

The **Watchtower**
Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

January 15, 1991

**How
God's Spirit
Can Affect You**

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THE PURPOSE OF *THE WATCHTOWER* is to exalt Jehovah God as Sovereign Lord of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as these fulfill Bible prophecy. It comforts all peoples with the good news that God's Kingdom will soon destroy those who oppress their fellowmen and that it will turn the earth into a paradise. It encourages faith in God's now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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IDENTIFYING THE HOLY SPIRIT

DID you know that the holy spirit affects the life of every one of us? And did you realize that it can make enormous improvements in your life? This may surprise you. In fact, you may ask: 'Who or what is the holy spirit?'

If you belong to one of Christendom's churches, you have probably heard a clergyman christen a baby "in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19, *The New English Bible*) When asked to identify the holy spirit, most clerics quickly respond: 'The holy spirit is the third person of the Trinity, equal in all ways to God the Father and to the Lord Jesus Christ.'

However, this view was not held during the first few centuries of our Common

Era. To illustrate: Some three centuries after the death of Jesus Christ's apostles, Gregory of Nazianzus wrote: "Some assume that [the holy spirit] is a power (*energeia*), some a creature, some that he is God, some cannot decide which of these."

Today, most churches in Christendom accept the Trinitarian view of the holy spirit. But is that what the Bible supports? Or is it merely an opinion based on tradition? Actually, the Bible never speaks of the holy spirit in the same way that it speaks of God or of Jesus. For example, in the Bible, the holy spirit does not have a personal name.

Is that just an insignificant detail? No, names are important in the Bible. God

stressed the importance of his own name when he said: "I am Jehovah. That is my name; and to no one else shall I give my own glory, neither my praise to graven images." (Isaiah 42:8) The importance of Jesus Christ's name was emphasized before his birth when an angel told Mary: "You are to call his name Jesus." (Luke 1:31) If the names of the Father and of the Son are so important, why does the holy spirit not have a personal name? Surely, this detail alone should make a person wonder whether the spirit is really equal to the Father and the Son.

The Scriptures and the Holy Spirit

In the Hebrew Scriptures, or the "Old Testament," there are references to the "holy spirit" and to "my [God's] spirit." (Psalm 51:11; Joel 2:28, 29) We read that the holy spirit can fill a person, come upon him, and envelop him. (Exodus 31:3; Judges 3:10; 6:34) Some of God's holy spirit can be taken from one person and given to another. (Numbers 11:17, 25) The holy spirit can become operative upon someone, enabling him to perform superhuman feats.—Judges 14:6; 1 Samuel 10:6.

What can reasonably be concluded from such statements? Surely not that the holy spirit is a person. How can a portion of a person be taken from one individual and be given to another? Moreover, there is no evidence that when Jesus was on earth, faithful Jews viewed the holy spirit as a person equal to the Father. They certainly did not worship the holy spirit. Rather, their worship was directed solely to Jehovah, the One whom Jesus himself called "my Father" and "my God."—John 20:17.

Like the so-called Old Testament, the part of the Bible called the Christian Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," says that the holy spirit can 'fill' a person

or be "upon" him. (Acts 2:4; Luke 2:25-27) Holy spirit was 'given,' 'poured out upon,' and 'distributed.' (Luke 11:13; Acts 10:45; Hebrews 2:4) At Pentecost 33 C.E., the disciples received "some of" God's spirit. (Acts 2:17) The Scriptures also speak of baptism with holy spirit and of anointing with it.—Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5; 10:38.

Such Biblical statements prove that the holy spirit is not a person. This conclusion is confirmed when we see that the holy spirit is listed with other impersonal things. For instance, the Bible states that Stephen was "full of faith and holy spirit." (Acts 6:5) And the apostle Paul recommended himself as God's minister "by purity, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by holy spirit, by love free from hypocrisy."—2 Corinthians 6:4-6.

True, at times the Bible personalizes the holy spirit. For instance, Isaiah said that certain rebels 'made God's holy spirit feel hurt.' (Isaiah 63:10) Paul said it could be 'grieved.' (Ephesians 4:30) And a number of scriptures say that the holy spirit teaches, guides, speaks, and bears witness. (John 14:26; 16:13, 14; 1 John 5:7, 8) But the Bible also personalizes other nonliving things, such as wisdom, death, and sin. (Proverbs 1:20; Romans 5:17, 21) This is actually a vivid way in which the Scriptures sometimes express matters.

Today, we speak of the Bible in a similar manner when we say that it says something or teaches a doctrine. In using such expressions, we do not mean that the Bible is a person, do we? Neither does the Bible mean that the holy spirit is a person when it uses comparable expressions.

What, then, is the holy spirit? It is not a person. Rather, it is God's own active force, used by him to accomplish his will. (Genesis 1:2) But how are our lives affected by the holy spirit? And how can we personally benefit more from its activity?

HOW GOD'S SPIRIT CAN AFFECT YOU

"IN THE beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters." (Genesis 1:1, 2, *Revised Standard Version*) This Scriptural statement highlights an outstanding way in which everyone alive has benefited from the holy spirit. That spirit was active during creation, and thanks to its activity, the earth became a delightful home for mankind.

But people can benefit much more from the holy spirit. An inspired proverb says: "Turn back at my reproof. Then to you I will cause my spirit to bubble forth; I will make my words known to you." (Proverbs 1:23) In our day God's collected "words" are available in the Holy Bible, written by men who "were borne along by holy spirit." (2 Peter 1:21; Mark 12:36; 2 Timothy 3:16) Whenever a meek person reads the Bible, he benefits from the holy spirit.

Holy Spirit and the Preaching Work

When one of Jehovah's Witnesses calls at your home to speak about the good news of the Kingdom, the holy spirit can affect your life in another way. How do we know? Well, when Jesus Christ began to preach the good news, he applied to himself the words of the prophet Isaiah, saying: "Jehovah's spirit is upon me, because he anointed me to declare good news to the poor, . . . to preach Jehovah's acceptable year." (Luke 4:18, 19; Isaiah 61:1, 2) Yes, Jesus was anointed by holy spirit to preach the good news.

Moreover, Jesus foretold that the preaching of the good news would continue after his death. He prophesied: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14) A short time before Jesus ascended to heaven, he gave his followers this commission: "Go . . . and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19, 20) After Christ's ascension to heaven, therefore, his disciples carried on the spirit-authorized work of preaching and teaching. Jehovah's Witnesses today imitate those early disciples in preaching the good news worldwide.

Baptism and the Holy Spirit

When an individual responds favorably to the good news, Jesus said he should be baptized "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit." So new disciples are affected further by holy spirit. The expression "in the name of" really means "by the authority of" or "recognizing the position of."* Hence, being baptized in the name of the Father means accepting without question the sovereignty of God in our lives. Baptism in the name of the Son means accepting Jesus as Redeemer, Exemplar, and King. And baptism in the name of the holy spirit involves relying on

* Compare the English expression "in the name of the law." See also Matthew 10:41 in the *King James Version*, where Jesus used the words "in the name of a prophet" and "in the name of a righteous man."

the spirit and submitting to its power.*

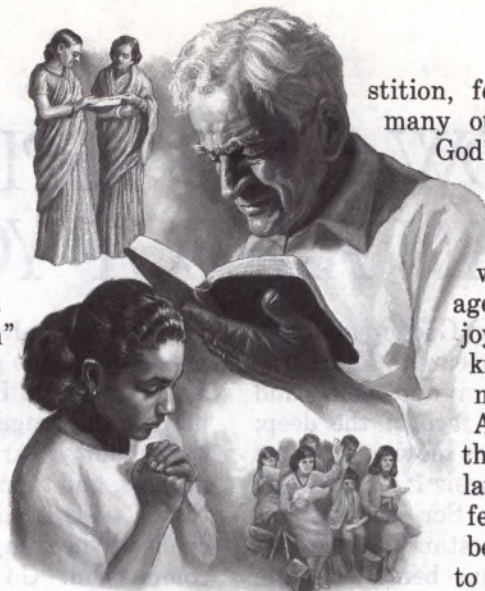
The Holy Spirit in Your Life

Sadly, the dishonesty, immorality, violence, and general lawlessness that we see in "Christian" lands betray the fact that most of those professing to be Christians actually resist the holy spirit. But those who submit to it are greatly blessed. For one thing, they take seriously what they read in the spirit-inspired Bible and apply it in their lives. Thus, they have wisdom, insight, judgment, shrewdness, knowledge, and thinking ability. (Proverbs 1:1-4) These are valuable assets in our troubled times.

The holy spirit also helps such individuals to overcome difficult problems. In ancient times, God showed his people how they would be able to accomplish a very difficult task. Jehovah said that it would be done "not by a military force, nor by power, but by [his] spirit." (Zechariah 4:6) If we submit to God and his spirit, we will also be helped to accomplish tasks and overcome obstacles that would otherwise be too great for us.—Matthew 6:33; Philippians 4:13.

Further, God's spirit helps us to enjoy a freedom unknown to the world at large. The apostle Paul wrote: "Where the spirit of Jehovah is, there is freedom." (2 Corinthians 3:17) Those who submit to God's spirit enjoy freedom from false religion, super-

* See Peter's speech to the Jews at Pentecost 33 C.E., when he explained many aspects of the role of Jesus and the holy spirit in the lives of baptized believers. After his speech, 3,000 were baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy spirit.—Acts 2:14-42.



stition, fear of the future, and many other enslaving factors.

God's spirit truly is a power for good! It can even change people. The Bible touches on this when it says: "The fruitage of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control. Against such things there is no law." (Galatians 5:22, 23) How different this world would be if everyone submitted to the influence of God's spirit!

As a group, genuine Christians also enjoy "the oneness of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:3) Unity and peace are rare commodities today. But they do exist where God's spirit is active. Indeed, among Jehovah's Witnesses the uniting bond of the holy spirit has brought people of all races, languages, and nationalities into a genuine "association of brothers."—1 Peter 2:17.

God's Spirit and You

Do you see the benefit of having God-given wisdom and of enjoying true freedom? Would it not be wonderful to have divine help in solving problems and cultivating love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, and self-control? Then submit to the power of God's holy spirit. But how can a person do this?

Let God's Word, the Bible, influence your mind and heart. Associate with those who let the holy spirit influence their lives. Take steps now to learn and do the divine will. Then, "may the God who gives hope fill you with all joy and peace by your believing, that you may abound in hope with power of holy spirit."—Romans 15:13.

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE BIBLE?

'The book of Thomas?

Sure, that is in the Bible. But the book of Jonah is not. Christ's birthplace?

Oh, that is Jerusalem

—or was it Nazareth? I'm not really sure whether the book of Isaiah is in the first or the second part of the Bible. The number of apostles?

I really don't know.'



“THESE findings may have come as no surprise if the data had been collected only among non-Christians,” says the magazine *Christianity Today*. “What is surprising—and disturbing—is the amount of Scriptural ignorance that was found among born-again Christians.”

For instance, 22 percent of the nominal Christians surveyed thought that there really was a book of Thomas in the Bible, while 13 percent were not sure. As for Jonah, 27 percent said it was not in the Bible, and 12 percent had no idea. Six percent could not even guess where Christ was born, while 16 percent named Jerusalem, and 8 percent said it was Nazareth. A full 13 percent had no idea where the book of Isaiah could be found in the Bible, while 11 percent placed it in the Christian Greek Scriptures (“New Testament”). And while most knew that there were 12 apostles, 12 percent gave another number, from 2 to over 20, and 10 percent had no idea at all.

The question that gave the most trouble was whether the expression “God helps those who help themselves” was in the Bible or not. Only 38 percent of the “Christians” surveyed knew that it was not to be found anywhere in the Bible, while a greater number, 42 percent, thought it was a Biblical quotation. The rest did not know.

“Why is there so much ignorance about the Bible?” asks *Christianity Today*. “Most likely, it comes from a lack of Bible readership. Half of all Americans do not read the Bible. The majority of all born-again Christians read the Bible once or twice a week, or not at all. No wonder so many Christians know so little about the Scriptures!”

Handed Over and Led Away

WHEN Pilate, moved by the quiet dignity of the tortured Jesus, again tries to release him, the chief priests become even angrier. They are determined to let nothing interfere with their wicked purpose. So they renew their shouting: "Impale him! Impale him!"

"Take him yourselves and impale him," Pilate responds in disgust. Contrary to their earlier claims, the Jews may have authority to execute criminals for religious offenses that are of sufficient gravity. Then, for at least the fifth time, Pilate declares Jesus innocent, saying: "I do not find any fault in him."

The Jews, seeing that their political charges have failed to produce results, fall back on the religious charge of blasphemy used hours earlier at Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin. "We have a law," they say, "and according to the law he ought to die, because he made himself God's son."

This charge is new to Pilate, and it causes him to become more fearful. By now he realizes that Jesus is no ordinary man, even as his wife's dream and Jesus' remarkable strength of personality indicate. But "God's son"? Pilate knows that Jesus is from Galilee. Yet, could he possibly have lived before? Taking him back into the palace again, Pilate asks: "Where are you from?"

Jesus remains silent. Earlier he had told Pilate that he is a king, but that his Kingdom is no part of this world. No further explanation now would serve a useful purpose. However, Pilate's pride is hurt by the refusal to answer, and he flares up at Jesus with the words: "Are

you not speaking to me? Do you not know I have authority to release you and I have authority to impale you?"

"You would have no authority at all against me unless it had been granted to you from above," Jesus responds respectfully. He is referring to the grant by God of authority to human rulers to administer earthly affairs. Jesus adds: "This is why the man that handed me over to you has greater sin." Indeed, the high priest Caiaphas and his accomplices and Judas Iscariot all bear heavier responsibility than Pilate for the unjust treatment of Jesus.

Impressed even more by Jesus and fearful that He may have a divine origin, Pilate renews his efforts to release Him. The Jews, however, rebuff Pilate. They repeat their political charge, craftily threatening: "If you release this man, you are not a friend of Caesar. Every man making himself a king speaks against Caesar."

Despite the dire implications, Pilate brings Jesus outside once more. "See! Your king!" he appeals yet again.

"Take him away! Take him away! Impale him!" comes the reply.

"Shall I impale your king?" Pilate asks in desperation.

The Jews have chafed under the rule of the Romans. Indeed, they despise Rome's domination! Yet, hypocritically, the chief priests say: "We have no king but Caesar."

Fearing for his political position and reputation, Pilate finally caves in under the Jews' relentless, threatening demands. He hands Jesus over. The soldiers strip Jesus of the purple cloak and

clothe him with his outer garments. As Jesus is led off to be impaled, he is made to bear his own torture stake.

By now it is midmorning on Friday, Nisan 14; perhaps it is approaching noon. Jesus has been up since early Thursday morning, and he has suffered one agonizing experience after another. Understandably, his strength soon gives out under the weight of the stake. So a passerby, a certain Simon of Cyrene in Africa, is impressed into service to carry it for him. As they proceed along, a great number of people follow, including many women who beat themselves in grief and bewail Jesus.

Turning to the women, Jesus says: "Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for me. On the contrary, weep for yourselves and for your children; because, look! days are coming in which people will say, 'Happy are the barren women, and the wombs that did not give

birth and the breasts that did not nurse!' Then they will start to say to the mountains, 'Fall over us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us over!' Because if they do these things when the tree is moist, what will occur when it is withered?"

Jesus is referring to the tree of the Jewish nation, which still has some moisture of life in it because of Jesus' presence and the existence of a remnant that believe in him. But when these are taken out from the nation, only a spiritually dead tree will remain, yes, a withered national organization. Oh, what cause for weeping there will be when the Roman armies, serving as God's executioners, devastate the Jewish nation! **John 19:6-17; 18:31; Luke 23:24-31; Matthew 27:31, 32; Mark 15:20, 21.**

♦ What charge do the religious leaders make against Jesus when their political charges fail to produce results?

♦ Why does Pilate perhaps become more fearful?

♦ Who bear the greater sin for what happens to Jesus?

♦ How do the priests get Pilate to hand Jesus over for execution?

♦ What does Jesus tell the women who weep for him, and what does he mean by referring to the tree as being "moist" and then "withered"?





TEACH PUBLICLY AND FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE

"I did not flinch from . . . teaching you publicly and from house to house."

—ACTS 20:20, "Byington."

"CATHOLICS Take Gospel Door to Door." So read a headline in *The Providence Sunday Journal* of October 4, 1987. The newspaper reported that a major objective of this activity was to "invite some of their inactive parishioners to return to a more active parish life." Priest John Allard, director of the Office for Evangelization in the Diocese of

1. How did a Catholic priest comment on the effectiveness of the house-to-house ministry of Jehovah's Witnesses?

Providence, was quoted as saying: "Sure, there's going to be a lot of skepticism. People are going to say, 'There they go, just like the Jehovah's Witnesses.' But the Jehovah's Witnesses are effective, aren't they? I'll bet you can go into any Kingdom Hall in the state [of Rhode Island, U.S.A.,] and find congregations filled with former Catholics."

² Yes, Jehovah's Witnesses are well-known for their effective house-to-house

2. What question is appropriately raised?

ministry. But why do they go from house to house?

The Apostolic Method

³ Jesus Christ gave his followers this meaningful commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you. And, look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things." (Matthew 28:19, 20) The principal way in which that work would be done became evident immediately after the day of Pentecost 33 C.E. "Every day in the temple and *from house to house* they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ, Jesus." (Acts 5:42) Some 20 years later, the apostle Paul was engaging in the house-to-house ministry, for he reminded Christian elders from the city of Ephesus: "I did not hold back from telling you any of the things that were profitable nor from teaching you publicly and from house to house."—Acts 20:20.

⁴ At Acts 5:42 the words "from house to house" are translated from *kat' oi'kon*. Here *ka-ta'* is used in a "distributive" sense. Hence, the preaching of the disciples was distributed from one house to another. Commenting on Acts 20:20, Randolph O. Yeager wrote that Paul taught "both in public assemblies [*de-mo-si'a*] and from house to house (distributive [*ka-ta'*] with the accusative). Paul had spent three years in Ephesus. He visited every house,

3. (a) What commission did Jesus Christ give his disciples? (b) In what chief way did Christ's early followers carry out their commission?

4. Why can we say that Acts 5:42 and Acts 20:20 mean that the preaching of Jesus' followers was distributed from house to house?

or at least he preached to all of the people (verse 26). Here is scriptural warrant for house to house evangelism as well as that carried on in public meetings."

⁵ A similar use of *ka-ta'* appears at Luke 8:1, which speaks of Jesus preaching "from city to city and from village to village." Paul used the plural form *kat' oi'kous* at Acts 20:20. Here some Bible translations read "in your homes." But the apostle was not referring solely to social calls upon elders or to shepherding visits in the homes of fellow believers. His next words show that he was speaking about a house-to-house ministry among unbelievers, for he said: "But I thoroughly bore witness both to Jews and to Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus." (Acts 20:21) Fellow believers had already repented and exercised faith in Jesus. Hence, both Acts 5:42 and Acts 20:20 have to do with preaching to unbelievers "from house to house," or from door to door.

No Substitute for It

⁶ Commenting on Paul's words at Acts 20:20, in 1844 Abiel Abbot Livermore wrote: "He was not content merely to deliver discourses in the public assembly, and dispense with other instrumentalities, but zealously pursued his great work in private, from house to house, and literally carried *home* the truth of heaven to the hearths and hearts of the Ephesians." More recently, it has been observed: "House to house dissemination of the gospel characterized the first-century Christians from the beginning (cf. Acts 2:46; 5:42). . . . [Paul] had thoroughly discharged his responsibility both to Jews

5. At Acts 20:20, why was Paul not referring solely to social calls upon elders or to shepherding visits?

6. What has been said about the nature of Paul's preaching work in Ephesus?

and Gentiles at Ephesus, and they were left without excuse if they perished in their sins.”—*The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*, Volume 4, pages 642-3.

⁷ Though public speaking has its place in declaring the good news, it is no substitute for personal contact at the door. In this regard, scholar Joseph Addison Alexander said: “The church has yet invented nothing to supply the place or rival the effect of church and household preaching.” As scholar O. A. Hills put it: “Public teaching and house-to-house teaching must go hand in hand.” Jehovah’s Witnesses provide instruction through discourses at their weekly Public Meetings. They also have clear evidence that the apostolic method of spreading Bible truth from house to house is effective. And Jehovah surely approves of it, for as a result of such ministry, he is causing thousands to stream to his exalted worship each year.—Isaiah 2:1-4; 60:8, 22.

⁸ Another authority has said: “People find it easier to remember teaching at their doorstep than at the church step.” Well, Paul was at doorsteps regularly, setting a fine example as a minister. “He was not content with teaching and discoursing in the synagogue and the market,” wrote Bible scholar Edwin W. Rice. “He was ever diligently ‘teaching’ ‘from house to house.’ It was a house-to-house, hand-to-hand, face-to-face contest with evil, and to win men to Christ, that he waged in Ephesus.” Jehovah’s Witnesses realize that person-to-person discussions on the doorstep are effective. Moreover, they make return visits and are happy to talk even with opposers if these individuals will allow reason—

7. Why can it be said that God approves of the house-to-house ministry of Jehovah’s Witnesses?

8. (a) What has been said about the reason why house-to-house preaching is effective? (b) How may Jehovah’s Witnesses be compared to Paul in doorstep preaching and other witnessing?

able discussions to take place. How like Paul! Concerning him, F. N. Peloubet wrote: “Paul’s work was not all in meetings. No doubt he visited many people personally at their homes wherever he learned of one who was inquiring, or so interested or even opposed as to be willing to converse on religion.”

Elders to Take the Lead

⁹ What example did Paul set for fellow elders? He showed that they should be bold and tireless house-to-house proclaimers of the good news. In 1879, J. Glentworth Butler wrote: “[The Ephesian elders] knew that in [Paul’s] preaching he had been utterly unaffected by thought of personal danger or popularity; that he had withheld nothing of needed truth; that he had not, with one-sided partiality, dwelt upon peculiar or novel aspects of truth, but had urged *only* and *all* that which was profitable ‘to the use of edifying,’ or building up: the *whole counsel of God* in its purity and fullness! And this faithful ‘showing,’ this fervid ‘teaching’ of the Christian truth had been his practice, not only in the school of Tyrannus and in other gathering places of disciples, but in every accessible household. From house to house, and from soul to soul, day by day had he borne the glad tidings with Christ-like desire and yearning. To all classes and races, to the hostile Jew and the sneering Greek, his one theme—that which, fully expounded, includes all other essential saving truths—was *repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

¹⁰ In essence, then, what did Paul expect of the Ephesian elders? Scholar

9. What example did Paul set for fellow elders?

10, 11. (a) As regards the Christian ministry, what did Paul expect of the Ephesian elders? (b) Like Paul, in what kind of preaching do Jehovah’s Witnesses, including the elders, engage?

**Paul taught "from house to house."
This form of the ministry
is carried on by Jehovah's Witnesses today**

E. S. Young paraphrased the apostle's words in this way: "I did not only speak in public, but I labored from house to house, with all classes, both Jews and Gentiles. The theme of my ministry to all classes was 'repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.'" Putting Paul's words another way, W. B. Riley wrote: "The plain meaning was: 'I expect you to continue that which I began, both to do and to teach and I expect you to resist as I resisted; to teach both privately and publicly as I did in the streets and from house to house, to testify likewise to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, for these are the fundamentals!'"

¹¹ Clearly, in Acts chapter 20, Paul was showing fellow elders that they were expected to be house-to-house witnesses of Jehovah. In this regard, the first-century elders were to take the lead, setting a proper example for other members of the congregation. (Compare Hebrews 13:17.) Like Paul, then, Jehovah's Witnesses preach from house to house, telling people of all nations about God's Kingdom, repentance toward Him, and faith in Jesus Christ. (Mark 13:10; Luke 24:45-48) And in such house-to-house work, appointed elders among the modern-day Witnesses are expected to take the lead.—Acts 20:28.

¹² In 1879, Charles Taze Russell began to publish *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*, now called *The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom*. Russell and other Bible Students declared the Kingdom message in the apostolic manner. In later years, however,

12. What did some former elders refuse to do, but in what do elders take the lead today?



some congregation elders did not live up to their witnessing responsibilities. For instance, one Witness wrote: "All went along well until the announcement came of *all* taking part in house-to-house witnessing with literature and particularly the Sunday house-to-house work—this in 1927. Our elective elders opposed and tried to discourage the whole class from taking up or engaging in any part of such work." In time, men who would not engage in house-to-house preaching were no longer privileged to serve as elders. Today, too, those serving as elders and ministerial servants are expected to take the lead in house-to-house witnessing and other forms of the Christian ministry.

Everyone a Witness

¹³ With Jehovah's help, Christians should declare the Kingdom message from house to house, even if it is not received with appreciation. As God's watchman, Ezekiel was to warn people whether they listened or not. (Ezekiel 2:5-7; 3:11, 27; 33:1-6) Drawing a parallel between Ezekiel and Paul,

13. (a) What should we do even if people do not listen to the Kingdom message? (b) How has Paul been compared with Ezekiel?

E. M. Blaiklock wrote: "From [Paul's speech in Acts chapter 20] emerges a clear picture of the ministry in Ephesus. Note the following: First, Paul's urgent faithfulness. He was no seeker after popularity or the public's approval. Set like Ezekiel to a watchman's task, he discharged his duty with honest zeal and character to back his speech. Second, his loving sympathy. He was not the man to take words of doom upon his lips without emotion. Third, his indefatigable evangelism. Publicly and from house to house, in the city and throughout the province, he had preached the gospel."

¹⁴ God's abundant blessing upon his present-day servants leaves no doubt that he is pleased to have them bear the name Jehovah's Witnesses. (Isaiah 43:10-12) Moreover, they are Christ's witnesses too, for Jesus told his followers: "You will receive power when the holy spirit arrives upon you, and you will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) So witnessing is the responsibility of everyone who makes a dedication to Jehovah God in prayer through Jesus Christ.

¹⁵ It has been said of witnessing: "It involved the entire church. The missionary enterprise of the early church was not the responsibility of the Women's Missionary Society or the Foreign Mission Board. Nor was the work of witnessing left to professionals like elders, deacons, or even apostles. . . . In those early days the church *was* mission. The missionary program of the early church was based on two assumptions: (1) The chief task of the church is world evangelization. (2) The responsibility for carrying out this task

14. Why is witnessing the responsibility of everyone who makes a dedication to Jehovah God in prayer through Jesus Christ?

15. What has been said about the witnessing work of the early Christians?

rests with the entire Christian community."—J. Herbert Kane.

¹⁶ Although modern-day writers of Christendom do not agree with the Kingdom message, some do acknowledge that Christians have an obligation to witness. For instance, in the book *Everyone a Minister*, Oscar E. Feucht observes: "No pastor can fulfill the ministry God gave to each believer. Unfortunately centuries of erroneous thinking in the church has made the tasks of 500 parishioners the task of a single pastor. It was not so in the early church. They who believed went everywhere preaching the Word."

¹⁷ Witnessing was paramount in the lives of early Christians, even as it is among Jehovah's people today. "Broadly speaking," wrote Edward Caldwell Moore of Harvard University, "the first three centuries of the Christian movement were characterized by a great enthusiasm for the dissemination of the faith. The Christian passion was evangelism, the telling of the message of redemption. . . . The spread

16. Even writers in Christendom make what acknowledgment regarding Christians and witnessing?

17. What can be said about the place witnessing had in the lives of early Christians?

How Would You Respond?

- ☐ Why can we say that Acts 5:42 and Acts 20:20 mean that Jesus' followers should preach from house to house?
- ☐ How do we know that God approves of the house-to-house ministry of Jehovah's Witnesses?
- ☐ In regard to the ministry, what is required of elders and ministerial servants?
- ☐ Witnessing should have what place in a Christian's life?

of the influence and teachings of Jesus was, however, in the earliest period, owing in but small part to men whom we should call missionaries. It was the achievement of men of every trade and occupation and of every order in society. [They] carried to the farthest limits of the [Roman] empire that secret of the inner life, that new attitude toward the world, which in their experience constituted salvation. . . . [Early Christianity] was profoundly convinced of the approaching end of the present world-order. It believed in the sudden and miraculous setting up of a new world-order."

¹⁸ In house-to-house witnessing and other forms of their ministry, Jehovah's Witnesses joyously direct their hearers to the new world God has promised. Its foretold blessings of endless life far surpass the fondest dreams of today's would-be builders of a new world order. (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-4) Though it would seem that everyone would want to live in God's wonderful new world, that is not the case. However, let us next consider some effective ways in which Jehovah's servants can teach those seeking eternal life.

18. What grand hope far surpasses the dreams of political leaders?

SEEK THOSE RIGHTLY DISPOSED FOR EVERLASTING LIFE

"All those who were rightly disposed for everlasting life became believers."

—ACTS 13:48.

JEHOVAH GOD can read the heart. This was made clear when the prophet Samuel went to anoint a son of Jesse as king of Israel. Upon seeing Eliab, Samuel "at once said: 'Surely his anointed one is before Jehovah.' But Jehovah said to Samuel: 'Do not look at his appearance and at the height of his stature, for I have rejected him. For not the way man sees is the way God sees, because mere man sees what

appears to the eyes; but as for Jehovah, he sees what the heart is.'" Accordingly, Samuel was directed to anoint David, who proved 'agreeable to God's heart.'—1 Samuel 13:13, 14; 16:4-13.

² A person displays a certain dominant attitude. He has a particular disposition that is rooted in his figurative heart. (Matthew 12:34, 35; 15:18-20) Thus, we read of

1. As regards the human heart, what ability does Jehovah have?

2. What is rooted in a person's figurative heart, and thus what do we read about this in the Scriptures?

**Jesus said that “the pure in heart” would “see God.”
What did this mean?**

a person whose “heart is disposed to fight.” (Psalm 55:21) We are told that “anyone disposed to rage has many a transgression.” And we read: “There exist companions disposed to break one another to pieces, but there exists a friend sticking closer than a brother.” (Proverbs 18:24; 29:22) Happily, many prove to be like some Gentiles in ancient Antioch in Pisidia. Upon hearing about Jehovah’s provision for salvation, “they began to rejoice and to glorify the word of Jehovah, and all those who were rightly disposed for everlasting life became believers.”—Acts 13:44-48.



Believers Are “Pure in Heart”

³ Those believers in Antioch became baptized Christians, and the faithful among them could apply to themselves Jesus’ words: “Happy are the pure in heart, since they will see God.” (Matthew 5:8) But who are “the pure in heart”? And how do they “see God”?

⁴ The pure in heart are inwardly clean. Theirs is a purity of appreciation, affections, desires, and motives. (1 Timothy 1:5) They see God now in that they observe him acting in behalf of integrity keepers. (Compare Exodus 33:20; Job 19:26; 42:5.) The Greek word here rendered “see” also

3, 4. (a) Who are the pure in heart? (b) How do those pure in heart see God?

means “to see with the mind, to perceive, know.” Since Jesus perfectly reflected God’s personality, insight into that personality is enjoyed by “the pure in heart,” who exercise faith in Christ and in his sin-atoning sacrifice, gain forgiveness of their sins, and are able to render acceptable worship to God. (John 14:7-9; Ephesians 1:7) For anointed ones, seeing God reaches its apex when they are resurrected to heaven, where they actually see God and Christ. (2 Corinthians 1:21, 22; 1 John 3:2) But seeing God through accurate knowledge and true worship is possible for all those who are pure in heart. (Psalm 24:3, 4; 1 John 3:6; 3 John 11) They are rightly disposed for everlasting life in heaven or on a paradise earth.—Luke 23:43; 1 Corinthians 15:50-57; 1 Peter 1:3-5.

⁵ Those not rightly disposed for everlasting life will not become believers. It is not possible for them to exercise faith. (2 Thessalonians 3:2) Moreover, nobody can become a true follower of Jesus Christ unless he is teachable and Jehovah, who sees what the heart is, draws that person. (John 6:41-47) Of course, in preaching from house to house, Jehovah's Witnesses do not pre-judge anyone. They cannot read hearts but leave the results in God's loving hands.

⁶ One scholar has appropriately said: "[Paul] taught the truth publicly and from house to house. Not only from the platform, but in personal contact with individuals he preached Christ. Oftentimes the personal touch is far more effective than any other type or method in reaching souls." (August Van Ryn) Such publications as the *Theocratic Ministry School Guidebook*, *Reasoning From the Scriptures*, and *Our Kingdom Ministry* help Jehovah's Witnesses to give talks and to make the most of personal contact in their field service. Helpful, too, are Service Meeting demonstrations and Theocratic Ministry School counsel. Those attending the school receive valuable training in such speech qualities as good introductions, proper use of the Scriptures, logical development, convincing argument, use of illustrations, and effective conclusions. Let us see how the Bible augments this instruction that can make God's people more effective as they seek those rightly disposed for everlasting life.

Thought-Provoking Introductions

⁷ From Jesus' example, those preparing

5. How only can one become a believer and true follower of Jesus Christ?

6. (a) What has been said about personal contact in the house-to-house ministry? (b) What provisions have been made to help Jehovah's Witnesses find those rightly disposed for everlasting life?

7. The opening words of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount teach what about introductions?

for house-to-house witnessing can learn something about introductions that arouse interest. In opening his Sermon on the Mount, he used the word "happy" nine times. For instance, he said: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need, since the kingdom of the heavens belongs to them. . . . Happy are the mild-tempered ones, since they will inherit the earth." (Matthew 5:3-12) The sentences were direct and clear. And that introduction surely aroused interest and got his listeners involved, for who does not want to be happy?

⁸ Any topic of conversation used in the house-to-house ministry should be introduced in a positive, pleasant way. But no one should use a shocking introduction, such as, "I have a message for you from outer space." The good news does have a heavenly source, but such an introduction might well make a householder wonder whether the Witness should be taken seriously or dismissed as quickly as possible.

Handling God's Word Aright

⁹ In the field ministry, as on the platform, scriptures should be properly introduced, read with suitable emphasis, and applied in a clear, accurate way. Questions that make a householder think about Scriptural points may also be helpful. Again, Jesus' methods are instructive. On one occasion, a man versed in the Mosaic Law asked him: "Teacher, by doing what shall I inherit everlasting life?" In response Jesus asked: "What is written in the Law? How do you read?" Doubtless, Jesus knew that this was a question the man could answer. He did respond correctly, saying: "You must love Jehovah your

8. In the house-to-house ministry, how should a topic of conversation be introduced?

9. (a) How should scriptures be introduced, read, and applied in the ministry? (b) What example is cited to show how Jesus used questions?

Scriptures should be properly introduced, read with suitable emphasis, and applied in a clear, accurate manner

God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole strength and with your whole mind,' and, 'your neighbor as yourself.'" This led Jesus to give commendation, and further discussion ensued.—Luke 10:25-37.

¹⁰ Those witnessing from house to house should emphasize the theme of the topic of conversation and make clear the reason for reading Bible texts that develop that subject. Since the Witness is trying to reach the heart of the householder, he ought to avoid asking embarrassing questions. In using God's Word, 'may our utterance always be gracious, seasoned with salt.'—Colossians 4:6.

¹¹ Especially on return visits there may be a need to correct wrong views by showing what the Scriptures actually say or mean. Jesus did something similar in rebuffing Satan, who said: "If you are a son of God, hurl yourself down [from the battlement of the temple, like a potential suicide]; for it is written, 'He will give his angels a charge concerning you, and they will carry you on their hands, that you may at no time strike your foot against a stone.'" Psalm 91:11, 12, quoted by Satan, does not justify the jeopardizing of life, a gift from God. Realizing that it was wrong to test Jehovah by taking chances with his life, Jesus told Satan: "Again it is written, 'You must not put Jehovah your God to the test.'" (Matthew 4:5-7) Of course, Satan is not a truth-seeker. But when reasonable

10. What should be kept in mind as far as one's topic of conversation is concerned, and what should be avoided when asking householders questions?

11. In using the Scriptures to correct wrong views, what example do we have from Jesus' temptation by Satan?



people express wrong views that would hinder their spiritual progress, the minister of God's Word should tactfully show what the Scriptures really say and mean. This is all part of "handling the word of the truth aright"—one of the important lessons taught in the Theocratic Ministry School.—2 Timothy 2:15.

Persuasion Has Its Place

¹² Persuasion has a proper place in the Christian ministry. For instance, Paul urged his coworker Timothy to continue in the things he had learned and was "*persuaded to believe*." (2 Timothy 3:14) In Corinth, Paul "would give a talk in the synagogue every sabbath and *would persuade Jews and Greeks*." (Acts 18:1-4) In Ephesus, he successfully 'gave talks and *used persuasion* concerning the kingdom of God.' (Acts 19:8) And when under house arrest in Rome, the apostle called people to him and gave them a witness, "*using persuasion*," and some became believers.—Acts 28:23, 24.

12, 13. Why is it right to use persuasion in the ministry?

¹³ Regardless of how persuasive the Witness may try to be, of course, only those rightly disposed for everlasting life will become believers. Convincing arguments and clear explanations, tactfully presented, may persuade them to believe. But what else can be helpful in persuading them?

Be Logical and Convincing

¹⁴ One of the speech qualities emphasized in the Theocratic Ministry School is logical, coherent development. This involves putting all the key ideas and relevant material in reasonable order. Also essential is convincing argument, which requires laying a good foundation and providing sound proof. Akin to this is helping listeners to reason by maintaining a common ground, developing points adequately, and applying them effectively. Again, the Scriptures provide guidelines.

¹⁵ These speech qualities are evident in the apostle Paul's renowned speech on Mars' Hill in ancient Athens. (Acts 17:22-31) His introduction captured attention and established a common ground, for he said: "Men of Athens, I behold that in all things you seem to be more given to the fear of the deities than others are." To them, this no doubt seemed to be a compliment. After mentioning an altar dedicated "To an Unknown God," Paul proceeded with his logical, coherent development and convincing argument. He pointed out that this God that they did not know had "made the world and all the things in it." Unlike Athena or other Greek deities, 'he does not dwell in handmade temples, nor does he

need to be attended to by human hands.' The apostle next indicated that this God gave us life and does not make us grope for him blindly. Paul then reasoned that our Creator, who has overlooked times of idolatrous ignorance, 'is telling mankind everywhere to repent.' This logically led to the point that 'God will judge earth's inhabitants in righteousness by an appointed man whom he resurrected from the dead.' Since Paul had been "declaring the good news of Jesus and the resurrection," those Athenians knew that this Judge would be Jesus Christ.—Acts 17:18.

¹⁶ True, Paul was not witnessing from house to house on Mars' Hill. But from his talk and the training given in the Theocratic Ministry School, Jehovah's Witnesses can learn much that can enhance their field ministry. Yes, all of this helps to make them more effective ministers, even as Paul's logical development and convincing argumentation persuaded some of those Athenians to become believers.—Acts 17:32-34.

Use Instructive Illustrations

¹⁷ The Theocratic Ministry School also helps God's ministers to use good illustrations in house-to-house witnessing and other avenues of their ministry. To emphasize important points, simple illustrations that are in good taste should be used. The Witness should draw them from familiar situations and be careful to make their application clear. Jesus' illustrations met all these requirements.

¹⁸ For instance, consider Jesus' words: "The kingdom of the heavens is like a

14. (a) What does logical, coherent development involve? (b) Convincing argument calls for what?

15. (a) How did Paul capture attention and establish a common ground when he spoke on Mars' Hill? (b) In Paul's speech, what evidence do we have of logical, coherent development?

16. How can one's ministry be affected by Paul's speech on Mars' Hill and by training in the Theocratic Ministry School?

17. What kind of illustrations should be used in the ministry?

18. How might Matthew 13:45, 46 prove useful in the ministry?

traveling merchant seeking fine pearls. Upon finding one pearl of high value, away he went and promptly sold all the things he had and bought it." (Matthew 13:45, 46) Pearls are precious gems found inside the shells of oysters and other mollusks. But only some pearls are "fine." The merchant had the discernment needed to appreciate the surpassing value of this one pearl and was willing to part with all else to acquire it. Perhaps during a return visit or a home Bible study, this illustration could be used to show that an individual who truly appreciates God's Kingdom will act like that merchant. Such a person will give the Kingdom priority in life, aware that it is worth any sacrifice.

Conclude With Motivation

¹⁹ In the Theocratic Ministry School, God's people also learn that the conclusion of a talk or discussion should have a direct relationship to the theme and should show hearers what to do and encourage them to do it. In the house-to-house ministry, the householder needs to be shown definitely what course he is expected to take, such as accepting a Bible publication or agreeing to a return visit.

²⁰ The conclusion of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount provides a fine example. By means of an easily understood illustration, Jesus showed that it would be the wise course to heed his words. He concluded: "Therefore everyone that hears these sayings of mine and does them will be likened to a discreet man, who built his house upon the rock-mass. And the rain poured down and the floods came and the winds blew and lashed against that house, but it did not cave in, for it had been founded upon

19. In the house-to-house ministry, what should conclusions show the householder?

20. What fine example of a motivating conclusion do we have at Matthew 7:24-27?

the rock-mass. Furthermore, everyone hearing these sayings of mine and not doing them will be likened to a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain poured down and the floods came and the winds blew and struck against that house and it caved in, and its collapse was great." (Matthew 7:24-27) How well this shows that God's ministers should endeavor to motivate householders!

²¹ The foregoing points illustrate how the Theocratic Ministry School can help many to be qualified Kingdom proclaimers. Of course, being adequately qualified issues primarily from God. (2 Corinthians 3:4-6) And regardless of how qualified the minister may be, no one can persuade people to become believers unless they are drawn by God through Christ. (John 14:6) Yet, God's people should surely take advantage of all the spiritual provisions made by Jehovah as they seek those rightly disposed for everlasting life.

21. What has our discussion illustrated, but what must be recognized?

What Are Your Answers?

- ☐ Who are "the pure in heart," and how do they "see God"?
- ☐ What factors should be considered when introducing the Kingdom message in the house-to-house work?
- ☐ How can God's Word be handled aright in the ministry?
- ☐ What will help to make logical, convincing presentations in the field service?
- ☐ What should be remembered about illustrations used in the ministry?
- ☐ What should be accomplished by conclusions used in the witnessing work?

"THIS IS MY BODY"

"TAKE it and eat; ... this is my body." (Matthew 26:26, *The New Jerusalem Bible*)

With these words, Jesus Christ passed unleavened bread to his apostles when instituting the Lord's Evening Meal. But what did he mean by the words, "This is my body"?

THE answer to this question is important to Roman Catholics, since Jesus' words form the basis of the doctrine of transubstantiation. According to this belief, when Catholics celebrate the Mass and swallow the wafer, it turns into Christ's literal body, or flesh. They would, therefore, strongly disagree with the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, which renders Jesus' words: "Take, eat. This means my body." This rendering suggests that the bread was a symbol of Jesus' flesh, not the flesh itself. Which translation conveys the correct thought?

The Greek word translated "is" or "means" is *e-stin'*. It basically means "is," but it can also mean "to denote, signify." Which rendering is better in this context?

Noteworthy is a footnote on Mark 14:22 in the Spanish-language *La Sagrada Escritura, Texto y comentario por Profesores de la Compañía de Jesús, Nuevo Testamento I* (The Holy Scripture, Text and Commentary by Professors of the Company of Jesus, New Testament). It states: "The translation, from the grammatical point of view, could just as well be rendered *signifies* or *symbolizes* as *is*—meaning literal identity. As examples in which the meaning is *symbolizes*, Genesis 41:26; Ezekiel 5:5; Daniel 7:17; Luke 8:11; Matthew 13:38; 16:18; Galatians 4:24; Revelation 1:20 could be cited. The meaning of *is* ([in the sense of] identical with) is inferred, as can be seen from the manuals of dogma, excluding the possibility

of the metaphor, or symbolism, and also by the way the Early Church understood the phrase.'

As this Roman Catholic version frankly shows, grammatically Jesus' words could be understood either way. In fact, the Greek word *e-stin'* is translated "the meaning of" elsewhere in the Catholic *New Jerusalem Bible*. (Matthew 12:7) Which word should a translator choose at Matthew 26:26? Since Jesus was still alive in a perfect body when he spoke the words of that text, the bread that he offered to his followers could not have been his literal flesh. Moreover, his entire perfect human body was offered as a ransom sacrifice. (Colossians 1:21-23) Hence, the best rendering of this verse is: "This means my body." The unleavened bread symbolized Jesus' body, which was about to be sacrificed in behalf of mankind.

Even if your personal Bible has the expression "This is my body," you need not be confused. Jesus often used similar language. When he said, "I am the door" and, "I am the true vine," no one understood that he was a literal door or a literal vine. (John 10:7; 15:1) And when, according to *The New Jerusalem Bible*, he went on to pass a cup of wine to his disciples and said: "This cup is the new covenant," no one thought the cup literally was the new covenant. (Luke 22:20) Likewise, when he said the bread 'was' his body, we have to understand that the bread 'meant,' or symbolized, his body.

Be Ready for Jehovah's Day!

Highlights From First Thessalonians

JEHOVAH'S day! Christians in ancient Thessalonica thought it was imminent. Were they right? When would it come? That was one vital matter addressed in the apostle Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, sent from Corinth in about the year 50 of our Common Era.

Paul and Silas established the congregation in Thessalonica, the administrative seat of the Roman province of Macedonia. (Acts 17:1-4) Later, in his first letter to the Thessalonians, Paul offered commendation, provided admonition, and discussed Jehovah's day. We too can benefit from this letter, especially with the day of Jehovah now so near.

Commend and Encourage

Paul first commended the Thessalonians. (1:1-10) Commendation was due for their faithful work and endurance. It was commendable, too, that they "accepted the word under much tribulation with joy of holy spirit." Do you commend others, as Paul did?

The apostle had set a fine example. (2:1-12) Despite insolent treatment in Philippi, he had "mustered up boldness by means of God to speak the good news" to the Thessalonians. He had shunned flattery, covetousness, and glory seeking. Paul had not become an expensive burden but was as gentle with them as a nursing mother is with her child. What a fine example for elders today!

Paul's next words encouraged the Thessalonians to remain firm when persecuted. (2:13-3:13)

They had endured persecution by their countrymen, and Timothy had brought Paul a good report about their spiritual condition. The apostle prayed that they abound in love and that their hearts be made firm. Similarly, Jehovah's Witnesses now pray for persecuted fellow believers, encourage them if possible, and rejoice in reports of their faithfulness.

Remain Spiritually Awake!

The Thessalonians next received counsel. (4:1-18) They were to walk more fully in a course pleasing to God, displaying more brotherly love and working with their hands to meet their needs. Moreover, they were to comfort one another with the hope that at Jesus' presence spirit-begotten believers

who had died would be raised first and be united with him. Afterward, surviving anointed ones would at their death and resurrection join Christ and those who had already been resurrected to heavenly life.

Paul next discussed the day of Jehovah and offered further counsel. (5:1-28) Jehovah's day was coming as a thief, with sudden destruction certain after the cry: "Peace and security!" So the Thessalonians were to remain spiritually awake, protected by the breastplate of faith and love and by the hope of salvation as a helmet. They were to have deep regard for those presiding in the congregation and were to abstain from wickedness, as we must.

Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians should prompt us to give commendation and encouragement to fellow believers. It should also move us to be exemplary in conduct and attitude. And surely its counsel can help us to be ready for Jehovah's day.

Breastplate and Helmet: Urging spiritual wakefulness, Paul wrote: "Let us keep our senses and have on the breastplate of faith and love and as a helmet the hope of salvation." (1 Thessalonians 5:8) A breastplate was a warrior's armored breast protector, consisting of scales, chains, or solid metal. Similarly, the breastplate of faith protects us spiritually. And what about the ancient helmet? Often made of metal, it was a military headgear designed to protect a fighter during battle. As a helmet protected the head of a warrior, so the hope of salvation protects the mental powers, thus enabling a Christian to maintain integrity. How vital that Jehovah's people wear such spiritual armor!—Ephesians 6:11-17.



"Do Not Give Up in Doing Right"

Highlights From Second Thessalonians

THE apostle Paul's concern for Christians in the Macedonian city of Thessalonica moved him to write his second letter to them, about the year 51 C.E. Some in the congregation were wrongly saying that the presence of Jesus Christ was imminent. Perhaps even a letter incorrectly attributed to Paul was interpreted as indicating that "the day of Jehovah" had arrived.—2 Thessalonians 2:1, 2.

The thinking of some Thessalonians therefore required adjustment. In his second letter, Paul commended them for their growing faith, increasing love, and faithful endurance. But he also showed that apostasy would come before Jesus' presence. So there were difficult times ahead, and the apostle's letter would help them to heed his admonition: "Do not give up in doing right." (2 Thessalonians 3:13) Paul's words can help us in the same way.

Christ's Revelation and Presence

Paul first spoke of relief from tribulation. (1:1-12) This would

come "at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his powerful angels." Everlasting destruction would then be brought upon those not obeying the good news. It is comforting to remember this when we suffer tribulation at the hands of persecutors.

Next, Paul pointed out that "the man of lawlessness" would be revealed before Christ's presence. (2:1-17) The Thessalonians were not to be excited by any message suggesting that "the day of Jehovah" was already upon them. First, the apostasy would occur and the man of lawlessness would be revealed. Thereafter, Jesus would bring him to nothing, doing so at the manifestation of His presence. Meanwhile, Paul prayed that God and Christ comfort the hearts of the Thessalonians and make them "firm in every good deed and word."

Dealing With the Disorderly

Among Paul's further words were instructions on dealing

with disorderly individuals. (3:1-18) He expressed confidence that the Lord would strengthen the Thessalonians and keep them from the wicked one, Satan the Devil. But they needed to take steps for their own spiritual benefit. They were to withdraw from disorderly ones, those meddling in matters that did not concern them and refusing to work. "If anyone does not want to work," said Paul, "neither let him eat." Such persons were to be marked, and there was to be no fraternizing with them, although they were to be admonished as brothers. Faithful Thessalonian Christians were not to give up in doing right, and Paul desired that the undeserved kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all of them.

Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians gives Jehovah's Witnesses the assurance that relief from their tribulation will come when Christ and his angels bring vengeance upon those not obeying the good news. It is also faith strengthening to know that "the man of lawlessness" (the clergy class of Christendom) and all false religion will soon be brought to an end. In the meantime, let us heed Paul's admonition not to give up in doing right.

Jehovah's Word Moving Speedily: "Carry on prayer for us," wrote Paul, "that the word of Jehovah may keep moving speedily [or, "may be running"] and being glorified just as it is in fact with you." (2 Thessalonians 3:1; *Kingdom Interlinear*) Some scholars have suggested that the apostle was alluding to runners moving speedily in a race. While that is uncertain, Paul requested the prayers of Thessalonian Christians so that he and his coworkers might spread the word of truth with urgency and without hindrance. Because God answers such prayers, his word is "moving speedily" as the good news is preached with urgency in these last days. Jehovah's word is also "being glorified," highly esteemed by believers as "God's power for salvation," as it was among Thessalonians who accepted it. (Romans 1:16; 1 Thessalonians 2:13) How glad we are that God is blessing Kingdom proclaimers and speedily increasing the ranks of his worshipers!—Isaiah 60:22.



THE PURE LANGUAGE

UNITES A GREAT
CROWD OF WORSHIPERS

THE God-given pure language is a force for Christian unity. Proof of that was apparent to all who attended the convention of Jehovah's Witnesses held in West Berlin from Tuesday through Friday, July 24 to 27, 1990, since Witnesses from 64 different countries were present.

When the "Godly Devotion" District Conventions were held in Poland during the summer of 1989, thousands of delegates came from Russia and Czechoslovakia, but only a few hundred were present from East Germany. How the world situation has changed politically since then! This time, an estimated 30,000 delegates from East Germany met with Witnesses in Olympia Stadium in West Berlin. The convention was typical of the hundreds held in other parts of the world, generally on Thursday through Sunday.

In his opening address of welcome on Tuesday, the chairman recounted the role that conventions had played since 1919 in helping Jehovah's Witnesses to make progress in speaking the pure language. This convention would likewise help all in attendance to improve in their ability to speak the pure language and to live by it. He reminded the delegates that by their very grooming and conduct, Jehovah's people make manifest the progress they have made in speaking the pure language.

"A Pure Language for All Nations"

Fittingly, the keynote talk of the convention featured the foregoing theme. It was based on Zephaniah 3:9, where God promised: "Then I shall give to peoples the change to a pure language, in order for them all to call upon the name of Jehovah, in order to serve him shoulder to shoulder." The pure language involves a proper understanding and appreciation of the truth about God and his purposes. Only Jehovah can provide this by means of his holy spirit. Love of the truth must be the motivation for learning the pure language, which is free from all moral uncleanness.



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15.10

15.30

15.4

16

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1. Olympia Stadium, West Berlin
2. Printed convention program
3. Two hundred buses brought delegates from East Germany
4. Polish conventioners were happy to receive printed releases
5. Floral decorations brightened the scene
6. A. D. Schroeder, one of the members of the Governing Body on the program in West Berlin

Furthermore, speaking the pure language is not just a matter of using a certain vocabulary. Rather, our way of life must be in agreement with what comes from our lips. In fact, our tone of voice, facial expression, and gestures are also important, for they reflect what we are inside. To keep up with the expanding pure language, we must have a consistent study program and regularly attend all congregation meetings.

Learning the Pure Language

As a talk on Tuesday afternoon stressed, learning the pure language means "Progressing From Basics to Maturity." Growth is essential if we are to keep developing spiritually. That means taking advantage of all provisions for spiritual advancement and applying Bible principles daily.

To become proficient in the pure language, we must be "Taught by Jehovah," the title of a symposium on Thursday morning. The first speaker showed how this was 'Exemplified by Jesus Christ.' That Jesus was taught by Jehovah was evident from his words and actions. So we want to imitate him in how he taught. And as Jesus always submitted to his Father's will, so must we.

The next three speakers showed how Jehovah teaches by means of meetings and assemblies. We benefit from all five congregation meetings and should not neglect any of them. Each meeting is vital to our spiritual advancement. Jehovah also teaches us by means of our circuit assembly, district convention, and special assembly day programs.

To benefit from all of these, we must listen attentively and then put into practice what we learn.

This symposium was followed by the talk "Sacrificing for Personal Study." To find time for it, we must heed the counsel at Ephesians 5:15, 16 to buy out time from less important things.

A logical goal of our learning the pure language is dedication and baptism. This truth was highlighted in the talk "Baptism of Those Learning the Pure Language." This language is leading many to dedication and baptism.



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4

However, one must thereafter continue to follow Jesus' pattern by zealously preaching the good news, putting on the new personality, and keeping separate from the world.

Solid Spiritual Food

Conventioners were also delighted to receive solid spiritual food based on the fulfillment of prophetic dramas. On Thursday afternoon, two talks were based on themes taken from Ezekiel's prophecy. The first, "Jehovah's Celestial Chariot on the Move," described a colossal, glorious, fear-inspiring celestial conveyance moving at lightning speed. It pictures Jehovah's heavenly organization, which God rides in that he lovingly directs its every move, using it to carry out his purposes. Ezekiel pictures the spirit-anointed remnant, particularly since 1919. Especially since 1935 have they been joined by the "great crowd."—Revelation 7:9.

The following talk was entitled "Keep Pace With the Visible Organization." There is no question that God's visible organization is keeping up with his celestial chariot-like organization. As did Ezekiel, Jehovah's servants today must obediently carry out their prophetic commission despite indifference, ridicule, or even opposition. Keeping pace leads to many blessings now and everlasting life in God's fast-approaching new world.

On Friday morning, solid spiritual food was also provided by means of three talks based on Isaiah chapter 28. The first of these showed in forceful terms that the spiritual drunkards of ancient Israel and Judah pictured the spiritual drunkards of Christen-

dom. And as the former experienced Jehovah's adverse judgments, so will those of Christendom.

The talk that followed, entitled "Their Refuge—A Liel," contained the stern warning: Just as ancient Judah's trusting in Egypt proved to be a vain refuge, so will be Christendom's alliance with political powers of our day. The third talk on Isaiah chapter 28, "Keep Warning of Jehovah's Unusual Work," was directed to God's people. What Jehovah will do to Christendom is rightly called unusual, for it will come as a complete surprise to her. Today, Jehovah is a crown of glory to the small band of anointed Christians and to more than four million "other sheep." (John 10:16) The speaker concluded with the stirring words: "May our zeal, determination, and loyalty contribute to the everlasting praise of our God, Jehovah!"

Speaking the Pure Language Means Showing Brotherly Love

On Wednesday afternoon the conventioners had it driven home to them that speaking the pure language also means to "Consider Orphans and Widows in Their Tribulation." The fatherless boys can be helped by receiving personal training. We can show consideration for widows by kind words of encouragement, by including them in our Christian activities and social gatherings, and by giving them material assistance if they are deserving and truly in need. Interviews showed how these things were being done.

On Thursday afternoon, another heart-warming talk showed "How Christians Care for One Another." Jehovah's Witnesses have a fine record of caring for one another, espe-

The peak attendance at the convention in West Berlin was 44,532, and 1,018 were baptized. It took the baptism candidates 19 minutes to file out of Olympia Stadium, and during this time there was continuous applause. There was a special section for the English-speaking delegates. Some 6,000 of these heard the entire program in their language. At this convention, there were also 4,500 from Poland; during two noon hours, members of the Governing Body gave brief talks for their benefit.

cially when such disasters as hurricanes and earthquakes strike, when there is a need to write to officials, or when there are local needs. But when difficulties arise because of human imperfection, we should apply the principles involved in Jesus' counsel at Matthew 5:23, 24 and 18:15-17. Especially when it comes to business arrangements between brothers is there need for mutual respect and the exercising of care so that neither the employer nor the employee takes selfish advantage of the spiritual relationship.

Speaking the Pure Language Means Watching Our Conduct

The need to watch our conduct was repeatedly stressed. Thus, the first speaker on Tuesday afternoon spoke on the theme "Hearing and Keeping the Word of God." He showed that there were two main reasons for our coming to conventions: to take in accurate knowledge and to be motivated to act on that knowledge.

The first talk on Wednesday morning posed the searching question "Christ 'Hated Lawlessness'—Do You?" It is not enough to love righteousness. We must also hate lawlessness so as to have a good conscience, to maintain a good relationship with Jehovah, to avoid bringing reproach on his name, and to avoid reaping the fruits of lawlessness—corruption and death.

Closely related to that theme was the next talk, entitled "Reject Worldly Fantasies, Pursue Kingdom Realities." Satan, Eve, and the fallen angels all pursued fantasies to their undoing. Worldly fantasies, consisting of materialistic dreams or those dealing with illicit affairs, result in disillusionment if not also gross wrongdoing. To counteract these fantasies, we must pursue Kingdom realities by means of study, prayer, meeting attendance, and the public ministry.

To live upright Christian lives, we must also heed the counsel given Wednesday

afternoon in the talk "Christians—Live Within Your Financial Means." Failure to do this is bound to have harmful effects both physically and spiritually. The course of wisdom is to curb one's selfish yearnings by not going into needless debt and by planning a realistic budget and then sticking to it. At all times we need to cultivate godly devotion. Along with self-sufficiency, this is a means of great gain.—1 Timothy 6:6-8.

The importance of watching our associations was highlighted in Tuesday's talk "Are Your Friends Jehovah's Friends?" Our friends should be Christians who have put on the Christlike personality and are zealous in the preaching work. Worldly acquaintances are not friends of God, and we cannot socialize with them without harm to ourselves. Even within the congregation, we must be selective if our associations are to be truly upbuilding.

The foregoing counsel regarding conduct was graphically underscored by the modern-day drama. It was entitled "Coping With the Devil's Crafty Acts."

Pure Language Counsel for Families

Greatly needed was the Wednesday talk "Parents—Fulfill Your Obligations!" Parents themselves must know God's will and be doing it to the best of their ability. They must also inculcate God's Word in their children. Moreover, it is not enough just to take children to Christian meetings and out in the field ministry. They must be taught to love Jehovah and to see the practical wisdom of doing godly things.

Next came a symposium on "The Family in Our Day." The first speaker showed that the family originated with God. Fathers must communicate well regarding spiritual matters. Mothers must be good homemakers, and children must show respect for Jehovah by cooperating with their parents.

The following speaker showed that the family is "Under Assault by Adversaries."

Economic pressures are taking their toll. The workplace abounds with temptations to do wrong, and media presentations reek with violence, illicit sex, and appeals to materialism. Instruction must begin early, and great diligence is required to overcome worldly influences. Good use must be made of the theocratic tools provided by the Watch Tower Society.

The next talk, dealing with the family's 'Preservation Into the New World,' further underscored the serious responsibility that parents have. The training of children must be done with the greatest earnestness. Fine counsel was given regarding family Bible studies and what to study, all with the purpose of reaching the hearts of children. Only then can parents and children hope to be preserved into the new world as a family.

Furnishing fine counsel for a family situation in which many Witnesses find themselves was the talk "Coping Within a Divided Household." Those in such circumstances were counseled never to give up hope that the unbeliever might someday become a believer. Spend time with the unbelieving mate and make sure that you measure up to all that is required of a Christian partner. You can get help from the elders or perhaps from others in divided households.

Speaking the Pure Language to Others

Most fittingly, much attention was given to our making use of opportunities to teach the pure language to others. Thus, on Wednesday morning the conventioners heard the talk "Use Your Valuable Time Wisely." To do that we must establish priorities, in keeping with Matthew 6:33, which says: "Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness." That includes setting aside time for personal Bible study, attending all the meetings, and being regular in the field ministry.

This requires that we buy out time from less important though pleasurable activities. Several interviews showed how some were doing this.

We must never forget that we are Jehovah's Witnesses. On Thursday afternoon, a number of demonstrations drove home that very point under the theme "Keep Speaking the Pure Language on Every Occasion." These demonstrations showed how this can be done in street witnessing, in informal witnessing, and by the use of the telephone. Unselfish love for Jehovah God and our neighbor will motivate us to speak the pure language at every opportunity.

Closely related to this theme was the next presentation, "Blessings of Those Not Begging Off." In striking contrast with Christendom stands the worldwide teaching organization of Jehovah's Witnesses. Individually, we must resist all pressures, such as official opposition, widespread apathy, and economic problems. Demonstrations based on the book *Reasoning From the Scriptures* showed how these pressures can be overcome.

Also encouraging zealous preaching was the Bible drama *Doing God's Will With Zeal*. It showed how zealous Jehu was for Jehovah's name and how important it is for us to display similar courage and zeal for God's work.

In Our Next Issue

■ **Why Take Religion Seriously?**

■ **Honor Jehovah, Why and How?**

■ **Honor Men of All Sorts**

Convention Releases

There were two outstanding releases in English and in German during the convention. The first of these publications was introduced in connection with the talk entitled "Saving Your Life With Blood—How?" The speaker first told of the risks associated with blood transfusions. He pointed out that there are many alternatives to blood in compensating for blood loss. But Jehovah's Witnesses abstain from blood not because it is unhealthy but because accepting it is unholy. They abstain, not because blood may be polluted, but because it is precious to God. The blood that is truly life-saving is the ransoming blood of Jesus Christ. In conclusion the speaker delighted all his listeners by displaying the 32-page brochure *How Can Blood Save Your Life?*

A second valuable release came in connection with the talk "Search for Jehovah, You People." By and large, people are not searching for God. The existence of many different religions demonstrates how misdirected man's search for God has been because he has ignored God's Word. As seen by our Memorial reports each year, millions need to be helped to take their stand for Jehovah. Isaiah 55:6, 7 shows that Jehovah truly is a loving and merciful God, ready to "forgive in a large way." As his Witnesses, we have been given the pure language so that we might help others to join us in serving Jehovah shoulder to shoulder.

Today, Jehovah's people are faced with a challenge due to mass movements of populations. As a result, all kinds of religions may be professed by people in our territory. So that we can help Hindus, Buddhists, Shintoists, and those of many other religions, the Society has provided the fine 384-page book *Mankind's Search for God*. It authoritatively presents the basic teach-

ings of main religions outside of Christendom. But it also traces the record of false religion within Christendom. This book can open the way for starting Bible studies with people professing many different religions.

Public Talk and Concluding Comments

"Become United by the Pure Language" was the title of Friday's public talk. The speaker showed that although three thousand different languages now act as barriers to unity, the pure language is a mighty unifying force. It has safeguarded Jehovah's Witnesses against Babylonian errors, has taught them respect for the sanctity of life and blood, and has helped them to live by Bible principles that benefit them spiritually and physically. All need to be concerned about learning and speaking the pure language, for only those doing so will survive Armageddon. There is no time to lose in heeding the counsel at Zephaniah 2:1-3.

After some fine Scriptural counsel on the need to "Be Vigilant With a View to Prayers," came the concluding remarks based on the theme "Walking in Accord With the Pure Language." The number now walking in accord with the pure language is truly increasing. And regard for the pure language was shown by those attending these conventions by their cleanness, orderliness, and organizational harmony. The new printed releases will help all of Jehovah's Witnesses to spread the pure language more effectively.

The final convention speaker reminded all of the need for endurance. He indicated that as a result of this convention, all should be strengthened in their determination to press forward. He then concluded with the words: "May we continue to keep walking in accord with the God-given pure language so that we can glorify our loving heavenly Father, Jehovah God, now and forevermore!"

Hold Faith and a Good Conscience

Highlights From First Timothy

ABOUT the year 56 C.E., the apostle Paul warned elders of the Ephesus congregation that "oppressive wolves" would rise among them and "speak twisted things to draw away the disciples after themselves." (Acts 20:29, 30) In a few years, apostate teaching had become so serious that Paul urged Timothy to wage spiritual warfare inside the congregation to preserve its purity and help fellow believers to remain in the faith. That was a major reason why Paul wrote his first letter to Timothy from Macedonia about 61-64 C.E.

Timothy was instructed about an elder's duties, the God-assigned place of women, qualifications of elders and ministerial servants, and other matters. Such instruction is also beneficial today.

Exhortation to Faith

Paul opened with counsel to hold faith and a good conscience. (1:1-20) He encouraged Timothy to remain in Ephesus and "command certain ones not to teach different doctrine." Paul was grateful for the ministry assigned to him, acknowledging that he had acted in ignorance and with a lack of faith when he persecuted Jesus' followers. The apostle charged Timothy to go on waging spiritual warfare, "holding faith and a good conscience" and not becoming like those who "experienced shipwreck concerning their faith."

Counsel on Worship

Next, Paul gave counsel as "a teacher of nations in the matter of faith and truth." (2:1-15) Prayers were to be offered concerning those in high station so that Christians might live peaceably. It is God's will that all sorts of men be saved, and a vital teaching is that Christ "gave himself a corresponding ransom for all." Paul showed that a woman should adorn herself with modesty and must not exercise authority over a man.

The congregation must be well organized. (3:1-16) So Paul set out the qualifications of overseers and ministerial servants. From the things the apostle wrote, Timothy would know how to conduct himself in the congregation, "a pillar and support of the truth."

Paul gave Timothy personal counsel to help him guard against

false teaching. (4:1-16) In later times some would fall away from the faith. But by paying constant attention to himself and to his teaching, Timothy would 'save himself and those listening to him.'

Timothy also received counsel on dealing with individuals, young and old. (5:1-25) For example, suitable provisions were to be made for older widows with a fine Christian reputation. Rather than gossiping, younger widows should marry and bear children. Older men presiding in a fine way were to be reckoned worthy of double honor.

Godly Devotion With Self-Sufficiency

Counsel on godly devotion ended Paul's letter. (6:1-21) "Godly devotion along with self-sufficiency" is a means of great gain, but determination to be rich leads to destruction and ruin. Paul urged Timothy to fight the fine fight of the faith and 'get a firm hold on everlasting life.' To get a hold on that real life, the wealthy had to "rest their hope, not on uncertain riches, but on God."

Saved Through Childbearing:

Paul was not discussing salvation to eternal life but a godly woman's proper role when he wrote: "She will be kept safe through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and sanctification along with soundness of mind." (1 Timothy 2:11-15) Through childbearing, caring for her children, and managing a household, a woman would be "kept safe" from becoming an unoccupied gossip and meddler in other people's affairs. (1 Timothy 5:11-15) Her domestic activities would complement her service to Jehovah. Of course, all Christians should guard their conduct and make wise use of their time.—Ephesians 5:15, 16.



Rely on God-Given Strength

Highlights From Second Timothy

JEHOVAH gives his servants power to endure trials and persecution. And how Timothy and other Christians needed God-given strength! A fire ravaged Rome in 64 C.E., and rumor had it that Emperor Nero was responsible. To protect himself, he blamed the Christians, and this apparently prompted a wave of persecution. Likely at that time (about 65 C.E.), the apostle Paul was again imprisoned in Rome. Though facing death, he then wrote his second letter to Timothy.

Paul's letter prepared Timothy to resist apostates and stand firm in the face of persecution. It encouraged him to keep making spiritual progress and told about Paul's circumstances in prison. The letter also helps readers to rely on God-given strength.

Suffer Evil and Teach With Mildness

God imparts strength for us to endure persecution as proclaimers of the good news. (1:1-18) Paul never forgot Timothy in his prayers, and he remembered his

unhypocritical faith. God gave Timothy 'not a spirit of cowardice, but that of power, love, and soundness of mind.' So let him be unashamed in witnessing and suffering evil for the good news. He was also urged to "keep holding the pattern of healthful words" heard from Paul, even as we should adhere strictly to genuine Christian truth though others turn from it.

The things Paul taught were to be committed to faithful men who would teach others. (2:1-26) Timothy was urged to be a fine soldier of Christ, faithful when suffering evil. Paul himself suffered in prison bonds for preaching the good news. He encouraged Timothy to do his utmost to present himself an approved workman of God, shunning empty speeches that violate what is holy. And he was told that a slave of the Lord must instruct others with mildness.

Preach the Word!

God-given strength would be needed to face the last days and uphold Scriptural truth. (3:1-17)

From among the ungodly would arise men 'always learning but never able to come to an accurate knowledge of truth.' Such 'wicked men and impostors would advance from bad to worse, misleading and being misled.' However, Timothy was to 'continue in the things he had learned.' So should we, knowing that 'all Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, reproving, setting things straight, and disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work.'

Timothy was to resist apostates and accomplish his ministry. (4:1-22) He could do so by 'preaching the word' and staying with it. This was vital, since the congregation faced a "troublesome season" because some were teaching false doctrine. Jehovah's Witnesses also adhere to God's Word now, preaching it urgently in the congregation and to people outside, even in unfavorable situations. Paul "observed the faith," though he was forsaken by some. But 'the Lord infused power into him, that through him the preaching might be fully accomplished.' May we too rely on God-given strength and keep preaching the good news.

A Fine Soldier: Paul urged Timothy: "As a fine soldier of Christ Jesus take your part in suffering evil. No man serving as a soldier involves himself in the commercial businesses of life, in order that he may gain the approval of the one who enrolled him as a soldier." (2 Timothy 2:3, 4) A Roman foot soldier 'suffered evil' when carrying heavy weapons, an ax, a basket, rations for three days, and other items. (Josephus' *Wars of the Jews*, Book 3, chapter 5) He did not pursue commercial interests, for that would not please his superior, and his expenses were covered. Similarly, a Christian suffers trials linked with being "a fine soldier of Christ." Though he may work secularly to discharge Scriptural obligations, he must not let undue involvement with material things make him stop waging spiritual warfare. (1 Thessalonians 2:9) Witnessing from house to house, he wields "the sword of the spirit, that is, God's word," and helps to free people from religious error. (Ephesians 6:11-17; John 8:31, 32) Since life is at stake, let all Christian soldiers keep on pleasing Jesus Christ and Jehovah God in this way.



Awake! Influences Lives

Awake! is published in 64 languages, and it has an average printing of 12,980,000 copies per issue. Readers around the world enjoy and benefit from it, as their letters of appreciation reveal. The Watch Tower branch office in Ghana, West Africa, received the following comments:

"I am one of the regular readers of your highly esteemed, educational and Biblical magazine *Awake!* The contents of the magazine have influenced my life-style in so many ways! I always like to read the magazine so much that I ignore my meals anytime I get a copy, although I belong to the Roman Catholic Church."

