in order to maintain integrity (Matt. 10:28; Rev. 2:10)

The resurrection hope prevents us from making the pursuit of pleasure the main goal in life (1 Cor. 15:32)

MAIN POINT: The resurrection hope should enhance our appreciation for Jehovah's boundless love, wisdom and power. This hope should strengthen us to continue serving Jehovah faithfully regardless of the circumstances we might face

SOURCES: *ms* 424-429; *tr* 107-111; *ad* 1393-1400; *im* 345-359

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture

Legal Rights and Difficult Times

RECOGNIZING THE SUPERIORITY OF JEHOVAH AS LAWGIVER AND JUDGE

As the Creator, Jehovah has the supreme right to make laws and require obedience to these; his laws are always right (Ps. 19:7-9)

All mankind are accountable to the Creator. He judges humans on the basis of their response to the preaching of the "good news," which is a loving provision to bring them into harmony with him as their Creator (2 Thess. 1:8).

Before Jehovah even the rulers and judges of the nations are called to account (Ps. 2:10-12).

Those who do the will of God have no reason to fear man (Ps. 118:6).

The Christian's obligation toward God always takes first place.

Christians are obligated before God to obey secular laws that are not in conflict with Jehovah's law; but when laws of men command that they do what God has forbidden, or that they refrain from doing what God has commanded, Christians rightly put God's law first (Acts 4:19, 20; 5:29-32).

As to the law of God, the English jurist Blackstone acknowledged:

It "is, of course, superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe, in all countries, and at all times: no human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this; and such of them as are valid derive all their force and all their authority, mediately or immediately, from this original." (*Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England*, 1938, pp. 5, 6)

AVAILING OURSELVES OF RIGHTS UNDER SECULAR LAW

It is proper to take steps to defend and legally establish our right to preach the "good news," as Paul did (Phil. 1:7).

Rights that one may have as a citizen may be claimed in the interest of furthering the Christian ministry (Acts 16:37, 38; 22:25-28).

WHEN MAN'S LAWS AFFECT OUR FREEDOM TO MAKE KNOWN THE GOOD NEWS

Authorities may demand that we register or obtain a permit or a license to do our door-to-door work.

No objection to cooperating with police by registering with them, if requested, so they know who is calling at homes in the community, but it should not be necessary for a witness of Jehovah to apply for a permit to preach.

The Supreme Court of the United States has held that laws requiring such a permit are invalid and unconstitutional.

If authorities request that we obtain a permit, we will agree *only if no fee is involved*; we do not purchase a license for preaching. Dedicated witnesses already have divine authority to preach (Acts 13:47).

Some courts have claimed that our placing of literature from door to door is commercial. Our objective is in no way commercial; the United States Supreme Court ruled that this is not a commercial work but is "missionary evangelizing."

What if judicial courts of the land find us guilty and impose fines for preaching?

We do not pay fines for preaching as Jehovah commanded.

If a fine is imposed, we may appeal; if appeal is lost, we take a jail sentence or confiscation of some of our property instead of paying a fine; thus officials are forced to show clearly their position as to persecution of God's servants, and a further witness is given in vindication of Jehovah as Lawgiver.

The apostles were imprisoned for preaching, and Paul when held for trial refused to buy his way free by giving money to governors; he appealed only for a change of venue.

Do we have a right to enter trailer courts, apartment houses that have doormen to keep people out, hotels, motels, military establishments, college dormitories, company towns, etc.?

Take a positive approach; if access is not difficult, you may want to start right to work; in some cases you may want to speak first to the one in charge, explaining your work.

If admittance is refused, it may be better to use discretion and not cause a disturbance by persistence.

If accosted, calmly explain the work being done; if you are asked to leave, it is better to do so and try again later, rather than making a court issue.

We have plenty of people to whom to preach; it is better to keep doing this than to tie up our time in court cases.

Attempt to get names of interested ones so they can be followed up.

What should be done when we encounter a sign saying "No Soliciting" or "No Trespassing"?

These signs do not reasonably apply to us; we are ministers of God; we do not solicit funds, nor are we there to trespass.

If such a sign is enforced and you are prevented from entering or ordered to leave, the restricting persons must accept the responsibility.

They have authorized persons to keep others from calling at their doors, thus they are responsible for their actions.

HOW TO CONDUCT YOURSELF WHEN STOPPED BY POLICE OR ARRESTED FOR PREACHING

Maintain calmness and mildness; there is no need to be belligerent (Prov. 29:11; 15:1)

Identify yourself; explain the preaching work that you are doing; show that you are not disobeying the law of the land

If in the United States, advise them that your right to do this work in the manner that you are is upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States

It would be good at such time to use the booklet *Defending and Legally Establishing the Good News*

You can agree to go with the officer to see his superior officer and then cover all of the foregoing points in explanation to him, if necessary

If arrested, request to be released on your own recognizance

If not released, ask to contact friends

Someone in the congregation who owns property can no doubt arrange for your release until the trial

Request a receipt for any personal property confiscated by police

Obtain a copy of the complaint and of the law that you are charged with violating

Write out a complete report on what happened and send this to the branch office

Send along with it a copy of the ordinance alleged to have been violated; if they do not have an extra copy, request permission to copy it

Submit the names and addresses of the Chief of Police and City Attorney

Send all this to the branch office of your country, but do not involve the Society in the case without prior approval

False arrest is no reason to be unduly perturbed (2 Tim. 3:12)

Christians have frequently been arrested for preaching the good news (Acts 4:1-3; Rev. 2:10)

When a person suffers because he will not compromise but continues to do the will of God, this is well pleasing to Jehovah (1 Pet. 2:19)

Being imprisoned can work for the furtherance of the good news (Acts 16:19-34; Phil. 1:12-14)

Jehovah continues to strengthen and uphold his servants when they come under persecution (2 Tim. 4:16, 17)

PROCEDURE IN COURT

Proper to honor the judge by rising when he enters, also to use secular titles showing respect (Gen. 42:6; Acts 26:2, 3, 25)

This is unlike the adulation demanded by some men who want to be worshiped as a god (Acts 12:21-23)

Expressions such as "Let the king live to time indefinite" are not wrong (1 Ki. 1:31; Neh. 2:3)

Regardless of false accusations, do not resort to reviling or threatening (1 Pet. 2:23)

Treat accusers with kindness and pray that they may see the truth (Matt. 5:44)

Remain firm, fearless as befits those entrusted with the "good news" (Phil. 1:27-29)

Keep in mind that your being in court is "for a witness"; therefore, seek to give a witness concerning Jehovah and his kingdom by Christ (Matt. 10:18; Luke 21:12, 13)

Be bold, keeping in mind that you speak as an ambassador or as an envoy of Christ (Eph. 6:18-20)

Hold to your legal rights as did Peter and John, recognizing Jehovah as Supreme Lawgiver (Acts 4:18-21; 5:27-29)

Where advantageous, an appeal may be made to a higher court

The apostle Paul appealed to Caesar, although not for reversal of any sentence against him (Acts 25:11, 12)

The decision as to whether to appeal should be based on circumstances

Is a favorable decision likely on appeal?

Bear in mind that the courts of the land are composed of imperfect men and you will encounter obstacles, perhaps false witnesses, loss of time and additional personal expense

OVERSEERS TO HELP THE BROTHERS IN DIFFICULT TIMES

A natural disaster may occur, causing isolation or loss of property; the elders should endeavor to keep the congregation supplied with spiritual food

Attempt to communicate with the branch office

Seek to arrange necessary physical and spiritual assistance according to the needs of the brothers; take initiative to do what you can locally

In case of opposition to the work, as with a ban, the elders continue to fulfill responsibilities under direction of the holy spirit

Keep spiritual food available, sharing literature for study

If new publications are unobtainable, use older literature and restudy

All should be encouraged to use spiritual food available and continue to grow spiritually (Col. 1:9-11)

May arrange for private meetings in different places each week

These private meetings could be held in homes with the table set as for a meal

Larger groups can assemble in the woods, at beaches, in isolated places, as for a picnic, while discussing Scriptural truths

Always impress on congregation that association strengthens but that isolation makes one an easy prey for the enemy

(Ask class for suggestions as to how to cope with problems in caring for spiritual needs of congregation when under ban)

Encourage witnessing to continue, preaching in any way possible

With discretion, probably can call at homes in continued effort to locate "sheep"

Continue to gather in "sheep" but be cautious in inviting new ones to associate

Better to hold a Bible study for some time to let them prove themselves, thus avoiding infiltration of spies or enemies

If no literature but Bible is available, have studies with just the Bible

If the Bible is taken, continue speaking what is in your mind and heart

(Ask students for suggestions as to how to witness under ban)

Elders should encourage all to keep balanced, sound in mind and avoid fear (Ps. 118:6)

Continue to encourage all to stand firm, maintain integrity, be diligent in prayer and trust in Jehovah (Dan. 6:10)

Be careful not to betray spiritual brothers

Literature should be scattered to various places and hidden to prevent its being confiscated

If work is banned, funds for the Society should

be retained in the congregation until instructions are received from the office

BE PREPARED,

ALWAYS RELYING ON JEHOVAH AND HIS ORGANIZATION

Make it a practice now to rely on Jehovah and his spirit for strength and help (Acts 18:9, 10; Prov. 3:5, 6)

Now is the time to work closely with the faithful and discreet slave class, showing genuine appreciation for spiritual food by regular study and meeting attendance; share fully in field ministry; work closely with all appointed overseers

Walking in integrity before there are severe pressures makes it easier to do so when the situation is more difficult (Prov. 2:7)

MAIN POINT: Elders are privileged to strengthen and help brothers so they can stand firm in time of trouble, thus honoring Jehovah

SOURCES: *fr* 3, 9, 38, 40, 45; *ms* 374-378

TEACHING SUGGESTION: When discussing this material, consider appropriate national laws and court decisions that pertain to the preaching work

No. 52 - Second Friday, 4:30

The Value of Discipline and Counsel from Jehovah

THE MEANING OF DISCIPLINE AND COUNSEL

Greek word for discipline means, basically, 'instruction,' 'a course of training'

Moses was 'instructed in Egypt's wisdom,' and Saul (Paul) was 'instructed in the ancestral Law' (Acts 7:22; 22:3)

Discipline does not always mean punishment, as it does at 1 Timothy 1:20; however, the same Greek word can also be rendered 'chastise.' (Luke 23:16, 22) Hence discipline means more than mere instruction. It includes the thought of there being restrictions or corrective measures available to cause the disciple to adhere to the course being taught (Prov. 3:11)

Counsel is advice, often includes commendation and constructive suggestions; it is linked with discipline at Proverbs 19:20

Jehovah disciplines through home and congregation (Eph. 6:4; Deut. 22:18)

This course of training includes counsel; an example in right deeds is also very important if it is to be effective

BENEFITS OF DISCIPLINE AND COUNSEL

The Bible often illustrates godly training as coming from a father who lovingly subjects his sons to a course of discipline for their good (Prov. 1:8; 4:1; Heb. 12:7)

The congregation is "God's household." (1 Tim. 3:15) Being therein entitles one to its protection and provisions, such as sins being forgiven, having prayers heard, getting holy spirit and its fruitage, associating with fine brothers, etc. (Luke 11:13; Jas. 1:17) But along with the benefits Christians *must* also accept the discipline, training, that God gives his household

Value of this course of training is shown in Hebrews chapter 12

Discipline identifies Christians as 'sons,' not illegitimate children, as only sons are disciplined by a father (Verses 5, 8)

God's fatherly training of sons for their good is illustrated in the Bible (Prov. 3:11, 12)

"As a man corrects his son," God allowed natural Israel to wander forty years in the wilderness, humbling them for their own good and to help them learn the importance of his commandments (Deut. 8:2-5, 15, 16)

Jesus, foremost son of God, recognized value of discipline. To serve as high priest he had to 'learn obedience'; he required training, disciplining, to be perfected for his office beyond any possibility of failure. He accepted this course willingly. Now, as a compassionate high priest who has himself personally experienced suffering, Jesus superbly qualifies to serve others (Heb. 2:17, 18; 4:15, 16; 5:8-10)

Discipline from Jehovah results in reward of life; it is proper to work for this valuable reward (Heb. 11:6; 12:2, 9)

Through discipline we 'partake of God's holiness' (Heb. 12:10)

God's "holiness" has reference to cleanness, purity, sacredness

Accepting God's discipline, the instruction from his Word, and the guidance of his holy spirit helps us maintain a morally upright course. Even our body will be a 'holy sacrifice, acceptable to God'; to defile it or make it unclean would render us unholy (Rom. 12:1; 2 Cor. 7:1)

Discipline "yields peaceable fruit, namely, righteousness," that is, a course of right doing (Heb. 12:11)

So godly discipline corrects things or makes them right. Do we value what is right enough to make changes in our lives, even though painful? Even at the cost of personal embarrassment or loss of face? (Ps. 119:47, 48; Heb. 1:9)

God disciplines his sons, even "scourges" them, which indicates severity (Heb. 12:6)

Mosaic law allowed for "strokes" with rod or stick; could be for person's good. "Scourging" can be even more severe; so God may allow sons to undergo severe trials (Prov. 20:30; Heb. 11:36)

Suffering is of value if it corrects a wrong; in a sense we "learn" in this way (Ps. 119:71)

Persons can 'know' something is right or wrong from a book. Pharisees, for instance, knew that the Scriptures said: 'I want mercy and not sacrifice,' yet Jesus told them to go and 'learn what it means' (Matt. 9:13)

Right principles must be put to work in our lives; this 'learning' may be difficult, trying, meaning suffering physically and emotionally

HOW DISCIPLINING AND COUNSELING ARE DONE TODAY

Responsible men in the congregation are interested in its purity, working to build it up by constructive counsel (2 Cor. 13:10)

They follow example of Jesus and apostles in showing sincere concern for "sheep" committed to their care

As you follow this example, brothers should feel free to come to you for advice

Discipline and education in the congregation today are basically from the Scriptures; elders get their authority therefrom, so their counsel should be based solidly on the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16, 17)

Good to show basis for counsel in the Bible, so brothers do not get impression that you are simply giving just your viewpoint

Meditation on Scriptures will 'discipline you in righteousness,' so you know "how you ought to conduct yourself in God's household" (1 Tim. 3:14, 15)

Takes more than reading, sitting at meetings, outward agreement; to act with understanding and wisdom, we must study and apply Scriptures (1 Ki. 2:3)

This takes positive, deliberate effort. Time is required to think about Bible and our course of life. Need information to reach the heart, influence us for good

Counsel may come as kind remark from responsible fellow Christian, or from Society's publication (Prov. 15:31)

We can learn from own mistakes and those of others (Prov. 24:30-34; 1 Tim. 5:20)

SELF-DISCIPLINE CAN BE APPLIED IN MANY ASPECTS OF LIFE

Work habits: Do you discipline yourself to get an early start or do you, rather, 'love sleep'? In your work are you diligent, reliable, or undependable and unnecessarily slow? (Prov. 20:13; 1 Cor. 15:58; Col. 3:23)

Keeping agreements: According to Romans 1:31, 32 those "false to agreements" (literally, "engagement breakers") are worthy of death, since those who make a practice of this are actually liars. Do you sincerely strive to keep your word even in small things? (Matt. 5:37)

Recreation: While recreation is a personal matter, all should ask: Of what value is it if it encroaches on my health or work? Is it upbuilding or does it interfere with my family life, field ministry or study time? Does it stumble others? Balance and self-discipline are required (1 Tim. 4:8)

Conduct with opposite sex: Matthew 5:28 should govern attitude toward those not your mate. It takes self-discipline to avoid "works of the flesh." Self-disciplined one avoids all that is not chaste, such as pornography, self-abuse, loose conduct. On the other hand, dwelling on right things inclines one in a spiritual way

Ask self: How would I want my fleshly sister treated? Proper application of 1 Timothy 5:1, 2 results in a clean conscience

Associates: Bible counsel should be applied in avoiding unnecessary association with those lacking faith, those who prefer the old system (Jas. 4:4, 5; Prov. 4:14, 15)

Manners: To all persons, a Christian should be kind, not crude or thoughtless. (Matt. 7:12; 1 Cor. 10:31) Term 'older man' implies high regard Bible attaches to faithful ones advanced in years, as well as those having responsible office within the congregation; those who truly are elders will treat all other elders with respect (Lev. 19:32)

Personal grooming and dress: "Modesty" is the Bible's standard. (1 Tim. 2:9) We should not want to identify ourselves with immodest, im-

moral or rebellious segments of the world by our dress. At Philippians 4:8, 9 the principle is to consider what is "chaste" and "well spoken of." As Philippian Christians were to "practice" what they "heard and saw" in connection with Paul, so we too. Responsible ones in the congregation should set fine standard in these respects

Speech: Our speech should be upbuilding at all times. Controlling one's temper not only is a credit to a Christian but actually brings valuable physical benefits (Prov. 17:27; Eph. 4:29-5:5)

PROPERLY VALUING DISCIPLINE AND COUNSEL

Avoid extremes of attitude when receiving specific counsel (Heb. 12:5)

"Do not belittle the discipline from Jehovah"

Regardless of the source, if counsel is consistent with Bible, accept it. Do not let personality of other person influence your attitude toward Scriptural counsel, nor cause you to be hasty in rejecting it (Prov. 18:13)

God used imperfect men to transmit even the Scriptures that we now have

"Neither give out when you are corrected by him"

Some brood, become dismayed, frustrated, lose confidence, develop martyr complex. Others

think, 'Brothers have it in for me.' This can lead to missing the whole purpose of discipline

"Righting of the wrong" is the wise course
Corinthians were affected by Paul's severe action, saddened, but took steps to clear selves (2 Cor. 7:10, 11)

The "sadness of the world" mourns unpleasant consequences of sin and 'getting caught,' as illustrated by cases of Cain, Esau and Judas (Gen. 4:5-14; 27:32-41; Matt. 27:2-5)

"Sadness in a godly way makes for repentance," moves people to 'turn around.' Absence of real changes indicates that the discipline has not realized its intended aim (Ezek. 33:14, 15)

Let godly discipline and counsel 'work deeply' in you (Prov. 17:10)

Knowing the purpose of discipline and counsel, and what they lead to, value them highly; let them endear Jehovah to you and contribute to your continued happiness (Prov. 12:1; 13:18)

Above all, stay humble, remembering you are only sinful flesh; like the very young child of an ageless Father (Rom. 12:16)

MAIN POINT: Regardless of how it is presented to you, never reject counsel or discipline that is in line with God's Word; also learn to discipline yourself by applying God's Word to your own life

SOURCES: ms 160-162; ad 836, 1387, 1388, 1624, 1625

No. 53 - Second Saturday, 9:10

Endurance That Results in Divine Approval

JEHOVAH URGES US TO DISPLAY CHRISTIAN ENDURANCE

Jehovah himself is the greatest example of endurance; this is so in broader sense than just that he lives endlessly

In working out his purpose he has for 6,000 years endured wickedness and the reproach brought on his good name

Though having power to wipe out humans who dishonor and disobey him, he has "endured" them (Rom. 9:22, By, AS)

God had records of the endurance of his servants included in the Bible as a "pattern" for us (Jas. 5:10, 11)

He specifically called attention to "endurance of Job"

Record of how prophets were mistreated but kept faithfully at their assignments benefits us (Heb. 11:36-38)

They had divine approval because of their faith and their exemplary endurance; the "world was not worthy of them"

God is not dealing with us by some new method; He tells us that Christians too need endurance to gain his approval (Jas. 1:12)

As those men proved their constancy to God, so must we

James said trials we must endure are cause for happiness; they lead to "becoming approved" and gaining reward of life

Christians in first century needed endurance to survive the end of the Jewish system of things
Jesus urged such endurance in order to get saved; his words had an application during foretold tribulation on Jerusalem (Matt. 24:13)

About 61 C.E. Paul stressed "need of endurance" to gain promise, though they had already faced trials (Heb. 10:32-34, 36)

Such endurance is especially vital now

With end of this system just ahead, we too must manifest endurance to gain divine approval
Because of our faith and service up to this point, we now have a fine standing with God

Still we must endure in Christian living, for without that all our preaching would be in vain

Whatever other trials may yet come—persecution, privations, sickness, traitors—we will have to endure

Endurance is an especially important concern for us as elders because (1) we need to aid our brothers to endure and (2) we may face special tests of our own endurance

AS AN ELDER, AID YOUR BROTHERS TO ENDURE

Elders are in a particularly favorable position to aid brothers to endure; do it as you regularly serve them

Our brothers *want* to endure and to stay faithful, but can use help from you who are keeping watch over their souls (Heb. 13:17)

You should not wait until a major crisis tests the love and faith of your brothers; try to prepare congregation beforehand to endure

You can do this by working to strengthen their faith and hope, helping to prepare them in advance

As you teach at meetings, do not be content just to impart information; work to reach the heart to strengthen their faith and love

Increasing faith in resurrection will help brothers to endure all sorts of trials that could involve death

Serving a "God who raises up the dead" (2 Cor. 1:8, 9), we have confidence to endure; our reward is assured (Heb. 12:2)

We are more prepared to endure trials such as blood issue, terminal sickness, threat of execution, mob violence

Your strong love for God and your brothers will help you stick by the truth and the congregation (1 Thess. 3:12, 13)

If under ban or meetings broken up, love will move one to meet despite risks, trusting the brothers

Even if some prominent brother is unfaithful, love built up in advance will aid one to continue serving with faithful ones

By personal conversation help others see how what is now being learned can be used during future tests of endurance

Mention how points about God's qualities, past examples of endurance, even doctrines, relate to tests that may come; your mentioning it will help others recall it later

Help brothers presently experiencing test of endurance to recognize it as such; fine to do this during shepherding visits

During a test (pain, family opposition, hurt feelings) there is tendency to be subjective—to think how much it hurts, how cruel persecutor is, how badly one has been insulted

Try to help one needing endurance to recognize situation as a test of *endurance* and to bear in mind joyful outcome

Highlight that even common things can be tests of endurance

Family *opposition* can be long-lasting test (Matt. 10:36-38)

Preach despite *indifference* of people, as Jeremiah did

Endure *discouragement* over making mistakes or stumbling

Not quitting when *disciplined* shows endurance (Heb. 12:5)

Naturally it is not pleasant to suffer, but emphasize how this produces endurance and is cause for joy (Jas. 1:2-4)

Urge one enduring to think on fact that our attitude under difficult circumstances may bring honor to God's name (Acts 5:41; 2 Cor. 4:7-11; Col. 1:11)

Do not overlook endurance shown by spiritually strong ones who are doing well; help them to continue to endure

There may be a tendency to focus most attention on new or weak ones who face tests of endurance; while they do need your encouragement and assistance, they are not the only ones

Strong ones also face tests and display outstanding endurance

Though they may not often mention it, tests they face are hard to endure—divided family, temptation to be dishonest, difficulties in business, ridicule from schoolmates, poverty, etc.

Give thought to their endurance, and as you associate with them commend and urge them to continue enduring (2 Thess. 1:4)

Remind them to pray; get heavenly help (Phil. 4:6, 7; Rom. 12:12)

AS AN ELDER, YOU MAY FACE OUT-OF-THE-ORDINARY TESTS OF ENDURANCE

Though all Christians will have to endure, elders likely will experience out-of-the-ordinary tests of endurance

This is not because of being better or more able to endure than others, but because of office and responsibilities you have

You may have to endure criticism of your manner or your way of handling matters, as Paul did (2 Cor. 10:10)

Critical or rebellious ones may gossip or backbite

As you work to manifest proper qualities in face of such things, you display signs of eldership (2 Cor. 12:12)

You may have to handle disputes between brothers, though it might seem easier just not to get involved (Phil. 4:2, 3)

As elder you will have to endure in maintaining high standards, being orderly, moderate, dependable, chaste, zealous, kind, loving and understanding

Those inside and outside congregation will be watching your example; it can draw them to truth or turn them away

You may have to endure hardship of having to reprove or disfellowship others, even close acquaintances

It was not pleasant for Paul to reprove Peter (Gal. 2:14)

It is a test to bear the weighty responsibility of taking action that completely cuts someone off from congregation

During time of persecution, you may be a special target

Enemy will likely search out "leaders" and try to break your integrity in hopes of discouraging the "sheep"

You will have to visit and help others though this means exposing yourself to greater danger

Daily you must show concern and even endure anxiety about the congregation (2 Cor. 11:28)

Extra duties will take up your time; you will be deeply concerned with the welfare of the "sheep"; you will need to deal constantly with problems that come up

You cannot afford to let this take away your joy

As with Paul, your enduring these particular tests is for the sake of "sheep" in your charge (2 Tim. 2:10)

More is involved than your life; it is to the direct benefit of entire congregation that you endure these trials

They are looking to you; as they see how your conduct turns out, they will be able to imitate faith (Heb. 13:7)

When going gets rough or you feel you should do more or better, do not give up; recognize this as a test of endurance

Though you cannot do all you would like, congregation has need of your assistance

EXPECT REWARDS FROM GOD AS YOU NOW DISPLAY ENDURANCE

Do not fearfully withdraw from trials, but look on them as opportunities to develop the godly quality of endurance

One who fearfully tries to avoid tests is inclined to compromise or quit, never developing the quality of endurance

A good result of experiencing tribulation is that you develop endurance, as Romans 5:3 explains

Each additional test you meet successfully will strengthen you, increasing your endurance, making you a better Christian

Instead of asking, 'Can I endure?', pray for God's help just as Jesus did when under trial (Heb. 5:7)

Keep in focus rewards of faithful endurance; for joy set before him, Jesus endured torture stake (Heb. 12:2, 3)

Our endurance can bring us even now rewards of approval and hope (Rom. 5:4)

By enduring we gain consciousness we are pleasing God, having his approval, so 'endurance produces approved condition'

Satan claims we cannot endure, but we are determined to; thus we help to vindicate God and gain his approval

We already have hope of gaining eternal life in New Order

Having realization of God's approval because of our endurance adds to and develops our hope; it becomes more real, more personal, more solid

Assured hope that endurance produces will not lead to disappointment (Rom. 5:5)

Rewards we get now are not disappointing; neither will be the eternal reward for which we are enduring

Even though we cannot yet actually see New Order, we wait for it and rely on it (Rom. 8:25)

While awaiting final realization of our hope, our endurance also serves to bring out fine qualities in us (Jas. 1:3, 4)

James says that right now endurance has a "work" it accomplishes

By enduring trial after trial we repeatedly exercise the right qualities and at the same time new ones are awakened

Endurance's work is completed in that we gain a many-sided experience and a well-rounded-out understanding of how to take things; we are perfected in obedience and trust toward God

These fine results of endurance—rewards both now and in future—give us real cause to be happy when enduring, because Jehovah promises the reward of life for all who faithfully endure (Jas. 1:12; Luke 21:19)

MAIN POINT: Elders in particular should appreciate the need for endurance, being willing to face special tests of endurance and also striving to aid brothers in the congregation to endure

SOURCES: or 182-187; ms 174-177

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture can include discussion on how an elder can effectively encourage endurance on the part of a spiritually strong brother, as well as for one physically sick. Also consider what can be done to present parts on the meetings in a way that will strengthen the endurance of the congregation for trials to come

"An Interchange of Encouragement"

EVALUATING THE ENCOURAGEMENT DERIVED FROM THE SCHOOL COURSE

Do you feel moved to share with others what you have learned? (Jer. 20:9)

Do you feel toward those in your congregation as Paul did when he wrote Romans 1:11, 12?

He said: "I am longing to see you, that I may impart some spiritual gift to you in order for you to be made firm; or, rather, that there may be an interchange of encouragement among you, by each one through the other's faith, both yours and mine."

Do you feel the need to convey what you have learned to fellow overseers, ministerial servants and everyone else in the congregation? (2 Tim. 2:2)

Throughout the course you have considered how the material could be used to help the brothers in your congregation

Now it is your responsibility and privilege to share these things with fellow overseers, ministerial servants and everyone else in the congregation in "an interchange of encouragement"

Think of the benefits everyone in the congregation will receive as you give encouragement to them by discussing the wealth of Scriptural and practical material considered in this course

HOW AND WHEN YOU CAN SHARE THIS ENCOURAGEMENT WITH THE CONGREGATION

(The following are some suggestions, but draw out how and when the students feel it can be done, getting their ideas. On the suggestions listed, discuss ways and times they feel these can be used; keep the discussion moving, offering ideas of your own or from previous classes)

1. As soon as it can be worked into the service meeting program, give a 30-minute report to the congregation on what you have learned at the school, showing its practical benefits
2. Work additional material into other service meeting parts that you handle and offer to share information from the school course with others having meeting parts
3. Discuss points from the course when visiting brothers in their homes; usually concentrate on just one principal subject during a visit
4. Invite brothers (families) to visit you in your home, sharing information with them; do not try to cover everything at once; take up what they will be able to remember, and give them opportunity to ask questions and to comment on points

5. Offer to meet with overseers who would like to do so to review information from the course, emphasizing points of special value to them and to the congregation; several sessions can be arranged with them if the brothers desire and if you have sufficient points in mind to discuss; do this within the next few weeks or month at the latest, while points are fresh in mind

6. Discuss points with the publishers while working together in the field ministry

(Keep in mind that most of these occasions are to be an "interchange," so let others share their experiences and thoughts with you; get their feelings, thoughts, questions, suggestions and experiences, too)

WHAT MATERIAL MIGHT BE DISCUSSED THAT WILL BE AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO ALL

(Have a review of basic points that would be of interest and have application in the congregation. Mention the name of the lesson; then draw out from students valuable points that were discussed in class. Do not try to cover every lesson. Encourage mention of appropriate Scriptural points in the discussion, thus emphasizing that the information is based on the Bible. Stress practical application of the material in the congregation)

REPORTS TO HOME CONGREGATION

(Three five-minute reports to class. Give brothers their assignment on the second Thursday so they will have time for preparation)

These reports are to be enlarged to 30-minute reports on the service meeting program for your congregation

Each brother should give such a report to his congregation

Cover helpful and practical information from the course

Discuss application of certain features particularly beneficial for your congregation and overseers locally

Offer to share personally with all in the congregation further information from the school

BENEFITING FROM THE SCHOOL COURSE AND THE "INTERCHANGE OF ENCOURAGEMENT"

The course has highlighted what a marvelous God Jehovah is and what a privilege it is to work with his people (Rev. 4:11; Ps. 9:1, 2; 84:10)

You have learned much about the theocratic organization and how it functions; this should

move you to cooperate with it even more fully in the days ahead

Emphasis has been placed on the Bible itself, how to use it and the importance of basing your decisions and counsel on it

You students are now better equipped, prepared and have reason for confidence that Jehovah and Christ Jesus are with you and are backing you in the administration and application of God's laws and procedures (Matt. 28:20; John 14:16, 17)

When problems come up now, you should be better prepared to answer them from the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16, 17)

If you are unsure, do research or consult other elders, locally or in nearby congregations

You should not find it necessary to refer everything to the branch office

Have confidence in the rightness of Jehovah's

ways and do not hold back from doing what his Word directs

Keep in mind, too, what we have discussed about the need for humility and kindness on your part; in all that you do, be motivated by love (Rom. 12:3, 10, 16; Mic. 6:8; 1 Cor. 13:3, 13)

So much has been considered; you no doubt wonder when to do it all

Work at it steadily; if one thing is done each day, much is accomplished in a month

Remember, Jehovah is directing the work, and he will use us if we offer ourselves willingly (Ps. 110:3)

Trust in Jehovah with all your heart, rely heavily upon his spirit, pray incessantly, exert yourselves vigorously; and the undeserved kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God will be with all of you (Prov. 3:5; 1 Thess. 5:17; Luke 13:24; 2 Cor. 13:11-14)

