"You, though, keep your senses in all things, suffer evil, do the work of an evangelizer, fully accomplish your ministry."—2 Tim. 4:5.
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NOTE: Bible quotations in this book are from the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures, 1981 edition, unless otherwise indicated.
Dear Fellow Ministers:

Organized to Accomplish Our Ministry is published for Jehovah's Witnesses. It draws attention to our basic Scriptural responsibilities. By reading it you will get an overall view of how the Christian congregation operates today. Its counsel and direction will help us to remain at unity with our brothers everywhere, who are busily 'engaged in the holy work of the good news of God.'—Rom. 15:16.

In addition to preaching the good news of the Kingdom worldwide, our aim is to help those thousands of people newly associating with us. Many of them desire to meet the Scriptural requirements for becoming dedicated and baptized witnesses of Jehovah. They, too, need to become familiar with Jehovah's organization and how to share the Kingdom good news with others. To that end, information has been included in this book that is especially beneficial to such persons.

General information is here published concerning the duties of elders and ministerial servants, judicial procedures and various features of congregation organization. Details regarding these matters are reviewed from time to time in The Watchtower, Our Kingdom Ministry and other publications of the Society.

It is our prayer that the reading and application of what is contained in this publication will bring Jehovah's blessing and will play a vital role in helping all of us to be theocratically organized to 'fully accomplish our ministry.'—2 Tim. 4:5.

—The Publishers
proved himself to be like his heavenly Father, Jehovah God.—Isa. 40:11.

World events fulfilling Bible prophecy prove beyond doubt that since 1914 Jesus Christ has been entrusted with Kingdom power. He is now ruling in the midst of his enemies. (Ps. 110:1, 2; 2:1-12) What does this portend for those now living on earth? As to his enemies, his role as King of kings and Lord of lords will be powerfully demonstrated when he executes divine judgment against them. (Rev. 11:15; 12:10; 19:16) Jehovah’s promise of deliverance expressed at the beginning of man’s rebellion will soon be fulfilled toward those on his right hand of favor. (Rom. 16:20) How happy we are to have recognized Christ’s role in God’s arrangement and to be organized to accomplish a worldwide ministry under his leadership during these last days!

CHAPTER 4
HOW THE CONGREGATION IS ORGANIZED AND GOVERNED

A N IMPORTANT basic truth about God was expressed by the apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians when he wrote: “For God is a God, not of disorder, but of peace.” Then, commenting further with regard to congregation meetings he said: “But let all things take place decently and by arrangement.”—1 Cor. 14:33, 40.

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10, 11) He then proceeded to give counsel with regard to various matters that were affecting the unity of the congregation. Using the illustration of a perfect human body, he showed clearly the need for unity and cooperation. Hence all those making up the Christian congregation, regardless of their position, are urged to care for one another in a loving way. (1 Cor. 12:12-26) Such harmonious cooperation among the various members of the congregation implies an orderly arrangement—organization.

But how was the Christian congregation to be organized? Who would organize it? What kind of organization would it have and who would be in charge? A key thought for our protection today, as it was for the first-century Christians in Corinth, is what the apostle stated at 1 Corinthians 4:6. There he gave the rule: “Do not go beyond the things that are written.” By letting the Bible be our guide, we can get clear answers to our questions.

**ORGANIZED THEOCRATICALLY**

The Christian congregation was established in 33 C.E. on the Jewish festival day of Pentecost. It was organized and governed theocratically, that is, under God (theos) rule (kratos). The inspired account of what took place there in Jerusalem nearly 2,000 years ago leaves no doubt that the congregation of anointed ones was established by God. (Acts 2:1-47) It was his building, his household. (1 Cor. 3:9; Eph. 2:19) It is important for us to learn what we can about the congregation back there because the same pattern of organization and operation that was established during the first century is adhered to by the Christian congregation of God today, which has now been
HOW THE CONGREGATION IS ORGANIZED AND GOVERNED

enlarged by the addition of the “great crowd.”

—Rev. 7:9, 10.

The early congregation began with about 120 members. Holy spirit was poured out first upon these in fulfillment of Joel 2:28, 29. (Acts 2: 16-18) But that same day 3,000 others were baptized in water and brought into the spirit-begotten congregation. They had embraced the word about the Christ and “continued devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles.” After that, “Jehovah continued to join to them daily those being saved.”—Acts 2:41, 42, 47.

The growth of the anointed congregation in Jerusalem became such that the Jewish high priest accused the disciples of having filled Jerusalem with their teaching. The new disciples in Jerusalem included many Jewish priests who became part of the congregation.—Acts 5:28; 6:7.

Jesus had said: “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) And so it was that when a great persecution arose in Jerusalem following the death of Stephen, the disciples living there were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. But wherever they went they continued declaring the good news and making more disciples, including some from among the Samaritans. (Acts 8:1-13) Still later the good news began to be preached with good success among the uncircumcised non-Jewish nations. (Acts 10:1-48) All this preaching activity and the making of many disciples resulted in new Christian congregations being formed outside Jerusalem.—Acts 11:19-21; 14:21-23.

Arrangements were made for each newly established congregation to be organized and governed God’s way, hence theocratically. This in-
volved the appointment of older men to care for the flock. Paul and Barnabas made such appointments in the congregations that were organized during their first missionary journey. (Acts 14: 23) Acts chapter 20 relates information about the apostle Paul's meeting with the older men of the congregation in Ephesus. Paul said to them: "Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the congregation of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own Son." (Acts 20:28) These were older men in a spiritual sense who qualified for appointment because of their spiritual qualifications. (1 Tim. 3: 1-7) Paul's fellow worker Titus was authorized to make appointments of older men in the congregations of Crete.—Titus 1:5.

As more congregations were formed, the apostles and the older men in the Jerusalem congregation continued to serve as the principal overseers of the expanded international congregation of the first century. From their position in the Jerusalem congregation they served as a governing body for the entire Christian congregation. It was their responsibility to consider matters affecting Christians everywhere. They sent out letters and decrees, all of which strengthened the congregations and made it possible for the disciples to remain united in thought and action. The congregations followed the direction of the governing body and, as a result, they received Jehovah's blessing and prospered.—Acts 8:1, 14, 15; 15:1, 2, 22-31; 16:4, 5.

The apostle Paul, in writing to the congregation in Ephesus, explained that the unity of the Christian congregation would be maintained through adherence to the headship of Jesus Christ and by
the operation of holy spirit. He urged Christians there to cultivate humility and to observe a oneness of the spirit in peaceful association among all members of the congregation. (Eph. 4:1-6) Then he quoted Psalm 68:18 and applied it to Jehovah's provision for spiritually qualified men to serve the needs of the congregation as apostles, prophets, evangelizers, shepherds and teachers. Such men, as gifts from Jehovah, would build up the entire congregation to a spiritual fullness that would be pleasing to God.—Eph. 4:7-16.

CONGREGATION TODAY FOLLOWS APOSTOLIC PATTERN

Today a similar pattern of organization is followed in all the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses. These collectively form a united worldwide congregation built around the nucleus of spirit-anointed ones. (Zech. 8:23) This is possible because Jesus Christ, true to his promise, has loyally remained with his anointed disciples "all the days until the conclusion of the system of things." (Matt. 28:20) They dedicate their life unreservedly to Jehovah God and faithfully do his will. Those brought into the growing congregation today embrace the good news of God and are baptized as disciples of Jesus Christ. (Mark 1:14; Acts 2:41) They recognize the headship of Jesus Christ not only over the anointed members of the congregation but also over the entire flock which includes the "other sheep."—John 10:16; Eph. 1:22, 23.

Unity is maintained by loyally recognizing the headship of Christ and also by submitting to an organizational channel, "the faithful and discreet slave." What has the Master appointed this "slave" to do? Jesus answered that the "slave" was to provide spiritual food at the proper time
and to care for all His "belongings," or Kingdom interests on earth. (Matt. 24:45-47; Luke 12:42-44) Rather than being an individual Christian, the 'faithful slave' today is the remnant, still living on earth, of the composite body of Christ's anointed footstep followers. Such remaining ones are a part of spiritual Israel, the anointed congregation of God. (Gal. 6:16; compare Isaiah 43:10.) This remnant is faithfully discharging the responsibilities of the "slave" during this time of the end by taking the lead in the preaching of "this good news of the kingdom" throughout all the earth and by providing spiritual food at the proper time for the household of faith.—Matt. 24:14.

USE OF RELIGIOUS CORPORATIONS
During these last days of the present wicked system of things, the "belongings" of the Master have increased abundantly throughout all the earth. This has placed a heavy responsibility on the 'faithful slave.' In discharging its responsibility to provide spiritual food at the proper time and in order to get the good news of the Kingdom preached before the end comes, the remnant on earth, as "the faithful and discreet slave" class, has formed certain agencies, or legal entities. It has proved to be the course of wisdom for the 'faithful slave' to organize certain corporations that are recognized by the laws of various countries. These religious corporations own and operate printing facilities that produce and distribute Bibles and Bible literature on a worldwide basis for use in the Kingdom ministry.

The first in time and the principal corporation used in this way is the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. This nonprofit religious society was incorporated in 1884, is made
HOW THE CONGREGATION IS ORGANIZED AND GOVERNED

up of dedicated, baptized Christians and is exclusively devoted to advancing the interests of true worship in the earth. The Watch Tower Society has extended its works worldwide, establishing branch offices in various countries. Also, in compliance with local governmental regulations, a number of other religious societies have been legally formed, such as the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. (1909) and the International Bible Students Association in London, England (1914). All these legal instrumentalities cooperate with one another. These and other legal corporations are used by the modern-day Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses to facilitate the preaching of the good news worldwide and to care for the spiritual needs of the entire congregation of God in all parts of the earth.

STRUCTURE UNDER BRANCH ORGANIZATION

Whenever a branch office is established, a Branch Committee of three or more elders is appointed to care for the various responsibilities involved in looking after the work in the country or countries under the jurisdiction of that particular branch. One member of the committee serves as the coordinator of the Branch Committee.

Local congregations under each branch organization are arranged into circuits and a number of circuits make up a district. Circuits and districts may be of various sizes depending on geographical and language considerations, as well as the number of congregations within the area assigned to a branch. A circuit overseer is appointed to serve the congregations in each circuit. District overseers visit the different circuits, serve at circuit assemblies and spend some time serving
organized to accomplish our ministry

congregations, usually with the circuit overseer present. The duties of traveling overseers are set out from time to time in Our Kingdom Ministry as well as in correspondence addressed to them by the Society.

All in the organization recognize God’s way of theocratic control. The congregations acknowledge and conform to the guidance of the Governing Body as it outlines organizational arrangements for the benefit of all. They accept the appointments made of older men to oversee the branches, districts, circuits and congregations. They look to “the faithful and discreet slave” for spiritual food at the proper time. (Matt. 24:45-47) The ‘faithful slave’ remnant and its Governing Body, in turn, adhere strictly to the headship of Christ, hold to Bible principles and submit to the direction of holy spirit. As all work together in unity, the results are the same as those experienced by the congregations in the first century. We are told at Acts 16:5: “Therefore, indeed, the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day.”

Chapter 5
Overseers to Shepherd the Flock

During his earthly ministry Jesus proved himself to be the Fine Shepherd. (John 10:11) We are told that once, upon viewing the crowds following him, “he felt pity for them, because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd.” (Matt. 9:36) Peter and the other apostles observed closely his loving concern. How different he was from the false
shepherds of Israel who neglected the flock to such an extent that the sheep were scattered and spiritually starved! (Ezek. 34:7, 8) By observing Jesus' fine example of teaching and caring for the sheep, even to the point of laying down his life for them, the apostles learned how to help those with faith return to Jehovah, the Shepherd and Overseer of their souls.—1 Pet. 2:25.

By precept and example Jesus reinforced the serious responsibility he had laid upon the apostles to care for the sheep. They never lost sight of it. On one occasion Jesus impressed very strongly upon Peter's mind and heart the importance of feeding and shepherding the sheep. (John 21:15-17) Peter was deeply moved by this as indicated later in his exhortation to older men. In his first inspired letter he wrote: "Therefore, . . . shepherd the flock of God in your care, not under compulsion, but willingly; neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly; neither as lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock."—1 Pet. 5:1-3.

Peter's words apply with equal force to overseers in the congregation today. The need for having overseers in the congregations today is the same as it was back there in the first century, namely, to shepherd the flock of God. In his letter Peter emphasized the proper attitude that overseers should have in caring for such responsibility. Imitating Jesus, they should serve willingly, eagerly and as examples to the flock, taking the lead in Jehovah's service.

We can indeed be grateful for having spirit-appointed overseers in the congregation today. The benefits we receive are many. For example, overseers give spiritual encouragement and personal attention to the needs of individual mem-
ORGANIZED TO ACCOMPLISH OUR MINISTRY

bers of the congregation. Each week with earnestness they preside at congregation meetings where all are nourished in the faith. (Rom. 12:8) Their efforts to protect the flock from harmful elements and wicked men contribute to our spiritual security. (Isa. 32:2; Titus 1:9-11) Moreover, by their example and lead in the field ministry we are encouraged to keep active in preaching the good news regularly each month. (Phil. 3:16, 17; Heb. 13:15-17) Through these “gifts in men” Jehovah has provided well for the building up of the congregation.—Eph. 4:8, 11, 12.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OVERSEEERS

To ensure proper care of the congregation, men appointed to serve as overseers must meet the requirements set out in God’s Word. Only if they do qualify could it be said that they have been appointed by holy spirit. (Acts 20:28) The Scriptural standards for Christian overseers are admittedly high, since these men have the serious responsibility of taking the lead in Jehovah’s worship and being exemplary in Christian conduct. (1 Cor. 11:1; Heb. 13:7; 1 Pet. 5:3) But the standards are not so high that they cannot be met by Christian men who have a real love for Jehovah and a willingness to be used by him. The high standards provide a guarantee that those appointed as elders will be good examples in the congregation. It should be obvious to all that the overseers are individuals who apply the counsel from the Bible in all affairs of life.

The apostle Paul wrote down the basic Scriptural requirements for overseers in his first letter to Timothy and in his letter to Titus. At 1 Timothy 3:1-7 he wrote: “If any man is reaching out for an office of overseer, he is desirous of a fine work. The overseer should therefore be irrepre-
hensible, a husband of one wife, moderate in habits, sound in mind, orderly, hospitable, qualified to teach, not a drunken brawler, not a smiter, but reasonable, not belligerent, not a lover of money, a man presiding over his own household in a fine manner, having children in subjection with all seriousness; (if indeed any man does not know how to preside over his own household, how will he take care of God's congregation?) not a newly converted man, for fear that he might get puffed up with pride and fall into the judgment passed upon the Devil. Moreover, he should also have a fine testimony from people on the outside, in order that he might not fall into reproach and a snare of the Devil."

Paul's words to Titus state: "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might correct the things that were defective and might make appointments of older men in city after city, as I gave you orders; if there is any man free from accusation, a husband of one wife, having believing children that were not under a charge of debauchery nor unruly. For an overseer must be free from accusation as God's steward, not self-willed, not prone to wrath, not a drunken brawler, not a smiter, not greedy of dishonest gain, but hospitable, a lover of goodness, sound in mind, righteous, loyal, self-controlled, holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching, that he may be able both to exhort by the teaching that is healthful and to reprove those who contradict." (Titus 1:5-9) Paul's counsel quoted above emphasizes the need for overseers to maintain a proper attitude toward carrying out their responsibilities, being willing and eager, taking the lead. Other Bible writers more indirectly or by implication set out what would be required of
Christian men in order for them to qualify for appointment as overseers, or shepherds, of the congregation.—Jas. 3:13, 17, 18.

Although a first consideration of the Scriptural requirements may prove to be somewhat overwhelming, there should be no reason for Christian men to shy away from desiring the fine work associated with the office of overseer. The fact is that all dedicated Christians should strive to measure up to these high standards. By taking the lead in exhibiting fine Christian qualities, overseers encourage other members of the congregation to do the same. This is indicated by what the apostle Paul wrote in describing how "gifts in men" are provided “with a view to the readjustment of the holy ones, for ministerial work, for the building up of the body of the Christ, until we all attain to the oneness in the faith and in the accurate knowledge of the Son of God, to a full-grown man, to the measure of stature that belongs to the fullness of the Christ." (Eph. 4:8, 12, 13) Since all Christians are to strive to attain spiritual maturity, those standing before the congregation as appointed overseers are required to be exemplary in taking the lead.

As indicated by what Paul wrote to Timothy and Titus, overseers would be selected from among the older men of the congregation. They would not be mere boys or newly converted men, but they would be individuals with experience in Christian living, having a broad knowledge of the Bible, a deep understanding of it and a genuine love for the congregation. They would be 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 from
any who would selfishly exploit them. (Isa. 32:2) They would be men readily recognized by all in the congregation as spiritually mature men with a genuine concern for the flock of God. Their overall way of life would show this.

Those qualifying for appointment as overseers of the flock of God would be men experienced in life who had demonstrated a measure of practical wisdom in carrying on their own affairs. If married, they would be adhering to the Christian standard for marriage, namely, husband of one wife, and would have demonstrated their ability to preside over their own household in a fine manner. Because of their having believing children who are not under a charge of debauchery nor unruly but who are in subjection with all seriousness, other members of the congregation could confidently approach overseers for counsel and advice on a wide range of personal matters having to do with Christian living. Having conducted themselves properly within the family arrangement as well as within the community in general, these men would also be irreprehensible, free from accusation and have a fine testimony even from people on the outside. No valid charge of improper conduct could be brought against them to mar the reputation of the congregation. They would not have been reproved recently for serious wrongdoing. Others in the congregation would be moved to imitate their fine example and entrust their spiritual life to their care.—1 Cor. 11:1; 16:15, 16; Phil. 2:25, 29; Heb. 13:7.

Such qualified men would be able to serve the Christian congregation in a role similar to that of the older men of Israel who were described as "wise and discreet and experienced." (Deut. 1:13) They would not be without sin. (Rom. 3:23) But
they would be known in the congregation and in
the community as being upright and God-fearing,
men who had demonstrated over a period of time
that they conduct their life entirely on the basis
of God's principles. Their blamelessness would
give them freeness of speech before others in
the congregation.

Men qualifying for appointment as overseers
would display moderation in personal habits and
in their dealing with others. They would not be
fanatics, but their way of life would be charac-
terized by balance, orderliness and self-control.
Moderation would be demonstrated in such things
as eating, drinking, recreation, hobbies and en-
tertainment. They would not be given to a lot of
wine but would be moderate in the use of alcohol-
ic beverages so as not to leave themselves open
to charges of drunkenness or of being a drunken
brawler. One whose senses have been dulled by
intoxicating drink easily loses self-control and so
is not in a position to watch over the spiritual
interests of the congregation.

Exercising oversight of the affairs of the con-
gregation requires one to demonstrate a measure
of orderliness, being systematic in life, habits and
work. This includes his personal appearance, his
home and his activities. Such one avoids procras-
tination, is able to see what is required and plans
accordingly. He adheres to theocratic order. All
of this is what is meant by being moderate in
habits and self-controlled.

An overseer must be reasonable. He must be
able to work in unity and cooperate with others
within the body of older men who are charged
with the oversight of the congregation. He should
have a proper view of himself in relation to oth-
ers both within the congregation and outside. As
OVERSEERS TO SHEPHERD THE FLOCK

a reasonable person, the overseer would not be opinionated, considering his views and opinions as always superior to those of his fellow elders. Others may excel in qualities or abilities that he may lack. Reasonableness comes as a result of basing one's conclusions solidly on the Scriptures and striving to imitate the example of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 2:2-8) By showing proper respect for others and considering others as superior to himself, an elder would not become belligerent or be a smiter of others with either physical or verbal abuse. He would not be self-willed, always insisting on his own way or that his point of view must be accepted as best. He would not be prone to wrath but would be peaceable in his dealings with others.

Similarly, one qualifying to serve as an overseer in the congregation should be sound in mind. This means that he should have a good comprehension of Jehovah's principles and their application. He should be levelheaded, not hasty in judgment. He should be receptive to counsel and direction. He should not be double-minded or hypocritical, not fanatical.

The apostle reminded Titus that an overseer should also be a lover of goodness. He should be righteous and loyal. These qualities would be reflected in his dealings with others and in his firm stand for what is right and good. He would be known as one who is unwavering in his devotion to Jehovah and consistent in upholding righteous principles when making judgments. He would be one who is able to keep a confidence.

As one who is sound in mind, of course, he would not be overly demanding in what he expects of others. Neither would the overseer be unduly concerned about material advantages for
herself, *not greedy of dishonest gain, not a lover of money.* He would not use his office to take material advantage of the brothers under his care nor would he hold back because of the reasonable material sacrifices he may be required to make in order to give generously of his time in caring for the needs of the congregation. His love for the brothers, as well as for strangers, and his self-sacrificing endeavors in their behalf would make him as one who is genuinely *hospitable,* freely giving of himself and his belongings for the benefit of others.—Acts 20:33-35.

In order to carry out his assignment effectively, one appointed as an overseer, or shepherd, of the congregation would need to be *qualified to teach.* Paul's words to Titus were that the overseer would be one "holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching, that he may be able both to exhort by the teaching that is healthful and to reprove those who contradict." (Titus 1:9) In exhibiting his art of teaching the overseer should have the ability to reason with others, produce evidence, overcome objections and set out with clearness the teaching of the Scriptures in such a way that others would be convinced and have their faith strengthened. The overseer would need to exercise such teaching ability under circumstances both favorable and unfavorable. (2 Tim. 4:2) He would need to have the patience to reprove with mildness one who is in error or convince a doubter and move him to profitable works on the basis of faith. His being qualified to teach either before an audience or on a person-to-person basis would give evidence of his meeting this important requirement.

The apostle Peter wrote that the older men of the congregation who serve in a representative
capacity should do so willingly and with eagerness, not under compulsion nor begrudgingly. They should be enthusiastic in their endeavors. They should be taking the lead, becoming examples to the flock.—Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:3.

All of this may look like a great deal to expect from one who would serve as an overseer. Certainly none would measure up perfectly to the high standard that has been set forth in the Bible, as outlined here, but none of the appointed elders in the congregation should be so significantly deficient in any one of these qualities that the deficiency could be considered a serious flaw. Some elders will be more outstanding in one quality than in another, whereas others of the body will excel in those qualities in which some may be weak. The effect then is that, generally speaking, as a whole, the body will have within itself all the fine qualities that are necessary for exercising proper oversight of the congregation of God.

When recommending men for appointment as overseers, the body of elders will want to keep in mind their own standing before Jehovah and their relationship with fellow Christians. Romans 12:3 counsels that each one should in no way “think more of himself than it is necessary to think; but to think so as to have a sound mind, each one as God has distributed to him a measure of faith.” Each should consider himself as a lesser one. None should prove to be “righteous overmuch” when examining the qualifications of another. (Eccl. 7:16) Having clearly in mind the Scriptural requirements for elders, they would want to determine whether or not one being considered measures up to those standards to a reasonable degree or whether he is so seriously
deficient in one or more of the Scriptural requirements that he would not qualify to serve. Allowing for human imperfections and being free from biased leanings and hypocrisy, appointed elders will make their recommendations in a manner showing due respect for Jehovah's righteous standards and for the good of the congregation. Just as with Timothy and Titus, elders today need to give prayerful consideration to each recommendation and follow the direction of holy spirit. This is one of the serious responsibilities they shoulder, and they must do so in accord with Paul's admonition 'never to lay your hands hastily upon any man.'—1 Tim. 5:21, 22.

Men meeting these high Christian standards are able to protect the congregation from spiritual dangers, and they serve as fine examples of Christian conduct for all to imitate. They have freeness of speech enabling them to be bold in giving needed counsel to those within the congregation as well as being zealous to proclaim the good news in the field ministry.—Heb. 10:19-23, 35; Acts 4:29; 1 Tim. 3:13.

FRUITAGE OF THE SPIRIT

Such spiritually qualified men would give evidence in their life that they were directed by holy spirit. They would be producing the fruitage of the spirit, described at Galatians 5:22, 23 as "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control." Their oversight of the congregation would be refreshing to the brothers and would serve to unite the congregation in rendering sacred service. Their course of conduct and the fruitage of their labors would give evidence that they are appointed by holy spirit. (Acts 20:28) Having the spiritual requirements for overseers and shepherds stated
so precisely in the inspired Scriptures has made it possible for us to have qualified appointed overseers to shepherd the flock today.

REACHING OUT

The office of overseer is to be desired by mature Christian men. (1 Tim. 3:1) However, the appointment means work, self-sacrifice and making oneself available to serve the needs of the brothers, caring for their spiritual interests. Reaching out for the office means striving to meet the qualifications set out in the Scriptures. The overseers of the congregation have a great responsibility as well as an accountability in caring for the souls of those entrusted to their care. Members of the congregation are told: “Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will render an account; that they may do this with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you.” (Heb. 13:17) Although the overseers are imperfect men, there is no need for anyone in the congregation to hold back from being submissive since it is Jehovah’s arrangement and he will hold the overseers responsible for their actions. They are representing him and his theocratic rule. He will remove from office those overseers who fail to manifest the fruitage of the spirit and whose pattern of life falls short of the Scriptural requirements.

Overseers themselves must also take very seriously what is stated at Hebrews 13:17. They are referred to as “those who are taking the lead,” “keeping watch over” the souls of the brothers and as “those who will render an account.” Overseers must exercise special care not to ‘lord it over’ the flock of God, not to use their position
of responsibility for selfish advantage or even serve because they feel that they are compelled to do so. The overseers must prove themselves to be loving shepherds of the flock of God.—1 Pet. 5:2, 3; Prov. 27:23.

Do we not truly appreciate the hard work and fine example of the congregation overseers? In writing to the congregation in Thessalonica Paul admonished the brothers: "Now we request you, brothers, to have regard for those who are working hard among you and presiding over you in the Lord and admonishing you; and to give them more than extraordinary consideration in love because of their work." (1 Thess. 5:12, 13) Much of the hard work of the congregation overseers serves to make our service to God easier and more enjoyable. Also, in his first letter to Timothy, Paul makes mention of the attitude that members of the congregation should cultivate toward the overseers, saying: "Let the older men who preside in a fine way be reckoned worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard in speaking and teaching."—1 Tim. 5:17.

PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES MAY CHANGE

Of course, a brother who has served faithfully for a period of time may become physically ill or otherwise incapacitated, perhaps due to advancing age, and may no longer be able to care for all the responsibilities of an overseer as he once did or in the way that other overseers do. Even so, he should still be viewed and respected as an older man as long as he is appointed. There would be no need for him to step aside due to his limitations. He is still due the double honor paid to all hardworking older men who are serving to the best of their respective abilities in shepherding the flock.
OVERSEERS TO SHEPHERD THE FLOCK

But if a brother should feel that it would be best for him to step aside due to changed personal circumstances that limit his ability to serve, he may choose to do so. He should still be held in respect and be able to do much good in the congregation, even though no longer having assignments and duties given to elders.

POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Generally, men appointed as overseers are recommended for appointment by the local body of elders. This is done during regular visits of the circuit overseer. However, the Governing Body may appoint men who qualify to serve as overseers in any locality at any time. The Governing Body is not bound by the recommendations of any local group. Such recommendations serve merely as a guide and may even be rejected for reasons well known to the Governing Body. Also, at times, the Governing Body may authorize certain representatives to make appointments of overseers.—1 Tim. 1:3; Titus 1:5.

In each congregation there is a presiding overseer who serves for an indefinite period of time. The same is true of the secretary, service overseer, Watchtower Study conductor and Theocratic Ministry School overseer. The elders do not serve in these positions on a rotational basis. Of course, if a brother holding any of these positions moves, is unable to care for his responsibilities due to health reasons or becomes disqualified for failure to measure up to Scriptural requirements, another elder is selected to handle the assignment. In congregations where the number of overseers is limited, it may be necessary for an elder to handle more than one assignment until such time as other brothers qualify to be appointed as elders.
ORGANIZED TO ACCOMPLISH OUR MINISTRY

The presiding overseer serves as chairman at meetings of the body of elders. Communications and important records of the congregation are handled by the secretary who keeps the elders informed about important communications. Arrangements for field activity and other service-related matters come under the direction of the service overseer. The specific duties of these brothers, along with the Watchtower Study conductor, Theocratic Ministry School overseer and others who make up the body of elders, are set out from time to time in Our Kingdom Ministry and letters from the Society. Whenever appointments, deletions or removals of overseers and ministerial servants take place, appropriate announcements are made to the congregation. This enables all concerned to know who are currently serving within the local congregation and they can thus cooperate with the arrangement that is in effect.

It is suggested that the body of elders in each congregation meet periodically to discuss matters related to the spiritual progress of the congregation. Two such meetings are held each year in conjunction with the regular visits of the circuit overseer. About three months after each visit of the circuit overseer, a meeting can be scheduled. These four meetings during the year would most likely be sufficient for resolving any matters requiring the attention of the entire body of elders. Of course, the elders may convene at any time circumstances make it advisable. But if each one gives proper attention to his assigned duties and if the work of the elders is being adequately supervised and coordinated through the presiding overseer, meetings involving the entire body of elders can be kept to a minimum. Additionally,
all the elders in the circuit meet with the circuit and district overseers during the week of the semiannual circuit assembly.

CONGREGATION SERVICE COMMITTEE

There are certain duties that are cared for by the Congregation Service Committee, made up of the presiding overseer, secretary and service overseer. Members of this committee are involved in handling and signing various forms, such as those used in connection with literature inventories, orders, field reports and recommendations for appointment or removal of overseers, ministerial servants or regular pioneers. From time to time the Society calls upon the Congregation Service Committee to perform other duties.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELDERS

The presiding overseer is responsible for overseeing the Service Meeting. Periodically, however, he may invite another elder to look after this assignment for a certain month. Depending on the number available and their individual abilities, various elders handle assignments in connection with the other congregation meetings each week. These meetings are planned, outlined and prepared in advance so that they will be instructive and spiritually upbuilding. The elders are responsible for presenting instructive public talks. These also take much time in preparation. Besides teaching in the congregation, the elders also take the lead in the field ministry. They work along with the publishers, setting the example.—Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:3.

CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY CONDUCTOR

One of the outstanding privileges in the congregation is to serve as a Congregation Book Study
conductor. Such conductor has the opportunity to help others in a number of areas. Because this responsibility is a serious one, elders should be used, if available. If not, then one elder might care for more than one group, doing so at different times during the week. This, however, would depend on his circumstances. Or, capable ministerial servants could be used until such time as an elder can take over. This is something for the elders to decide. They would also decide to which group the conductor would be assigned.

One of the chief responsibilities of the Congregation Book Study conductor is teaching. In order to do so adequately, thorough preparation is necessary. He should know not only the answers to the study questions but also the reasons behind those answers and the value of the material. It should be his goal to help the group get a true understanding of what is being considered, so that they can apply the truths learned to their life and explain them to others. This would require a genuinely conscientious effort on his part, even as emphasized by Paul at Romans 12:7, where he wrote: “He that teaches, let him be at his teaching.”

Another important feature of the book study conductor’s work is that of taking the lead in the field ministry. The regularity, zeal and enthusiasm that he shows for the field activity will be reflected in the publishers. Because the brothers appreciate the encouragement and help that come through being together, a group witnessing schedule convenient for the majority should be worked out and maintained. (Luke 10:1-16) The conductor needs to plan so there is always enough territory to work. He will conduct the meeting for field service and organize the publishers for
that day's work. When he cannot be there, he can arrange for another elder, ministerial servant or, if neither is available, another publisher in good standing to care for these responsibilities so that the publishers enjoy the good leadership they need.

A real help to the study conductor and the entire group is the service overseer. It is a wise conductor who plans ahead for the visit of the service overseer, keeping his group informed of the time of the visit and anticipating its benefits. As all in the group are kept fully aware of the arrangements and enthusiastically support them, there is a corresponding improvement in the field activity.

Each study group is purposely kept small. This allows for the study conductor to become well acquainted with all assigned to it. As a loving shepherd he is warmly interested in each one and will try to give personal help and encouragement for the field ministry, support of congregation meetings and whatever else is appropriate to assist in keeping each person spiritually strong. Some will benefit from a personal visit when ill or depressed. An encouraging suggestion or a word of counsel might prompt some to reach out for additional privileges in the congregation, thus becoming of greater use to their brothers. While most of his efforts logically will be directed toward helping those in his own group, as an elder and shepherd he will have the entire congregation in mind. He is lovingly concerned for all in the congregation and will be ready to help others who are in need.—Acts 20:17, 28.

**BENEFITING INDIVIDUALLY**

The hard work of the overseers includes many things that contribute to the spiritual well-being
of the congregation as a whole and of its members individually. Much time is also used by these mature men in making visits to the homes of the brothers for the purpose of giving spiritual encouragement. While visiting the brothers privately in their home, or talking with them personally at the Kingdom Hall when home visits are not convenient or possible, the elders are able to give attention to the special needs of each one, just as a loving shepherd looks to the individual needs of each one of the many sheep in his flock.

At times it may appear that the overseers are so very busy that they really do not have time to give you the personal attention that is needed. Or you may hesitate to approach one of the overseers because you do not want to add to his burden. Although overseers do have many responsibilities and are kept busy not only with congregational matters but also with their own families and personal matters, members of the congregation should always feel free to approach them whenever they need help. It is unwise to allow a problem to remain unattended until it becomes serious. Also, it is not wise to reason that the overseers will learn of the problem by themselves if you do not bring it to their attention. Some matters causing disturbance may be more easily handled at an early stage before they grow into problems of major proportions.

CITY OVERSEER

A city overseer is appointed in cities where there is more than one congregation. Usually this appointment is made on the recommendation of the circuit overseer or circuit overseers, if more than one serves congregations in that city. This is not an appointment that changes
Each year. The city overseer does not exercise jurisdiction in any congregation other than the one in which he serves as an elder. The Society's branch office may wish to communicate with him on various matters, such as expired subscriptions or arrangements for assemblies and schools that may be held in his city. However, the branch deals directly with each congregation in regard to literature supplies, monthly field service reports and other matters.

Circuit Overseer

The Governing Body appoints qualified elders to serve as circuit overseers. These are assigned by the branch office to visit, on a regular basis, the congregations that make up their circuits, usually twice a year. They also periodically visit pioneers, special pioneers or missionaries serving in isolated territory. They plan their routing and notify each congregation sufficiently in advance so the visit will result in the most benefit.

The presiding overseer takes the lead in organizing matters so the visit will prove spiritually refreshing to all. (Rom. 1:11, 12) After he receives notification of the visit and information about the needs of the circuit overseer and his wife, if married, he makes arrangements through various brothers to get the needed literature supplies, accommodations and other necessary things. He makes sure all, including the circuit overseer, are informed of these arrangements.

The circuit overseer will contact the presiding overseer regarding the scheduling of meetings, including meetings for field service. These will be arranged in accord with what is directed in Our Kingdom Ministry, letters from the branch, local circumstances and the circuit overseer's suggestions. All need to be informed in advance.
concerning the time of the meetings with the congregation, with the pioneers and with the elders and ministerial servants, as well as the places and times of meetings for field service. This will enable all to adjust their affairs so they can benefit from the entire week's activities.

Since the circuit overseer will check the congregation's records on Tuesday afternoon, such records should be in good order and available before he arrives. The presiding overseer will be sure to have them at the location where they will be checked. It is helpful if the presiding overseer or the secretary is available to render any assistance needed. The circuit overseer checks the Congregation’s Publisher Record cards, monthly field service reports, meeting attendance records, territory records and the accounts. This will give him some insight as to possible needs of the congregation and how he may be of assistance to those responsible for keeping these records.

During his visit the circuit overseer takes time to speak with the brothers individually as he is able—at meetings, out in the field service, while enjoying their hospitality at mealtimes and otherwise. Additionally, he meets with the elders and ministerial servants, sharing appropriate Scriptural counsel, suggestions and encouragement that will help them shoulder their responsibilities in serving and shepherding the flock in their care. (Prov. 27:23; Acts 20:24-32; 1 Tim. 4:11-16)

He also meets with the pioneers to encourage them in their work and give personal assistance with any problems they may be encountering in their ministry.

If there are problems that need attention, the circuit overseer will either handle these or assist the elders to the extent possible while he is with
the congregation. He will strive to help the elders or individuals involved to locate the Scriptural direction that applies. If there has been some serious wrongdoing and the elders need his assistance in handling such, he will set aside time for this purpose. If there is anything that the branch office needs to do in following through, he and the elders will provide the office with a detailed report on the matter.

While with the congregation the circuit overseer attends the regular congregation meetings. These may be adjusted from time to time in harmony with directions in Our Kingdom Ministry, letters from the branch office or other directives from the Society. He will give several talks to the congregation. His objective will be to encourage, fortify and motivate the congregation. He will strive to build in each one love and appreciation for Jehovah, Jesus Christ and the organization. He will encourage zealous participation in field service, providing practical suggestions on how to do the work effectively.

One of the primary objectives of the circuit overseer's visit is to provide leadership in field service. Many in the congregations have been able to adjust their schedule so that they could have a fuller share in field service that week. Some have been able to arrange to be auxiliary pioneers the month of his visit. Could you do so? Those desirous of working with him or his wife can make an appointment to do so through the presiding overseer. Much good has been accomplished by taking the circuit overseer or his wife on Bible studies and return visits. At times adjustments have to be made to do this during his visit, but the benefits are worth it. The circuit overseer is encouraged to arrange for an early
start in field service each day and to spend full days in service, taking into consideration local circumstances. Your extra effort to give full support to this aspect of the week's visit is deeply appreciated.—Prov. 27:17.

Circuit assemblies are arranged twice a year for each circuit. The circuit overseer is responsible for the operation of the assembly organization on these occasions. On the circuit overseer's recommendation the Society appoints permanent assembly personnel: an assembly overseer, an assistant assembly overseer and a news representative. They are to work closely with the circuit overseer in caring for the assembly organization. This will enable the circuit overseer to give his primary attention to the assembly program. The circuit overseer designates other capable men to care for various departments. He also arranges for an audit of the circuit accounts after each circuit assembly.

The circuit overseer reports his field service directly to the Society at the end of each month. He also submits a report on certain necessary expenses incurred, such as for travel, food and lodging, if these are not covered by the congregations. Additionally, the Society provides him with a small allowance for personal things and he receives literature and magazines at pioneer rates. These traveling representatives have confidence that, as Jesus promised, material needs will be provided if they seek continually the interests of Jehovah's Kingdom. (Luke 12:31) The congregations will want to be conscious of their privilege to display hospitality to these devoted elders who serve them.—3 John 5-8.
OVERSEERS TO SHEPHERD THE FLOCK

DISTRICT OVERSEER

The district overseer is a traveling elder who is also appointed by the Governing Body and assigned by the branch office to serve a number of circuits that comprise a district. He serves as chairman of the circuit assembly programs in his district and gives the public discourse on such programs. He works the first part of each week with a host congregation in the circuit being served. He takes the lead in group witnessing and gives an upbuilding Scriptural talk to the host congregation.

The branch office assigns each circuit the dates for its circuit assembly, and when the circuit overseer has secured assembly facilities for these dates he notifies the branch office. The branch office notifies the district overseer of this schedule, which he now follows as his assigned routing. Due to travel distances for the publishers and the small size of assembly facilities, some circuits have to be divided into sections with a circuit assembly held for each section. The district overseer is informed of this and spends a week in the circuit for each circuit assembly to be held. In advance he works out with the circuit overseer which congregation can appropriately be the host congregation for each circuit assembly.

The district overseer gives encouragement to the circuit overseer and his wife (if married) and offers helpful suggestions to assist them with their work. This he does on Tuesday afternoon of his visit. From time to time the branch office will outline points that they can beneficially discuss in this meeting. The circuit overseer and his wife may have questions on which they desire assistance. (Prov. 20:5) The district overseer, too, may have points to share due to things he
has learned through experience and observation. Privately, the circuit overseer may want to discuss the needs of the circuit and points that the district overseer may be able to work into his talks on the circuit assembly program or at his meeting with the elders of the circuit.

While working with the host congregation during the first part of the week, the district overseer will give a talk to the congregation and attend an abbreviated Congregation Book Study on Tuesday evening. If the elders need advice or assistance with some congregation matters, they will let him know this in advance and he will meet with them. Primarily, during the week he will take the lead in group witnessing. He and his wife will have a full schedule for field service. The circuit overseer and his wife will also give full support to the field service activity that week. The presiding overseer will make sure all are informed of the arrangements for meetings for service. He will also see that adequate territory is available and make appointments in behalf of any who have requested to work with the traveling overseers.

At the conclusion of the circuit assembly (or assemblies) the district overseer will send the branch a report on how the program was presented and received in that circuit. Also, he will report on the spiritual condition and the needs of the circuit. Once a month he also reports his field service and expenses. His accommodations and expenses are cared for in the same way as those for the circuit overseer.

**BRANCH COMMITTEE**

In each of the branch offices of the Watch Tower Society throughout the world, three or more spiritually qualified and mature brothers
serve as a Branch Committee to oversee the preaching work in the country or countries under their jurisdiction as assigned by the Society. One of the committee members serves as the Branch Committee coordinator.

Those serving on the Branch Committee handle matters pertaining to all the congregations in their territory. They arrange for the providing of publications furnished by "the faithful and discreet slave" to strengthen all associated with the congregations. Their primary objective is to see to it that the good news of the Kingdom is preached throughout the territory assigned, and that congregations, circuits and districts are set up to give proper oversight to the needs of the field. The Branch Committee also gives attention to missionaries and to special, regular and auxiliary pioneer activity. When there are assemblies and conventions, these brothers see to it that arrangements and assignments are made so as to ensure that everything takes "place decently and by arrangement."—1 Cor. 14:40.

The Governing Body makes all appointments of those selected to serve as members of Branch Committees throughout the world.

ZONE OVERSEER

Periodically, arrangements are made by the Governing Body to have qualified brothers serve each of the branches throughout the earth. Brothers used in this capacity are known as zone overseers. Their primary work is helping the Branch Committee with problems or questions they have to face in carrying on the preaching and disciple-making work. Wherever practical, the zone overseer also serves the missionaries who work under the many branches of the organization worldwide. He talks with them about their problems and
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needs, giving necessary encouragement in their most important Kingdom-preaching activity.

The zone overseer also examines the various records that are kept for operating a branch office. He is especially interested in what is being accomplished in the field as far as the Kingdom preaching and other congregational activities are concerned. If there is a printery, farm or other facility, he inspects each of these operations. When the zone overseer visits branches he also shares to the extent possible in the Kingdom-preaching work.

LOVING OVERSIGHT

Visits by traveling overseers provide an interchange of encouragement, and the congregations are thus strengthened and made firm in the faith. (Rom. 1:12; Eph. 4:3) All are made aware of their interdependency. Each one serving in the organization works for the common good of all and in spreading the Kingdom good news. (1 Cor. 12:12-31) Certainly we have all benefited greatly from the hard work and loving care of these mature Christian men. We will benefit even further as we continue submitting ourselves to congregation elders and other appointed overseers charged with shepherding the flock and with oversight of the work. (1 Cor. 16:15-18; Phil. 2:25, 29) As we all cooperate together we are drawn into unity with the head of the congregation, Christ Jesus, our Lord, the one appointed by Jehovah as the Fine Shepherd of the sheep. (Eph 1:22, 23) So it is that God's spirit permeates the congregations worldwide and his Word serves to guide the operation of the work throughout the earth. —Ps. 119:105.
CHAPTER 6

MINISTERIAL SERVANTS RENDER VALUABLE SERVICE

IN WRITING to the congregation at Philippi the apostle Paul said: "Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus, to all the holy ones in union with Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, along with overseers and ministerial servants." (Phil. 1:1) Note, he made particular mention of the ministerial servants in his salutation. These men evidently fulfilled an important role in assisting the elders in the congregation back there. The same is true in our time. Ministerial servants render a number of services that are most helpful to overseers and contribute to the good order of the congregation.

Have you become acquainted with the ministerial servants in your congregation? Are you aware of the many fine services they perform for your benefit and for the benefit of the entire congregation? Perhaps you have not thought of their assigned duties as being of great consequence. But the apostle specifically mentions them and states that "the men who minister in a fine manner are acquiring for themselves a fine standing and great freeness of speech in the faith in connection with Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. 3:13.

SCRIPTURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MINISTERIAL SERVANTS

Ministerial servants are expected to lead a wholesome Christian life, be responsible men and give proof that they are able to care for assignments properly. This becomes obvious when we consider what Paul had to say in his letter to
Timothy about the qualifications of ministerial servants: "Ministerial servants should likewise be serious, not double-tongued, not giving themselves to a lot of wine, not greedy of dishonest gain, holding the sacred secret of the faith with a clean conscience. Also, let these be tested as to fitness first, then let them serve as ministers, as they are free from accusation. Let ministerial servants be husbands of one wife, presiding in a fine manner over children and their own households. For the men who minister in a fine manner are acquiring for themselves a fine standing and great freeness of speech in the faith in connection with Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12, 13.

So whereas their work within the congregation generally involves nonteaching responsibilities, ministerial servants are nonetheless spiritual men who by their hard work and exemplary Christian life not only perform vital services for the congregation but also set an example to be imitated by others.—Compare 1 Timothy 4:11, 12.

The specific Scriptural requirements for ministerial servants mentioned by Paul in his first letter to Timothy indicate that a high standard is set for men who are used in this capacity. Holding to such a standard serves to protect the congregation from any legitimate accusation as to the kind of men to whom it entrusts special responsibilities. Whether young or older in years, ministerial servants are expected to be active in the ministry each month, setting a fine example. They should be exemplary in their dress, grooming, speech, attitude and conduct. Such a pattern of living with soundness of mind gains the respect of others and reflects the seriousness with which ministerial servants view their relationship with Jehovah and their privileges of service in the congregation.—Compare Titus 2:2, 6-8.
MINISTERIAL SERVANTS RENDER VALUABLE SERVICE

These are men who have been “tested as to fitness.” Even before receiving their appointment they have demonstrated themselves to be truly dedicated men whose faith has been made manifest in zealous Kingdom service and in helping others to be made firm in the faith. In their response to the good news they have demonstrated that they put Kingdom interests first in their life and are reaching out for whatever service privileges may be opened to them. They are indeed examples for others in the congregation to imitate.—1 Tim. 3:10.

HOW THEY ARE USED

Ministerial servants render a great variety of practical services in behalf of their brothers and sisters. In doing so they are very helpful to the overseers, relieving them of much detailed work, thus leaving them free to care for important teaching and shepherding responsibilities. In making such service assignments the elders take into account the number of appointed ministerial servants in the congregation as well as their individual abilities.

Just consider some of the services they handle. One ministerial servant may be assigned to take care of the congregation literature, making it convenient for all of us to obtain the literature we need for our personal use and for field service. Another may care for the magazines in the congregation. Others are assigned duties to keep records such as for the congregation accounts or for the assigning of territory, or they are used to handle microphones, operate sound equipment, look after the platform or perhaps help the elders in other ways. There is much work to be done in maintaining the Kingdom Hall and keeping it clean, so ministerial servants are often called
upon to assist in caring for such responsibilities. Ministerial servants are also assigned to serve as attendants, welcome new ones and help maintain order at congregation meetings.

In some congregations there may be enough ministerial servants so that a different one can be assigned to each of these duties. Elsewhere, a ministerial servant may care for several assignments. In some instances it is beneficial to have more than one person assigned to share in certain work. (If there are not enough ministerial servants to care for some of these responsibilities, the body of elders may, in these cases, arrange for other dedicated exemplary brothers to help take care of some of this necessary work. Thus, they would gain experience that would be useful later when they, in turn, become qualified to serve as ministerial servants. Or, if brothers are not available, certain sisters who show godly humility and devotion to Jehovah could be asked to assist with some things, though, of course, they would not be appointed as ministerial servants.) Periodically, if there is good reason, elders may find it beneficial to shift some ministerial servants from one assignment to another. However, there is great advantage in having brothers continue to handle the same assignments so as to become more proficient and gain experience. Much depends on local needs as to how elders work out these assignments handled by ministerial servants.

Depending on local circumstances in each congregation, there may be other services that can be assigned to ministerial servants who are doing as the apostle Paul encouraged young Timothy, 'making their spiritual advancement manifest.' (1 Tim. 4:15) If there are not enough elders to
MINISTERIAL SERVANTS RENDER VALUABLE SERVICE

Conduct the Congregation Book Studies, some of the more qualified ministerial servants are used as study conductors to care for assigned groups. They may be assigned to handle parts in the Service Meeting and the Theocratic Ministry School and to deliver public talks in the local congregation. Other privileges may be extended to some of the ministerial servants where there is particular need and they meet the requirements for the assignment.—Compare 1 Peter 4:10.

In assisting the elders they should give of themselves willingly, demonstrating that they have a sense of responsibility and are working for the advancement of Kingdom interests and the benefit of everyone in the congregation. By taking the lead in the field service, ministerial servants can set a good example for others and reap great satisfaction themselves in a work well done.

Though their work differs from that of the elders, it is no less a part of their sacred service to God and is important to the smooth functioning of the congregation. In time, if ministerial servants discharge their obligations well and also become qualified to serve as shepherds and teachers, they may be recommended as elders in the congregation.

If you have not done so already, why not make special effort to get acquainted with the ministerial servants in your congregation? You can show your appreciation for their hard work by cooperating with them as they care for their assigned duties. In this way you will also be showing appreciation for Jehovah's provision for maintaining an orderly household. (Gal. 6:10) The ministerial servants are appointed by holy spirit for your good.
CHAPTER 7
ARRANGEMENTS FOR REGULARLY ASSEMBLING TOGETHER

THE congregation of God is referred to in the Bible as his household. (1 Tim. 3:15) How fitting that arrangements are made for its members and their companions to assemble regularly for worship and to be fed spiritually! It is important for each one of us to gather together to hear God's Word, so as to learn his requirements and how we may serve him. This applies to both young persons and those of older years, just as it did in the case of God's ancient covenant people, the nation of Israel. His command to them through Moses was to "congregate the people, the men and the women and the little ones and your alien resident who is within your gates, in order that they may listen and in order that they may learn, as they must fear Jehovah your God and take care to carry out all the words of this law." (Deut. 31:12) A command exhorting all Christians to assemble together regularly is expressed in similar terms.—Heb. 10:23-25.

Clearly, the purpose for assembling together now, even as then, is to listen and learn and to be "taught by Jehovah." (Isa. 54:13) Assembling for worship in ancient Israel was always a joyous occasion, as reflected in the words of David who wrote, "I rejoiced when they were saying to me: 'To the house of Jehovah let us go.'" (Ps. 122:1) This is also true of Jehovah's Witnesses today as they assemble together to worship Jehovah.
REGULARLY ASSEMBLING TOGETHER

KINGDOM HALL

The Bible account and secular history tell us that the first-century Christians assembled together in private homes as well as in public places. (Rom. 16:3, 5; Col. 4:15; Acts 19:8, 9) At times it was necessary for them to meet in isolated, or secluded, places to avoid detection by persecutors. Today, also, private homes and public places are used for Christian meetings, but the principal meeting place used by congregations of Jehovah’s Witnesses is the Kingdom Hall.

In some localities it is more convenient to rent a hall than it is to buy or to build one. However, large numbers of congregations have chosen to purchase property and build their own Kingdom Halls, suited to their needs. Or they have bought and renovated existing buildings. In such instances it is appropriate to have a dedication program. Elders are generally familiar with information regarding ownership and operation of Kingdom Halls as set out in Our Kingdom Ministry, memorandums and letters provided by the Society. The Kingdom Hall, as a place of worship, should not be a pretentious building designed to impress others. While its architecture may vary from place to place, its purpose is functional. (Compare Acts 17:24.) It should be a comfortable and convenient place for conducting Christian meetings that help us to grow spiritually and to learn about Jehovah, and that encourage us to share in his Kingdom service.

Each Kingdom Hall is arranged for, financed and maintained by the local congregation(s) of Jehovah’s Witnesses. The brothers should consider it a privilege not only to support the Kingdom Hall financially but also to volunteer their
services in keeping it clean, presentable and in good repair. Both inside and out, the Kingdom Hall should be a proper representation of Jehovah's organization. An elder or a ministerial servant is usually assigned to see that necessary work is cared for according to an equitable, convenient schedule. Book study groups may take turns in cleaning the Hall, following the list of things to be done each week. At times several congregations may share the use of a Kingdom Hall. This requires close cooperation among all the brothers with regard to financing and maintaining the Kingdom Hall. When it is necessary for two or more congregations to use the same Kingdom Hall, the elders of all the congregations involved set up a committee of brothers to care for the responsibility of working out convenient and practical arrangements for the proper care of the building and the property.

Meeting times are arranged for each congregation, having in mind what is convenient for the majority of publishers. Consideration should also be given to interested persons in the territory since we want them to attend. This may be worked out through the elders in a spirit of mutual concern and brotherly love.—Phil. 2:2-4; 1 Pet. 3:8.

In addition to its use for regular congregational meetings and as a meeting place for field service, the Kingdom Hall may be used for wedding ceremonies and funerals with the permission of those members of the body of elders who are present at the time the decision is made. They carefully consider what is desired and whether the individuals involved are in good standing with the congregation and otherwise qualified. Those who are granted the use of the Kingdom Hall for such purposes are expected to conduct
themselves in a way that befits such a place of worship. All involved should be sure that nothing is done that would offend the brothers or bring reproach upon Jehovah and the good name of the congregation. (Phil. 2:14, 15) At times use of the Kingdom Hall may be granted for other spiritual functions under the Society's direction, such as conducting the Kingdom Ministry School for elders and the Pioneer Service School.

Private homes of the brothers may also serve as meeting places. Those who are able to offer their home as a convenient place for some of or all the congregation meetings, as circumstances require, should view this as a privilege.

Meeting places of the congregation should always be viewed with respect by members of the congregation. Our dress, grooming and decorum should bespeak the dignity associated with worshipping Jehovah at his house. (Eccl. 5:1; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10) Ignoring such counsel would be showing a lack of appreciation for our Christian meetings.

At meetings in the Kingdom Hall qualified brothers should be assigned to serve as attendants. They should be alert, have friendly personalities and use good judgment. Their responsibilities include greeting newcomers and making them feel welcome, helping any latecomers to find seats and giving necessary attention to proper heating and ventilation of the Hall. Maintaining order during the meetings is essential. It is recommended that children sit with their parents. When a child becomes unruly, an attendant might ask the parent in a kind and tactful way to take the child out so the audience will not be unduly distracted. Even before the meeting, parents with young children can be encouraged to sit where they will cause the least distraction if it is necessary to take
the children out to discipline them or care for other needs.

Since the conduct of children inside the Kingdom Hall as well as outside can reflect favorably or unfavorably on the congregation, attendants can, where necessary, remind parents to give proper supervision so that the children will not be running in the building or around the property, especially when those in attendance are visiting with one another after the meeting is concluded. The service performed by attendants obviously contributes much to everyone's enjoyment of the meetings. It is desirable for ministerial servants to be used as attendants, particularly those who themselves have had experience in handling situations that arise in family life.—1 Tim. 3:12.

**CONGREGATION MEETINGS**

The Bible emphasizes the need and the value of coming together to worship and praise Jehovah. (Ps. 26:8, 12; Matt. 18:20) Faithful Nehemiah recognized this and so he urged his fellow Israelites: “We should not neglect the house of our God.” (Neh. 10:39b) Those who embraced the truth at the time of Pentecost, 33 C.E., did not treat this matter lightly. They continued devoting themselves to the teachings of the apostles, “and day after day they were in constant attendance at the temple with one accord.” (Acts 2:42, 46) Later, we know, when Christians came together for worship they read from the Scriptures, including inspired letters written by the apostles and other Christian disciples. (Col. 4:16; 1 Cor. 1:1, 2; 1 Thess. 1:1; Jas. 1:1) There was congregation prayer. (Acts 4:24-29; 20:36) They also related experiences from the missionary field. (Acts 11:5-18; 14:27, 28) They considered Bible doctrines and the fulfillment of inspired proph-
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Instruction was given in matters of approved Christian conduct and godly devotion. They were encouraged to be zealous proclaimers of the good news.—1 Cor. 11:23-26; Eph. 5:1-33; Rom. 10:9, 10; 1 Cor. 15:58.

In our day Christian meetings in many respects follow the pattern set in apostolic days. We give heed to the inspired exhortation at Hebrews 10:25 by "not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, as some have the custom, but encouraging one another, and all the more so now as we behold the day drawing near." During these difficult last days of the wicked system of things, we need added encouragement that comes from regularly assembling together in order to maintain spiritual strength and Christian integrity. (Rom. 1:11, 12) As in Paul's day, we live among a crooked and twisted generation, a system of things whose ungodliness and worldly spirit we have repudiated. (Phil. 2:15, 16; Titus 2:12-14)

Really, where would we rather be than in association with Jehovah's people? (Compare Psalm 84:10.) And what could be more beneficial than hearing the Word of God discussed?

Jehovah is the source of an abundance of satisfying spiritual food. (Ps. 145:14, 15) Through his Son and the earthly channel, "the faithful and discreet slave," food at the proper time is being dispensed. How is such provision served to the individual members of the organization? One means is through the various meetings arranged each week in the congregation. Consider each of these occasions and the benefits derived as our brothers regularly assemble together.

THE WATCHTOWER STUDY

For over 100 years now The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom has been the prin-
ciple journal to keep Jehovah's people well supplied with timely spiritual food. Certain articles published in The Watchtower are specifically prepared for weekly congregational study where instruction based upon the written Word of God is featured. Information carefully examined in the Watchtower Study stirs the heart and the mind of the members of the congregation and builds up their spiritual strength.

The study articles are varied as to subject matter. They deal with Bible prophecy, godly conduct, Christian morals, Bible doctrine, encouragement in the Christian ministry, admonition to cope with spiritual dangers, and Scriptural counsel on many other matters. Also, a variety of general Biblical information vital for continued spiritual growth is considered.

How do all associated with the congregation benefit from such a variety of timely spiritual food? Study material frequently deals with the application of Bible principles in daily living and fortifies against "the spirit of the world" and unclean conduct. (1 Cor. 2:12) Through the columns of The Watchtower comes increased light on Bible doctrine and the discussion of fulfillment of prophecy as Jehovah makes this known, thus enabling all to keep abreast of the truth and stay on the path of the righteous. (Ps. 97: 11; Prov. 4:18) Attending and sharing in the Watchtower Study helps us always to rejoice in the hope of Jehovah's righteous new system of things. (Rom. 12:12; 2 Pet. 3:13) It helps us to manifest the fruitage of the spirit in our life and to keep strong our desire to serve Jehovah zealously. (Gal. 5:22, 23) It strengthens our faith to endure the trials ahead and to 'build a fine foundation for the future so that we may get a firm
It is evident that the material considered at the *Watchtower* Study week by week is vital. It helps us to grow spiritually, to make the truth of God's Word our own, to bring our life into conformity with the teachings of the Bible and to be united spiritually with our brothers worldwide. What can each one do to take fuller advantage of this provision for spiritual feeding? Prepare the lesson in advance, looking up all the cited scriptures. Have a share in commenting during the meeting. Such participation will make a deeper impression of the points under discussion, sound­­ing down the truth into our heart and our mind. At the same time others benefit as they hear our expressions of faith and hope. Carefully listening to their comments, and especially the points emphasized by the *Watchtower* Study conductor, will ensure our getting the most benefit from the lesson each week.

The *Watchtower* Study should not be looked upon as just a routine meeting. If we are to maintain spiritual strength and firmness in the faith it is necessary to be present each week. None should miss this important provision for strengthening all associated with the household of faith.

**PUBLIC MEETING**

Usually the Public Meeting is held in conjunction with the weekly *Watchtower* Study. Regular public talks in the congregation are 45 minutes in length. The *Watchtower* Study takes one hour. These two meetings together with the songs and the opening and closing prayers should cover no more than two hours. Public Meetings complement the *Watchtower* Study, differing as to the method used in presenting information. Whereas
the Watchtower Study is developed as a discussion with audience participation in answering prepared questions, the Public Meeting features a discourse on a Bible subject. Such meetings featuring the spoken word play an important part in filling a spiritual need for new ones and members of the congregation.—See Acts 18:4; 19:9, 10.

By inviting interested persons and even the public in general, we may accomplish much in acquainting people with basic Bible information. The Public Meetings should help one and all to remain alert to Christian teachings and encourage steadfastness in Kingdom service.

The subjects that may be considered at Public Meetings are varied. Talks may cover Bible doctrines and prophecy, Scriptural principles and counsel regarding family life, marital problems, the difficult situations that confront youths in this wicked world, requirements regarding Christian morals, as well as Jehovah’s marvelous works of creation and the way in which science confirms Biblical facts and statements. Other talks may enhance our appreciation of accounts and activities of different Bible characters, commenting on their significance for our day. Truly the Public Meeting is an occasion for taking in informative and refreshing spiritual food.

If we are to get the full benefit of the Public Meeting arrangement it is essential for us to attend regularly, pay close attention, look up the scriptures referred to by the speaker and follow along as he reads and explains them. (Luke 8: 18) This will help us to become more familiar with the location of Bible books and increase our knowledge of the Scriptures. As we thus make sure of the things discussed, we should be
If there are sufficient speakers available, the congregation will no doubt have a public talk every week. Frequently this is made possible by arranging for visiting speakers from nearby congregations. But even if there is a shortage of speakers in an area, arrangements are usually made to have these talks as often as possible.

Christ Jesus, his apostles and their associates conducted public meetings similar to those enjoyed today by congregations of Jehovah’s Witnesses. Without question, Jesus was the greatest public speaker ever on earth. Officers said concerning him: “Never has another man spoken like this.” (John 7:46) Jesus spoke with authority, astounding his audiences. (Matt. 7:28, 29) Many were the benefits received by those who took his message to heart. (Matt. 13:16, 17) The apostles followed his example. At Acts 2:22-36 we read of Peter’s powerful discourse on the day of Pentecost, 33 C.E. Many were motivated to act as a result of what they heard. Later, individuals benefited from Paul’s discourse in Athens. (Acts 17:22-34) Similarly, in our day millions have received benefits through the Public Meetings held in congregations, at circuit assemblies and at district, national and international conventions. We should give full support to the arrangement for Public Meetings.

**THE SERVICE MEETING**

This meeting stresses service, which is what our ministry is all about. It equips us to have a full share in preaching the Kingdom good news, making disciples and declaring the approaching execution of divine judgment. (Mark 13:10; Matt. 28:20; 2 Pet. 3:7) To a large extent this work is
done by speaking to other people and providing them with Bible literature. But the application of Jehovah's righteous principles in our life has a great bearing on the effectiveness of our field ministry and the fruitage that we produce. (Matt. 13:23; John 15:8) Thereby we demonstrate the good results that come from applying the Scriptures. Appropriately, the Service Meeting gives attention to all these facets of our service to God.

Each month the Society publishes Our Kingdom Ministry, which outlines the weekly Service Meetings. You will receive a copy through the congregation. When a new issue of Our Kingdom Ministry is received, the presiding overseer can carefully analyze what it contains and he either personally assigns the various meeting parts to qualified brothers or arranges for such assignments through one of the other elders.

Elders and the more qualified ministerial servants are assigned to handle the various parts on the Service Meeting program. They need to study the assigned material carefully to determine what the principal points of instruction are and how to handle them so that the brothers will understand and remember them. Careful thought is also given to application of the material to the situation of the local congregation.

While there are a variety of ways in which material can effectively be presented, in no case should the method of presentation be allowed to overshadow the material presented. The objective of demonstrations is not to have a great dramatic production with a lot of stage props. Use natural settings such as a scene at one's secular work, the door-to-door work, a home Bible study or a family discussion. Settings should fit what
is encountered locally so that publishers can relate to them.

If each one on the program sticks to the allotted time the Service Meeting will conclude in 45 minutes, not including the songs and closing prayer. Everyone who shares in the program should cooperate to that end.

Exemplary dedicated publishers, and their well-trained children, may be asked to participate in certain parts, such as demonstrations. They may be interviewed or invited to relate their experiences under the direction of responsible brothers. If you have an opportunity to participate, cooperate joyfully and conscientiously, recognizing that this is part of your service to Jehovah.

It should be the heartfelt desire of each Christian to live and accomplish things in his life in a way that influences others to follow Jesus Christ as dedicated witnesses of Jehovah. To that end, the Service Meeting programs are designed to help us in a number of ways, such as by (1) encouraging us to engage to the fullest extent possible in the house-to-house work or in street work and to improve in our presentation of the good news; (2) helping us to see the need of making return visits on individuals who display interest or accept Bible literature (this involves keeping good records and improving our ability to teach such persons); (3) moving us to set aside time for regularly conducting home Bible studies and directing students to the organization; (4) providing us with ideas on how to give an informal witness and alerting us to speak about the truth whenever we have opportunity; (5) improving our efforts to help new ones, our children and other young people to become dedicated disciples.

To get the fullest benefit from the Service
Meeting, why not prepare beforehand? You will benefit more if, prior to the meeting, you go over the program outlined in Our Kingdom Ministry. At times articles in various publications of the Society are considered. Not only will advance research be informative but such research will equip you to share when parts on the program call for audience participation. The more you absorb from the Service Meeting the more effective you will be in your ministry.

Regularity in attending the Service Meeting results in unified activity on the part of the entire congregation. Since every baptized Witness is a minister, this meeting is essential in helping us to carry out our commission. It is also very beneficial for anyone else who desires to become a dedicated servant of God. Make attendance at this meeting a part of your weekly schedule of activity.

Meetings of this sort are nothing new. They are based on sound Scriptural precedent. Before sending his disciples out to preach, Jesus gave them detailed instructions on what to say and do. (Matt. 10:5-11:1; Luke 10:1-16) Later his disciples continued to have such meetings where they discussed experiences in their ministry and this strengthened them for zealous Kingdom activity. (Acts 4:23-31) We continue that same practice today.

THEOCRATIC MINISTRY SCHOOL

The Theocratic Ministry School, held also at the Kingdom Hall, is an ongoing provision for the education of the entire congregation. Its curriculum includes Bible talks, student presentations and other training useful for the field ministry. Counsel is given to students to help them progressively improve in their presentations. While
presenting a great variety of information that is of interest and benefit to the entire congregation, the Theocratic Ministry School also gives opportunity for participants as well as the audience to improve various aspects of their personal ministry. Occasional written reviews provide a means of self-examination as to one's own progress in ministerial training.

Each year the Society provides a Theocratic Ministry School Schedule setting out the program to be followed. It outlines the material to be used and how the assignments are to be handled. The Theocratic Ministry School for many years has proved its worth in training Jehovah's Witnesses to be effective proclaimers of the Kingdom. All who are actively associated with the congregation may enroll, including people newly attending the meetings, as long as they are not leading a life that is out of line with Christian principles.

By enrolling in the Theocratic Ministry School we show that we are interested in advancement. Such instruction can help us to be finer public praisers of Jehovah. It can equip us to accomplish more in the time we have available for the field service, as well as to give fine comments in the congregation meetings. In the case of brothers, this instruction will assist them greatly toward qualifying as ministerial servants or elders and eventually handling major Service Meeting parts and giving public talks.

Those enrolled will be notified well in advance concerning their student assignments so that they can prepare thoroughly. When we have an assigned part in the school it is particularly important to be on hand before the meeting starts. If an emergency situation arises and it is impossible to be present to fulfill an assignment we
should be sure to notify the school overseer, just as early as possible, so that he can arrange for a replacement.

As a regular part of our spiritual feeding program, the Theocratic Ministry School provides many benefits. It was Isaiah who said: "The Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself has given me the tongue of the taught ones, that I may know how to answer the tired one with a word." (Isa. 50:4) Unquestionably the school has played an important part in training literally tens of thousands to develop the tongue of one taught by Jehovah. Over the years the program has been designed to help those enrolled to make spiritual advancement and to learn how better to express themselves in presenting the good news of the Kingdom. Under the direction of holy spirit such training has enabled God's people to give an answer to everyone demanding a reason for their hope. Being taught to use God's Word in this way is a blessing.

The congregation usually provides a Theocratic Ministry School library at the Kingdom Hall. This may contain the available publications of the Society, perhaps a number of Bible translations, a concordance and other helpful reference works. We should feel free to use any of these publications at the Kingdom Hall before or after meetings.

CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY

Members of the congregation, and others who are associated, derive great personal benefit from the Congregation Book Study, which is generally conducted with a group smaller than at the other meetings. There are just a few families, or a comparatively small number of individuals, who gather at each of these studies. Instead
of having the entire congregation come together at one place, arrangements are made for the study groups to meet in convenient locations scattered throughout the congregation's territory. One group may meet at the Kingdom Hall. Others assemble in private homes.

In some respects these group studies provide benefits that do not directly come through other provisions of the congregation. Why is this so? It is because the Congregation Book Study arrangement not only provides for a careful and detailed study of Bible subjects but, in these small groups, makes it possible for more personal attention to be given to the spiritual growth of each individual. Such personal assistance may include appropriate Scriptural counsel, encouragement and direction for carrying out our ministry, as well as other vital spiritual help to fit the needs of the individual. Here is a reflection of Jehovah's loving-kindness and his tender care for his people.—Isa. 40:11.

This meeting is a one-hour group study using the Bible and a textbook provided by the Watchtower Society. The brother assigned as conductor is usually an elder. He is himself a student of God's Word and qualified to help each one not only to increase in Bible knowledge but also to apply this knowledge in practical ways. Basically, the meeting is conducted in the same manner as the Watchtower Study. It is opened and closed with prayer. Paragraphs are read. Questions are asked on the paragraphs. Comments are invited. Scriptures are read. To impress principal thoughts on the mind of each one, a brief oral review may be conducted at the end of the study. As we attend week by week we will gain not only knowledge but understanding. We will learn the reasons for
statements that are made and how to support them from the Bible, as well as how to conduct discussions of the same material with others that we are able to help in our field ministry. (2 Tim. 2:15) So this meeting will do much to equip us to become better teachers of God's Word.

With a small group such as this there is more opportunity for all of us to offer comments. It is not at all difficult to participate freely at this meeting, and thus we have the opportunity to get accustomed to making a public declaration of our faith before others. (Heb. 13:15) It is good to learn to make our comments in our own words instead of reading them out of the book.

Although anyone present may be encouraged to share in the reading of the scriptures, just one person reads the paragraphs at any one study. If possible, arrangements are made a week in advance for a baptized brother who is a good reader to read the paragraphs.

Having the study groups scattered throughout the congregation territory makes it convenient for both ourselves and newly interested people in the neighborhood to attend. We should make every effort to bring others with us to the meeting so that they can get a taste of the spiritually upbuilding discussions and the warm association that we enjoy.

In addition to providing a place for group study, the location of the Congregation Book Study may be a meeting place for field service. Here the group can meet at convenient times prior to going out into the field. Cooperating in all these arrangements results in groups that are closely knit together for the twofold purpose of study and service.
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MEETINGS FOR FIELD SERVICE

At various times during the week, groups of Jehovah's Witnesses may briefly assemble together in preparation for going out in the field ministry. Discussion of a Bible text, suggestions for dealing with situations likely to be encountered in the field or other points from Our Kingdom Ministry are usually considered at these meetings. Field service arrangements are made and one of the group leads in prayer. Then they are ready to go into the field. Such meetings provide not only the practical instruction but also real encouragement for those going out in the witness work. Arrangements can be made at this meeting to help newer ones or others that may need assistance in the preaching work. Such meetings last from 10 to 15 minutes.

NEW OR SMALL CONGREGATIONS

As more disciples are made, the number of congregations also increases. Whether a new congregation is formed from an already existing congregation or it is made up of publishers in an isolated area, it must be a group of baptized publishers and others who recognize “the faithful and discreet slave” class and desire to work under its direction. The application for a new congregation is usually submitted by the circuit overseer. In some cases small groups may find it more advantageous to be associated with the nearest congregation.

At times small congregations may be composed entirely of sisters. When such is the case, a sister who prays or conducts meetings does so with head properly covered, in harmony with the Scriptural arrangement. (1 Cor. 11:3-16) In most cases they remain seated, facing the group. None of the sisters give actual discourses at
meetings, but they read and comment on the material provided by the Watch Tower Society or, for variety, they may cover it in discussions or demonstrations.

Those brothers in a newly formed congregation who qualify for appointment as elders or ministerial servants will be recommended to the Society’s branch office. If none qualify, as in the case of a group made up entirely of sisters, the branch office will designate one of them to care for correspondence with the office and to carry on meetings. In time, when brothers qualify for appointment, they will care for these responsibilities.

**CIRCUIT ASSEMBLIES**

Meetings of Jehovah’s servants may range in size from just two or three individuals to large assemblies of many thousands. From time to time arrangements are made for congregations assigned to the same circuit to assemble together at a circuit assembly. The Scriptural theme and various parts of the program are prepared by “the faithful and discreet slave” with a special need in mind. A variety of methods are used to present the information, such as discourses, discussions, demonstrations and interviews. Also, a part of the program usually deals with local situations or counsel that specifically applies to the particular circuit. Such timely instruction builds up all who attend.

At the circuit assembly, opportunity is provided for new disciples to get baptized in symbol of their dedication to Jehovah. Circuit assemblies are always joyous occasions that afford opportunity for the brothers to “widen out” in their Christian association. (2 Cor. 6:11-13) All are encouraged by the reports and experiences related
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concerning the work of preaching the good news.

DISTRICT CONVENTIONS

Once each year larger assemblies are held by Jehovah's Witnesses. Usually these are organized as district conventions combining congregations from a number of circuits. However, in smaller branches it may be more practical and convenient for all the Witnesses to assemble together in one place. These arrangements may vary due to circumstances in some lands or on the basis of direction from the Governing Body. National and international conventions are also organized periodically around the world. These conventions may be attended by tens of thousands of Witnesses from many different lands. Over the years many people have come to learn about the good news because of the publicity given to these large gatherings of Jehovah's Witnesses.

District, national and international conventions are joyous occasions of united worship for Jehovah's dedicated people. Such conventions have provided the setting for revealing increased light on the truth, releasing new publications for personal and congregational study and for use in the field ministry, and for mass baptisms. Jehovah's Witnesses consider district conventions to be of particular importance in promoting their spiritual growth and in reviewing progress in fulfilling their Christian commission. The larger conventions give evidence that Jehovah's people indeed form an international brotherhood of dedicated Christians bearing the identifying mark of disciples of Jesus Christ.—John 13:35.

By becoming involved in local congregation meetings, as well as in the larger assemblies and conventions of Jehovah's people, we are strengthened to do Jehovah's will and are protected against
outside worldly influences that would undermine our Christian faith. We can all be thankful that Jehovah has provided these periods of spiritual refreshment for his dedicated people in this time of the end.

**THE LORD’S EVENING MEAL**

Once each year on the anniversary date of the death of Jesus Christ, all congregations of Jehovah’s Witnesses celebrate the Memorial of Christ’s death, or the Lord’s Evening Meal. (1 Cor. 11: 20, 23, 24) This is the most important meeting of the year for Jehovah’s people. We are specifically commanded to keep this Memorial celebration. —Luke 22:19.

The Memorial date is clearly marked in the Bible as the anniversary of the Biblical Passover. (Matt. 26:17, 20, 26) The Passover was the annual celebration of the exodus of the Israelites from captivity in Egypt in the year 1513 B.C.E. At that time Jehovah marked the 14th day of their first lunar month as the date for them to eat the Passover lamb and leave their captivity in Egypt. (Ex. 12:1-51) The date is determined by counting 14 days from the new moon nearest the spring equinox, March 21-22, as it would be visible at Jerusalem in the land of Palestine. Generally, this would make the Memorial celebration each year fall on the date of the first full moon following the spring equinox.

Matthew 26:26-28 outlines in Jesus’ own words the way the Memorial is celebrated. It is not a ritual with mystical overtones, but it is a symbolic meal that is shared by those who have been called to be fellow heirs with Jesus Christ in his heavenly Kingdom. (Luke 22:28-30) All other dedicated Christians and interested people are invited and encouraged to attend the Lord’s Evening Meal as observers and in this way show...
their appreciation for the provision Jehovah God has made for the benefit of all mankind through his Son, Jesus Christ. Jehovah’s Witnesses today endeavor to make the Memorial a special event in their life each year.

Usually in the spring of the year, near Memorial time, a special public talk is given in all the congregations. Jehovah’s Witnesses endeavor to invite all interested persons to attend. The talk provides a timely message for those who want to be pleasing to God and it is designed to stimulate further interest in Bible study.

Jehovah’s Witnesses joyfully anticipate occasions for meeting together to be built up and encouraged spiritually. The Governing Body is alert to provide occasions for assembling together according to our spiritual needs. All of Jehovah’s servants and other interested people are urged to take full advantage of all arrangements for regularly assembling together and show due appreciation for Jehovah’s provisions through his earthly organization.

CHAPTER 8

MINISTERS OF THE GOOD NEWS

In sending forth his Son, Jehovah gave us a perfect model to follow. (1 Pet. 2:21) When anyone becomes his follower, Jesus helps that one to preach the good news as one of God’s ministers. Indicating that this would be spiritually refreshing, he said: “Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me (become my disciples, 1971 edition), for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls.” (Matt. 11:28,
29) His promise has not failed any who have responded to that invitation!

As God's Chief Minister, Jesus called certain individuals to come and be his followers. (Matt. 9:9; John 1:43) He trained them in the ministry and sent them forth to do the same work he was doing. (Matt. 10:1-11:1; 20:28; Luke 4:43) Later he sent forth 70 others to share in declaring the good news concerning God's Kingdom. (Luke 10:1, 8-11) When Jesus sent his disciples forth he said to them: "He that listens to you listens to me too. And he that disregards you disregards me too. Moreover, he that disregards me disregards also him that sent me forth." (Luke 10:16) In this way he stressed the serious responsibility that was laid upon the disciples. They were to represent the Most High God! So it would be with all others who respond to Jesus' invitation to "come be my follower," even down to this day. (Luke 18:22) All who respond have a divine commission to preach the good news of the Kingdom and to make disciples.—Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20.

Having come to Jesus, therefore, in response to his invitation to follow him, we have been blessed with knowledge of Jehovah God and of Jesus Christ. (John 17:3) We have been taught Jehovah's ways. With his help we have been able to make over our mind, change our personality and harmonize our daily conduct with Jehovah's righteous standards. (Rom. 12:1, 2; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9, 10) Out of heartfelt appreciation, we have also been moved to follow our Exemplar and to present ourselves to God just as was expressed by the psalmist: "Here I have come... To do your will, O my God, I have delighted." (Ps. 40:7, 8; Heb. 10:7-9) Our baptism in water
is a symbol of our dedication to Jehovah and constitutes our ordination as ministers.

Always keep in mind the fact that service to God must be rendered with clean hands and out of a pure heart. (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; Isa. 52:11; Ps. 24:3, 4) Through faith in Jesus Christ we have gained a clean conscience and freeness of speech. (Heb. 10:19-23, 35, 36; Rev. 7:9, 10, 14) The apostle Paul admonished Christians to do all things for God's glory so as not to be stumbling others. Also, the apostle Peter pointed out the value of exemplary godly conduct in winning unbelievers over to the truth.—1 Cor. 10:31, 33; 1 Pet. 3:1.

Jesus Christ took very seriously his commission as Jehovah's sent-forth One, and as a vigorous proclaimers of the good news of God's Kingdom he set the example for all his followers. He took the initiative and went out among the people, speaking and teaching in their homes and in public places. (Matt. 9:35; Luke 8:1) He spoke intimately with individuals, taught his disciples privately and addressed groups numbering into the thousands. (John 3:2-21; Matt. 13:36; Mark 4:10-15; 6:35-44) He took advantage of every appropriate occasion to speak words of encouragement and hope. (Luke 4:16-19) He did not pass up opportunities to witness even when he himself was in need of rest and refreshment. (Mark 6:30-34; John 4:4-34) When we read the inspired accounts of his ministry, are we not impelled to follow in his footsteps and to imitate closely his example? Certainly we are, just as the apostles were.—Matt. 4:19, 20; Luke 5:27, 28; John 1:43-45.

Consider the opportunities that are open to
Christians today to share in the work initiated by Jesus Christ nearly 2,000 years ago.

**PREACHING FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE**

Jehovah's modern-day witnesses recognize the value of preaching the good news systematically from house to house. This method of reaching people with the Kingdom message has been used so extensively by Jehovah's Witnesses that it has virtually become their trademark in many lands. The good results obtained give proof of Jehovah's approval and blessing. Also, the wisdom of using this method to reach millions of people effectively with the good news during a short period of time has been confirmed by most gratifying results. (Matt. 11:19; 24:14) Our field ministry has proved to be a most practical way for us to demonstrate love for Jehovah and love for our neighbors.—Matt. 22:34-40.

House-to-house preaching is not a modern innovation of Jehovah's Witnesses. It was firmly established in theocratic history long ago in the days of the apostles. Outstandingly, the apostle Paul refers to his teaching in the homes of people. Defending his ministry before the overseers in Ephesus, he said: "From the first day that I stepped into the district of Asia 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."

In this and other ways he "thoroughly bore witness both to Jews and to Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus." (Acts 20:18, 20, 21) At that time there was an urgent need to reach all the people with the good news, since the Roman emperors were encouraging idolatry and many peoples were "given to the fear of the deities." There was a pressing need to seek "the God that
made the world and all the things in it," the one who was then "telling mankind that they should all everywhere repent."—Acts 17:22-31.

Today the need for reaching people with the good news is even more urgent. The end of the present wicked system of things is approaching at a rapid pace. Life itself is in the balance for all mankind. So there is need for intensive effort on our part, now, before the great tribulation strikes. Seeing the great need, we are moved to increase our efforts in the house-to-house ministry, realizing that no better way has been found to replace this time-tested method of finding those who are hungering for the truth. It is as effective today as it was in the days of Jesus and the apostles. It is a most satisfying way for all of us to have a share in the ministry.—Mark 13:10.

According to your personal circumstances, are you having a full share in the house-to-house ministry? If you are taking advantage of every opportunity to do so we know that you are also reaping a rich reward of great joy and personal satisfaction in your service to God. (Acts 20:35; compare Ezekiel 9:11.) The house-to-house ministry may not be easy for you. You may be hindered by physical limitations or you may be assigned to work in territory where many people are not inclined to listen. There may even be governmental restrictions with which to cope. Because of your personality makeup you may also find it very difficult to initiate conversations with total strangers and therefore you must overcome a measure of nervous anxiety each time you engage in the house-to-house ministry. Do not be discouraged. (Compare Exodus 4:10-12.) Your circumstances are not unlike those of your brothers in many other places.
Do you remember Jesus' promise that he would be with those whom he sent forth to preach and make disciples? And do you remember that Jehovah has given his spirit to those carrying his message to the people? (Matt. 28:20; Isa. 61:1, 2) Take courage and have the same confidence as expressed by Paul at Philippians 4:13. He said: “For all things I have the strength by virtue of him who imparts power to me.” Take full advantage of congregation arrangements made each week for engaging in house-to-house witnessing. By working with others in field service you will receive needed encouragement and personal assistance to talk more effectively with people and present Bible literature. Pray for greater faith to overcome whatever obstacles or discouragement you may face and exert yourself vigorously as a preacher of the good news.—Luke 17:5.

There are many benefits you will personally receive from being zealous in the house-to-house ministry. As you speak to others about the good news there will be many opportunities to give a reason for your hope, and your own hope will be made more firm. (1 Pet. 3:15) You will constantly remain aware of the sharp contrast between those who are firmly established in the Kingdom hope and those who are without hope in the world. Finding those deserving of the Kingdom message and noting the reactions of those who are not will enable you personally to experience what Jesus told his disciples at Matthew 10:11-14. You will have the joyful satisfaction of knowing that you have been obedient to Jesus' command to “let your light shine,” and you may even be privileged to help someone else to come to a knowledge of the truth that leads to everlasting life.—Matt. 5:16; John 17:3; 1 Tim. 4:16.
To make it convenient for publishers to share in the house-to-house activity, arrangements are made for witnessing on weekends as well as for during the week. In some areas it has become very difficult to find people in their homes during the daytime. When faced with this situation, some congregations have met with good success by arranging for evening witnessing in their territories. Some people are more inclined to receive visitors in the late afternoon or early evening rather than in the morning hours. Also, there are the following features of the ministry that may prove to be particularly effective in your area.

STORE-TO-STORE AND STREET WITNESSING
Concerning Paul’s ministry in Athens, Acts 17:17 tells us: “Consequently he began to reason in the synagogue with the Jews and the other people who worshiped God and every day in the marketplace with those who happened to be on hand.” Yes, in addition to teaching from house to house, Paul taught the people he found in public places, where they went to shop or to carry on business.

In modern times Jehovah’s Witnesses have met with good success in calling on people at their places of business or employment. In this way it has been possible to witness to individuals for the first time even though regular visits had been made to their homes. Presenting the latest issues of The Watchtower and Awake! has proved to be an effective way of witnessing to business people, but it is also appropriate to make other literature offers from time to time, using Topics for Conversation or discussions as suggested and outlined in Our Kingdom Ministry.

Street witnessing is done in many countries and usually entails offering the latest copies of
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The Watchtower and Awake! to passersby in business areas. This can be done in a kind and tactful manner by approaching people with brief comments on a timely subject featured in one of the magazines. Other literature may also be offered to interested people, and arrangements can then be made to call on these people at their homes. Periodically, Our Kingdom Ministry offers suggestions and encouragement for us to share in this effective feature of the ministry. You may find store-to-store and street witnessing effective and enjoyable ways for you to be fulfilling your ministry.

However, just sounding a warning and proclaiming the good news is not all that is involved in the work assigned to Christians today. If you are to succeed in helping others embrace the truth that leads to life, there is a need for you to make repeated calls to help interested ones progress toward becoming mature Christians.

MAKING RETURN VISITS

Jesus said to his followers: “You will be witnesses of me . . . to the most distant part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8) But he also told them to “go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you.” (Matt. 28:19, 20) Once the seeds of truth have been planted, there is a need to make return visits. Those people who manifest interest in the Kingdom message need further help if they are to grow to Christian maturity.—Heb. 6:1, 2.

Making return visits can also be a source of much joy for you in Jehovah’s service. Those people who expressed interest in the good news when you first called on them will very likely be happy to receive you again. By sharing additional
Bible information with them, you may be able to strengthen their faith in God and help them to become more fully aware of their spiritual need. (Matt. 5:3) If you plan ahead, prepare well and arrange to make the return visit at a convenient time, you may be able to start a regular home Bible study. Usually this will be your objective in making return visits.

Making return visits may present a challenge for some. Perhaps you have become quite efficient in making a brief presentation of the good news from house to house and you enjoy that particular feature of the ministry. But then when you think of going back for the purpose of engaging the householder in a more detailed discussion of a Bible subject, the challenge seems to be overwhelming. You need not feel that way. Very likely on your first call you placed some Bible literature with the interested person. Why not discuss information contained in that publication? You can prepare ahead of time for that. Also, if you do not feel entirely qualified, arrange to take a more experienced publisher along to help you make the return visit.

Jehovah's organization provides the personal assistance you need to help you become effective in making return visits. Be sure that you are taking full advantage of opportunities to improve your own knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. Trust in Jehovah and accept the assistance of your more experienced brothers and sisters. If you do, you too will improve your ability to make effective return visits and your joy in service will increase accordingly.

HOME BIBLE STUDIES

When the evangelizer Philip spoke to a man who was interested in the message of God's Word,
Philip asked: "Do you actually know what you are reading?" The man's response was: "Really, how could I ever do so, unless someone guided me?" The Bible account in Acts chapter 8 then tells us that, starting with the scripture the man was reading, Philip "declared to him the good news about Jesus." (Acts 8:26-36) We do not know how much time Philip spent with the man, but he explained the good news thoroughly so that the man believed and requested water baptism. He became a disciple of Jesus Christ.

An interested person we find today may not be at all familiar with the Bible at first, and so it may require a number of return visits and a detailed study of the Bible over a period of time (weeks, months or even a year or more) before he is able to manifest faith to the extent of requesting baptism. But your patient and loving assistance in helping honest-hearted ones become disciples has its own reward, even as Jesus said: "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."—Acts 20:35.

You will no doubt find it most convenient to conduct a home Bible study by using one of the Society's publications that is especially designed for that purpose. By following the example of the one who studied with you, or by receiving the help of other capable teachers in the congregation, you can learn to conduct productive studies and contribute to the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

If you need personal assistance in starting and conducting a home Bible study, you should feel free to speak about your need with one of the overseers or with a fellow Witness who is known to be effective in the Bible study work. You can get personal assistance to help you put
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into practice the suggestions appearing in Our Kingdom Ministry and demonstrated at the Service Meeting from time to time. Again, reliance on Jehovah and making your desire a matter of prayer will bring results. (1 John 3:22) So share in making disciples and, if at all possible, make it your aim to conduct at least one home Bible study regularly in addition to any study you may conduct with children in your family. By conducting Bible studies, you will again increase your joy in the ministry.

DIRECT INTERESTED ONES TO JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION

When we conduct Bible studies and help people become disciples of Jesus Christ, they have the prospect of coming to know Jehovah God and of being brought into his household. That household, God's congregation, is organized theo­ cratically to accomplish Jehovah's will. Our Bible students will make better spiritual progress and grow to maturity more rapidly if we help them to recognize and cooperate with Jehovah's organization. It is important to teach them how they can do that.

To accomplish this you can use material recommended in Our Kingdom Ministry. Also, some of the information found in chapter 4 of this publication may be helpful. From the very begin­ ning of your Bible discussions with interested people you can help them to see that Jehovah is using an organization to get his work done on the earth today. Point out the value of the Bible study aids used by Jehovah's Witnesses and explain how they are produced and distributed worldwide by volunteer workers who are dedicated to Jehovah God. Invite your Bible students to accompany you to the Congregation Book Study.
Introduce them to the brothers there and explain how meetings at the Kingdom Hall are conducted. Encourage them to attend. Help them to get acquainted with more of Jehovah's Witnesses at circuit assemblies and district conventions. On these and other occasions let new ones observe for themselves how Jehovah's servants display the identifying mark of true Christians, love among themselves.—John 13:35. If your own deep appreciation for Jehovah's organization is reflected in your conversations with interested people, it will be easier for them to grow in appreciation and will move them to make greater advancement in getting to know Jehovah.

USING BIBLE LITERATURE

The early Christians became zealous publishers of the Word of God. They made copies of the Scriptures for their own personal use and for congregational study. They recommended the word of truth to others. Their handwritten copies were few in number and highly treasured. (Col. 4:16; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:14-17; 4:13; 1 Pet. 1:1) Today, with the aid of modern printing methods, Jehovah's Witnesses have been able to publish millions of Bibles and hundreds of millions of Bible study aids such as bound books and magazines in scores of languages, making them available to people worldwide. As you share the good news with others be sure to make good use of the numerous Bible study aids provided by "the faithful and discreet slave" and published by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Service campaigns are outlined for each month in Our Kingdom Ministry, suggesting publications to be featured in public witnessing. You also have opportunity to share
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regularly in distributing magazines at different times each month including magazine days, especially those Saturdays designated for making a special effort.

Although the primary concern of the ‘faithful slave’ has been to provide spiritual food at the proper time for the household of God, that “slave” has reflected the generosity of Jehovah God himself in providing an abundance of spiritual food for all mankind that hunger for knowledge of God. Knowing how much you personally have benefited from reading and studying the Society’s publications, you will no doubt want to share with others the things you have learned. (Heb. 13:15, 16) With the use of the Society’s publications, even new ones can accomplish much good in preaching the good news from house to house.

INFORMAL WITNESSING

Jesus told those who were paying attention to his word: “You are the light of the world... Let your light shine before men, that they may see your fine works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens.” (Matt. 5:14-16) The very life of these disciples should reflect God’s ways by imitating Jesus Christ, who also said: “I am the light of the world.” Jesus set the example for all Christians in letting the “light of life” shine forth for the benefit of all who came in contact with him.—John 8:12.

The apostle Paul likewise became an example for us to follow. (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1) The Christians in Philippi had followed his example and he addressed them as ‘illuminators in the world, shining among a crooked and twisted generation.’ (Phil. 2:15) We today can also let the Kingdom truth shine forth by our words and actions whenever there is opportunity for us to tell oth-
ers about the good news. True, our good example as honest and upright people may in itself draw attention to the fact that we are different from the majority of mankind today. However, if we do not open our mouth to speak the good news to those who see our good example, they may never get to know why we are different from the rest.—Matt. 5:15, 16.

Many of Jehovah's Witnesses have fine opportunities to present the good news to people they meet daily in their secular work, at school or otherwise while going about their normal affairs. At times we have the opportunity to talk with fellow travelers when on a journey. There are many opportunities that present themselves, but individually we must be alert to turn ordinary conversation into a witness and be prepared to speak with others on every appropriate occasion.

We will be encouraged to take advantage of every opportunity to share the good news with others if we keep in mind that whenever we do so we are praising our Creator and bringing honor to his name. At the same time we may be able to help honest-hearted ones come to know Jehovah so that they too can serve him and gain the hope of life that comes through faith in Jesus Christ. All of this is sacred service and it is pleasing to God.—Heb. 12:28; Rev. 7:9, 10.

TERRITORY ASSIGNED FOR EFFECTIVE WITNESSING

It is Jehovah's purpose to have the Kingdom message preached worldwide in an orderly manner. To this end congregations, as well as individuals who witness in isolated areas, receive assignments of territory, in both city and rural areas, from the branch office directing the work in their respective lands. (1 Cor. 14:40)
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This is consistent with the God-directed arrangement existing in the first century among some of the apostles. (2 Cor. 10:13; Gal. 2:9) With the rapid expansion of the Kingdom work in these last days, much overlapping of effort is avoided by having well-organized territory assignments. This affords opportunity for more people to hear the good news.

The overall arrangement for working congregation territory comes under the service overseer's supervision. A ministerial servant may do the actual assigning of territory and keep a record concerning it up-to-date. Where the territory is limited, the Congregation Book Study conductors usually hold territory in which publishers in their group may share in field service.

If you are in a congregation where territory is plentiful, however, you may wish to have a territory of your own, perhaps one near where you live. Having such a conveniently located personal territory would enable you to make the most of the time you can devote to field service. Also, you may wish to invite other publishers to work with you in your personal territory.

When such personal territory is available, you may approach the one who assigns territory in your congregation and request any portion of territory that has not already been assigned to someone else. He should be kept informed as to the coverage of that territory. As you work your personal territory you will get acquainted with many people and, with patience, you may have the joy of helping some of them to come to appreciate God's provision for salvation.

Of course, if you have a personal territory it will be your responsibility to get in touch with as many people in that territory as you can. This
will entail calling back where no one was at home and rendering continued spiritual assistance to those who show interest in the good news of the Kingdom. From time to time Our Kingdom Ministry makes specific suggestions as to how territory can be worked thoroughly with the use of Bibles and books, magazines, tracts, handbills and other similar provisions of the Society. It may be that some of the people in your territory, such as those living in apartments, will have to be reached by letter, telephone or other means, such as street witnessing. The service overseer and your Congregation Book Study conductor can offer appropriate suggestions in accord with local conditions and individual circumstances.

When all of those associated with the congregation cooperate, the territory can be worked in a thorough and effective manner. We also avoid confusion as well as irritation on the part of householders due to simultaneous coverage of the same area by two or more Witnesses. In this way consideration is shown both for our brothers and for the people in the territory.

GROUP WITNESSING

Dedicated Christians have a personal responsibility to share the good news with others. There are many ways in which this can be done, but most of us appreciate being able to go out in field service accompanied by others. (Luke 10:1) For this reason congregations have meetings for field service on weekends as well as during the week. Worldly holidays also provide fine opportunities for group witnessing arrangements, since many brothers are free from secular employment on such days. Meetings for field service are scheduled for the convenience of the publishers. These may be held at the Kingdom Hall, at homes
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where Congregation Book Studies are conducted or at other convenient places.

At meetings for field service, arrangements can be made to give assistance to newer or less experienced ones. Also, in some areas it may be advisable to assign two or more publishers to work together for other reasons. Those working together can always be helpful and encouraging to one another. Even if you are planning to work separately in the territory, meeting with the group can prove to be encouraging to all concerned. Just knowing that others are out in service working in the same general area gives one confidence.

NEW PUBLISHERS

From the time you begin conducting a home Bible study with an interested person, encourage him to speak with others about what he is learning from the Bible. He could be urged to speak with relatives, friends, work associates and others on an informal basis. Then, at the appropriate time and in keeping with his advancement, invite him to share in the organized field service of the congregation if he qualifies to do so. This is an important step in teaching new ones to be followers of Jesus Christ.—Matt. 9:9; Luke 6:40.

MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS

Before inviting a person to accompany you in the field service for the first time, or before you suggest that he report any field service to the congregation, there are certain qualifications he should meet. When such a person accompanies us in the field service he identifies himself publicly with the congregation of Jehovah’s people, so it is understood that he has already brought his life in harmony with Jehovah’s righteous stan-
ards and can be an approved associate of the congregation. The same would be true regarding his reporting time spent in informal witnessing. So whereas you will certainly want to help your Bible students to become publishers of the good news, and to report field service to the congregation even before baptism, caution must be exercised when inviting them out in field service for the first time. We will want to know that this will not bring reproach on the congregation and thus be displeasing to Jehovah.

Very likely as you study with a person and discuss Bible principles with him the circumstances of his life will become known to you. Or you may have occasion to observe that he is living in harmony with the information he has learned from studying the Bible. But there are some aspects of the student's life that you will want to observe particularly before inviting him to accompany you in the field service and to share in publicly witnessing to others.

Do the person's expressions show that he believes the Bible is the inspired Word of God? (2 Tim. 3:16) Does he know and believe the basic teachings of the Scriptures so that, when asked questions, he will answer in harmony with the Bible and not according to his own ideas or false religious teachings? (2 Tim. 2:15; Matt. 7:21-23) Is he heeding the Bible's command to associate with Jehovah's people in congregation meetings (if he physically and circumstantially can)? (Heb. 10:24, 25; Ps. 122:1) Does he know what the Bible says about fornication, adultery, polygamy and homosexuality, and is he living in harmony with such teachings? If the person is living with one of the opposite sex, are they properly married? (Matt. 19:9; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10;
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1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Heb. 13:4) Does he heed the Bible's prohibition of drunkenness? (Eph. 5:18; 1 Pet. 4:3, 4) Does he keep himself clean from the defilement of tobacco, betel nut and other things that contaminate the body? Is he free from nonmedical use of addictive drugs? (2 Cor. 7:1) Has he definitely broken off membership in all false religious organizations with which he may have been affiliated, and has he ceased attending their meetings and supporting or sharing in their activities? (2 Cor. 6:14-18; Rev. 18:4) Is he free from all involvement in the political affairs of the world? (John 6:15; 15:19; Jas. 1:27) Does he believe and live in harmony with what the Bible says about the affairs of the nations at Isaiah 2:4? Does he really want to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses?—Ps. 110:3.

If you are not sure about some of these matters, it may be helpful to invite him to look up the scriptures here cited and get his expressions on them, making sure that he sees the import of what they say and that he understands that those who share with Jehovah's Witnesses in their activity must be leading a life that harmonizes with these Scriptural requirements. We want to be satisfied that those who begin to participate in the field ministry with us know what is expected of them. We should be reasonably sure that they do qualify. Then, when such a person desires to identify himself with Jehovah's Witnesses by publicly engaging in the field ministry, we can encourage him to turn in a field service report.

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE

Young children may also qualify as publishers of the good news. Jesus received young children to himself and blessed them. (Matt. 19:13-15; 21:15, 16) Although parents are primarily re-
sponsible for their own children, others in the congregation may also wish to help young ones who are motivated from the heart to share in the Kingdom-preaching work. If you are a parent, your fine example in the field ministry will do much to encourage your children to be zealous in their service to God. When a child is exemplary in his conduct and is able to make a personal expression of his faith by speaking to others about the good news, being moved from the heart to do so, what further help can be given?

It would be in order for the parent to approach one of the elders on the service committee of the congregation and discuss whether the child is qualified to be counted as a publisher. If the child has a basic knowledge of Bible truth and gives evidence of wanting to share in Kingdom service, this would indicate good progress has been made. After that elder has considered these and other factors similar to those that apply to adults, he can determine whether the child's field service reports may be accepted, so that he may be recognized as a publisher with the congregation.—Luke 6:45; Rom. 10:10.

REPORTING ON THE PROGRESS OF THE MINISTRY

Progressive reports on the worldwide expansion of pure worship have been a source of genuine encouragement for Jehovah's people over the years. From the time Jesus first told his disciples that the good news would have to be preached throughout all the earth, true Christians have been vitally concerned with knowing how this would be accomplished.—Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark 13:10; Acts 1:8.

Early followers of Jesus Christ took interest in reports of progress in the preaching work. (Mark 6:30) As the work prospered, statistical
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to share in the ministry at hand? (Ezek. 33:8, 9) Will we put God's Kingdom first in our life and fully accomplish our ministry? What theocratic goals are we pursuing to that end?

What Jehovah requires of each one of his dedicated servants was expressed by Jesus when he said: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength." (Mark 12:30) All of us are required to be whole-souled in our service to him. This means that we can individually demonstrate the depth of our devotion and the genuineness of our dedication by doing our utmost in the ministry. (2 Tim. 2:15) There are many opportunities open to each one, according to our individual circumstances and abilities. Just consider what some of these opportunities are and decide what theocratic goals you will pursue in fulfilling your ministry.

SERVING AS A CONGREGATION PUBLISHER

All who embrace the truth have the privilege of publishing the good news. This is the basic work that Jesus gave his disciples to do. (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20) A disciple of Jesus Christ usually begins speaking about the good news to others just as soon as he recognizes its value. This is what Andrew, Philip, Cornelius and others did. (John 1:40, 41, 43-45; Acts 10:1, 2, 24; 16:14, 15, 25-34) Does this mean that a person may participate in telling others about the good news even before he gets baptized? Yes. As soon as an individual qualifies as an approved associate of the congregation, the opportunity to participate in the house-to-house preaching of the good news is opened up to him. Also, according to his abili-
ty and circumstances he may regularly share in other features of the Kingdom ministry.

As a baptized member of the congregation you, of course, are interested in doing all you can to help others learn the good news. Men and women alike have the privilege of sharing in the God-ordained preaching work in the field. All should set a fine example in caring for their respective roles within the congregation. (1 Tim. 2:9-15; Titus 2:1-10; 1 Pet. 5:5) Male members of the congregation who make spiritual advancement and qualify may be appointed as ministerial servants. (1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12, 13) Such ones who reach out for the responsibilities of an overseer and who meet the Scriptural requirements are appointed to this position. They are used in teaching the congregation and serve as shepherds of the flock. (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) It is certainly a privilege to have even a small part in advancing the interests of God's Kingdom. Anyone who can expand his ministry to attain special privileges of service is happy indeed.

SERVING WHERE THE NEED IS GREATER

It may be that you have come to a knowledge of the truth in a congregation where the territory is frequently worked and a fine witness is continually being given for the benefit of anyone who should wish to come to know Jehovah. In such circumstances you may feel that you should expand your service privileges by moving to another area or, in some cases, even to another land where there is a greater need in the field. (Acts 16:9) If you are a brother who presently serves as an elder or a ministerial servant in the congregation, there may be another congregation either nearby or elsewhere that would appreciate
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having your assistance in caring for congregational responsibilities.

If serving where the need is greater is something you would like to do, why not discuss the matter with the elders of your congregation. They may be able to help you determine how to go about making such a move or how to qualify for such work sometime in the future.

AUXILIARY, REGULAR AND SPECIAL PIONEER SERVICE

All publishers should be acquainted with the general requirements for the auxiliary, regular and special pioneer service as well as other branches of full-time service. From time to time Our Kingdom Ministry sets out additional specific information. A pioneer publisher of the good news must be an exemplary baptized Christian, male or female, whose personal circumstances allow the spending of a specified number of hours each month in publicly preaching the good news. Applications for auxiliary pioneer service are approved by the local congregation’s service committee, whereas regular and special pioneers are appointed and assigned by the Society.

Auxiliary pioneers may be appointed for a minimum of one month or they may pioneer for any number of consecutive months, according to their individual circumstances and personal qualifications. Many Kingdom publishers enjoy serving as auxiliary pioneers on special occasions, such as during the Memorial season or the month of the circuit overseer’s visit to the congregation. Vacation months are chosen by some. Baptized school-age publishers may wish to enroll as auxiliary pioneers during those months they have time off from school because of vacations or worldly
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holidays. Whatever your personal circumstances, if you are baptized, are of good moral standing, can arrange to meet the requirement of spending 60 hours a month in the field ministry and believe you could serve one or more months as an auxiliary pioneer, the congregation elders will be pleased to consider your application for this privilege of service.

To qualify for appointment as a regular pioneer you must currently be in a position to reach the yearly field service quota of 1,000 hours. This is a requirement. To fulfill this quota you will need to work for a monthly goal of 90 hours. As a regular pioneer, you may choose your own assignment of territory, but you must always work in close cooperation with the congregation where you are assigned. Zealous pioneers can be a real blessing to the congregation, generating enthusiasm for the field ministry and even encouraging others to take up the pioneer service. Before the elders recommend your appointment as a regular pioneer, however, you must be baptized for at least six months, have good morals and have shown yourself to be an exemplary publisher. You must be able to follow a practical schedule that will enable you to spend the required number of hours in field service.

Special pioneers are chosen by the Society from among regular pioneers who have demonstrated their effectiveness in the ministry and who are able to serve wherever the Society chooses to assign them. This is often in unassigned or isolated territory where they can find interest and form new congregations. At times, special pioneers are assigned to congregations that need help in covering their territory regularly with the Kingdom
message. Some special pioneers who are also elders have been assigned to help small congregations even where there is not a particular need for more workers in the field. The Society gives some financial assistance to special pioneers in view of their high hour requirement.

MISSIONARY SERVICE

Getting the Kingdom good news preached "to the most distant part of the earth" before the end comes has made it necessary for the Society to send forth missionaries into many lands. (Acts 1:8; Matt. 24:14) This has opened up opportunities for greatly expanded service privileges for thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses and especially for those already sharing in the full-time service.

Usually those invited to share in missionary work are given specialized training in Gilead school. Over the years thousands of full-time ministers have received missionary training. They have been chosen from among those who have already proved themselves as zealous workers, as whole-souled in their devotion and as having a great measure of ability in Kingdom service.

To qualify for missionary work a person must be between the ages of 21 and 40 and have good physical health and stamina, since many missionary assignments are in areas of the earth where living conditions are difficult and there is exposure to unaccustomed diseases. Also, a person going into missionary work may be required to adjust to a different standard of living and an entirely new cultural environment.

If you are already in the full-time service and you would like to reach out for additional privileges as a missionary, you can learn more about the requirements by attending the meet-
ings for people interested in missionary service when these are arranged at district conventions. Your circuit overseer may also be able to help you with good advice. If you qualify, you may be privileged to take up a sacred service that has wonderfully contributed to the worldwide expansion of true worship.

BETHEL SERVICE

Serving at one of the many Bethel homes around the world is a very special privilege. The name Bethel means "House of God," and that designation is certainly appropriate for these centers of theocratic activity. Brothers and sisters who are in Bethel service do a vital work in connection with producing and distributing literature used by Jehovah's Witnesses everywhere. Also, from Brooklyn Bethel the Governing Body provides theocratic oversight and direction for the congregations throughout the earth.

Much of the service being performed at the Bethel homes is hard physical work. For this reason most of those called into Bethel service are dedicated and baptized brothers, young in years, in good health and strong physically. If there is a need in your country and if you would like to serve at Bethel, you can learn more about the requirements by attending the special meetings for people interested in Bethel service when these are arranged at district conventions. Your circuit overseer can also be of assistance in this regard.

WHAT ARE YOUR SPIRITUAL GOALS FOR THE FUTURE?

If you have dedicated your life unreservedly to Jehovah, your ultimate goal is that of attaining to everlasting life in Jehovah's righteous New Order. But what are your service goals along
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the way? By having spiritual goals you are less likely to misdirect your energies and other resources. (1 Cor. 9:26) You will be able to aim for something worth while. Such goals are conducive to spiritual growth and will help you to concentrate on more important things as you use opportunities to reach out for additional service privileges.—Phil. 1:10; 1 Tim. 4:15, 16.

In his illustration of the man that sowed, Jesus emphasized the fact that good symbolic soil produces varying amounts of fruitage. He said: "As for the one sown upon the fine soil, this is the one hearing the word and getting the sense of it, who really does bear fruit and produces, this one a hundredfold, that one sixty, the other thirty." (Matt. 13:23) If we have got the sense of the Word into our heart, should we not exert ourselves to make that Word produce abundant fruitage for Jehovah's praise? Do we not want to bear much Kingdom fruitage as we zealously share in the Kingdom ministry? And do we not want to produce abundantly the fruitage of God's spirit in our life every day? (John 15:2, 3) Having spiritual goals can help us do all of that.

The apostle Paul is an example for us to imitate in our service to God. (1 Cor. 11:1) He exerted himself vigorously in serving Jehovah to the very limit of his ability. He recognized that Jehovah's service provided him with many opportunities. To the brothers in Corinth he wrote: "A large door that leads to activity has been opened to me." Is this not true in our case also? Are there not many opportunities for us to serve Jehovah in association with the congregation, especially in preaching the Kingdom good news? Paul recognized that going through that door would not be easy, for he added, "But there are many op-
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posers.” (1 Cor. 16:9) In accepting that service Paul was willing to discipline himself severely, even as would an athlete whose heart desire was to win a mere fading crown in the games. Notice what he said at 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, including the words: “I pummel my body and lead it as a slave.” Are we of that same mind?

Many of the missionaries in foreign lands today are there because they, with encouragement from their parents and others, set Gilead training and missionary work as a theocratic goal early in life, even while they were yet children in school. Similarly, many brothers now serving at Bethel set Bethel service as a goal either while they were very young children or when they first became acquainted with the good news and learned about this special privilege of service.

According to their differing personal circumstances in life, each one is encouraged to work toward certain theocratic goals. Some of those goals might be increasing participation in field service each week, starting and conducting a home Bible study, making more time to prepare for congregation meetings, enrolling as an auxiliary or regular pioneer, serving where the need is greater, serving at Bethel or in the missionary field. Of course, at congregation meetings, at conventions and in the Society's publications attention may be drawn to other theocratic goals that you, according to your own personal circumstances, may want to consider and strive to reach. The important thing is that you remain steadfast and fully accomplish your ministry. If you do, you will also attain your ultimate goal of everlasting life in Jehovah's service.—Luke 13:24; 1 Tim. 4:7b, 8.
a change of pace and recuperate their physical and mental powers. Many have benefited from following the Scriptural counsel and balanced suggestions contained in the Society's publications on this matter.

With so many forms of recreation available, Christians should be selective and exercise godly wisdom in what they do. While it has its place, recreation is not the big thing in life. We are warned that in "the last days," men would become "lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God." (2 Tim. 3:1, 4) Much of what is today termed recreation and entertainment is objectionable to one who desires to hold to Jehovah's righteous standards.

Early Christians had to resist an unwholesome environment in the pleasure-seeking Roman world. At the circus, spectators were entertained by viewing the sufferings of others. Violence, bloodshed and sexual immorality were key elements in the recreation of the populace. Early Christians stayed away from such things. Much of the modern world's entertainment features similar attractions and caters to base human emotions. We need to 'keep strict watch on how we walk' by turning away from demoralizing entertainment. (Eph. 5:15, 16) And even though the entertainment itself may be acceptable, often the presence and influence of worldly people can be harmful.—See 1 Peter 4:1-4.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Children of Jehovah's Witnesses benefit from getting a basic secular education. While attend-
ing school, they should be interested in learning how to read and write well. Other subjects taught in primary school as well as in high school can be of value to young people as they pursue spiritual goals. During their school years they should make a diligent effort to remember their Creator by putting spiritual things first.—Eccl. 12:1.

If you are a Christian youth attending school, your parents have no doubt encouraged you to exercise special care. Even though worldly youths go unrestrained in their rebellious course of conduct, you do not need to side with them. (2 Tim. 3:1, 2) Under these circumstances there is much you can do to ward off worldly influences. Jehovah has not left any of us exposed to dangers without providing necessary protection. (Ps. 23:4; 91:1, 2) So take advantage of Jehovah's provisions for the congregation; this will serve to safeguard you.—Ps. 23:5.

To keep separate from the world while in school, young Witnesses should consider the dangers of becoming involved in extracurricular activities. Though classmates and teachers may not always understand your decision of nonparticipation, pleasing God is what counts. This requires exercising a Bible-trained conscience and standing firm in the resolve not to become involved in worldly competition or nationalistic practices that violate Bible principles. (Gal. 5:19, 26; see footnote in 1971 edition.) By listening to the Scriptural counsel of godly parents and benefiting from the good association and instruction of the congregation, the youth in our midst will be aided in holding to Jehovah's righteous standards.
Family heads have a Scriptural obligation to provide for the needs of their own household. (1 Tim. 5:8) Even so, they as ministers recognize that their secular work is secondary to the vital Kingdom interests. (Matt. 6:33; Rom. 11:13) By practicing godly devotion and being content with having sustenance and covering, they avoid the anxieties and snares of the materialistic way of life so common in the world.—1 Tim. 6:6-10.

Not only family heads but also other dedicated Christians who find it necessary to be secularly employed should have such Scriptural principles in mind. Making honest provision for themselves means that they would not want to profit from activities that violate God's law or are illegal from the standpoint of Caesar. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Rom. 13:1, 2) Also, there is a need to be constantly aware of the dangers of bad association. As soldiers of Christ, our brothers refrain from engaging in commercial endeavors that violate Christian standards or jeopardize their spirituality. (2 Tim. 2:4) Neither do they become involved in unscriptural connections with God's religious enemy, Babylon the Great.—2 Cor. 6:14-17; Rev. 18:2, 4.

Observing God's righteous standards will prevent us from taking advantage of our theocratic association in order to promote personal or other business interests. The purpose of our association with others at Christian meetings in the local congregation and when attending circuit assemblies and larger conventions is exclusively for worshiping Jehovah, feeding at his spiritual table...
and enjoying an interchange of encouragement. (Rom. 1:11, 12; Heb. 10:24, 25) Such association should always be kept on a high spiritual level.

"DO ALL THINGS FOR GOD’S GLORY"

In addition to the foregoing, other aspects of our daily life should give clear evidence that our profession of Christianity is genuine. (Rom. 2:21-24) Our personal habits, for example, may seem to be of relatively little consequence. But, concerning these very things we are admonished: “Whether you are eating or drinking or doing anything else, do all things for God’s glory. Keep from becoming causes for stumbling.” (1 Cor. 10:31-33) Such counsel is applicable at all times—in our private life, when we are among our Christian brothers or when we are being observed by worldly people.

It is a fine thing to be hospitable. (1 Pet. 4:9) When inviting others to our home for a meal, refreshments, a period of study or relaxation and fellowship, we should keep in mind those in the congregation who may be needy or disadvantaged. (Luke 14:12-14) If we are guests on such occasions, our conduct should be in line with the counsel at Mark 12:31. It is always good to show appreciation for the thoughtfulness and kindness of others.

At times, several families may be invited to a home for Christian fellowship. Or, brothers may be invited to attend a wedding reception or a similar social occasion. (John 2:2) Reasonably, those who are hosts in such cases should feel personally responsible for what takes place. With this
in mind, discerning Christians have seen the wisdom of limiting the size of such groups and the duration of the gatherings. Alcoholic beverages, if served at all, should be used in moderation. (Phil. 4:5) If there is an effort to make such Christian get-togethers spiritually upbuilding and they are planned accordingly, food and drink will not be the most important considerations. There is a need to exercise caution when large groups get together. The relaxed atmosphere at such gatherings has led some to go beyond the limits of proper Christian conduct and become involved in excessive eating and drinking and even serious wrongdoing.

Truly, Christians rejoice in God's bounteous gifts and find that they can 'eat and indeed drink and see good for all their hard work.' (Eccl. 3:12, 13) Realizing that these and other activities should always be to God's glory, hosts as well as guests will look back on social gatherings, not with troubled consciences, but with the satisfaction of having been spiritually refreshed.

Dwelling in Christian Unity

Jehovah's righteous standards for his people also require that they "observe the oneness of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace." (Eph. 4:1-3) Rather than seeking to please themselves, they would each seek to pursue what is good toward others. This is the spirit you have doubtless found in your association with the brothers in your congregation. No matter what a person's racial, national, social, economic or education-
place from the wind and a place of concealment from the rainstorm, like streams of water in a waterless country, like the shadow of a heavy crag in an exhausted land."—Isa. 32:2.

NOT OVERLOOKING SERIOUS WRONGS

Willingness to overlook offenses and to forgive does not mean that we are not concerned about wrongdoing or that we approve of it. Not all wrongs can simply be charged to inherited imperfection; nor is it for our brother's good or for the good of the congregation to overlook it if he commits wrongs that go beyond minor offenses. (Lev. 19:17; Ps. 141:5) Under the Law covenant given through Moses there was recognition of a difference in degree of seriousness of sins and transgressions. This is also true for Christians under the new covenant.—Compare 1 John 5:16, 17.

When giving counsel, Jesus outlined some specific procedures for resolving problems of serious wrongdoing, such as fraud or slander, that may arise between fellow Christians. Note the steps that he set out: "Moreover, if your brother commits a sin, [1] go lay bare his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, [2] take along with you one or two more, in order that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every matter may be established. If he does not listen to them, [3] speak to the congregation. If he does not listen even to the congregation, let him be to you just as a man of the nations and as a tax collector."—Matt. 18:15-17.

If someone in the congregation has committed such a serious sin against you personally, do not be hasty to turn to the overseers, or someone else, requesting them to intervene in your
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half. First of all, as Jesus counsels, speak with the one against whom you have a complaint. Try to resolve the matter between just the two of you without involving anyone else at all. If the matter can be straightened out in this way, the one who has sinned will certainly appreciate the fact that you have not told others about his sin and have not marred his good reputation among others in the congregation. You will have "gained your brother."

Where the sinner accepts reproof, seeks forgiveness and straightens the matter out, Jesus states there is no need to carry the matter further. This fact shows that, although serious, the offenses here discussed were limited in nature to such as could be settled between the individuals involved. This would not include such offenses as fornication, adultery, homosexuality, blasphemy, apostasy, idolatry and similar gross sins that should be reported to the elders and handled by them. When the Law covenant was in force, these sins required more than forgiveness from an offended individual.—1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Gal. 5:19-21.

In view of this and in view of the illustration that Jesus subsequently gave, as recorded at Matthew 18:23-35, the sins considered in Matthew 18:15-17 evidently were sins such as those involving financial or property matters—failure to make proper payment for something or some action involving a measure of fraud. The sin might damage one's reputation by actual slander. In these cases, if the offender recognized his wrong, expressed willingness to right it to the extent possible and sought forgiveness, the matter could be settled by the offended one's granting forgiveness.—Compare Matthew 5:25, 26.

If the one who sinned against you cannot be
convince him alone, then do as Jesus said and take one or two others along and speak with him again. The one or two you take with you should have the same objective, that of gaining your brother. Preferably they should be witnesses of the alleged wrongdoing, but if there are no eyewitnesses, you may choose to take along responsible brothers who become witnesses to the evidence presented in the discussion. Also, after listening to what you and the other person have to say, they may help the two of you reason on the matter and seek a solution to the problem. Keep in mind, however, that if you alone were not able to convince your brother that a wrong was committed, there is always the possibility that he has not sinned against you and that the individuals you take along with you may be required to convince you that you have no reason for complaint against your brother. (Prov. 18:17) Remember that the objective is to establish peace between you and your brother, to ‘gain your brother.’

But if you are convinced that your brother has sinned against you and it has not been resolved either when you spoke with him alone or when you went to him with one or two others, and if a serious sin is involved so that it would be wrong just to let it pass, then you should report the matter to the elders of the congregation. Having done this, you have taken it as far as you can. Leave the problem in the hands of the responsible members of the congregation and trust in Jehovah that it will be resolved. Never should you allow the wrongdoing of someone else to become a reason for stumbling or a force to rob you of your joy in Jehovah’s service. —Ps. 119:165.
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If upon investigation it should become evident to the shepherds of the flock that the brother has indeed committed a serious sin against you and yet has been unwilling to repent and make appropriate amends, it may become necessary for the overseers to expel the unrepentant wrongdoer and in that way protect the flock and safeguard the cleanness of the congregation.—Matt. 18:17.

HANDLING OTHER JUDICIAL MATTERS

Some cases of wrongdoing may be brought to the attention of the overseers by individual brothers or sisters who report unresolved personal grievances. (Matt. 18:17) On the other hand, the elders may be approached by individuals who either confess their own sins or report what they know regarding the wrongdoing of others. (Jas. 5:16; Lev. 5:1) But regardless of the exact manner in which the elders first hear reports of serious wrongdoing on the part of a baptized member of the congregation, an initial investigation will be made. If it is established that there is substance to the report and evidence is produced showing that a serious sin actually may have been committed, the congregation's body of elders will assign a judicial committee of at least three brothers to handle the matter. In the case of reported serious wrongdoing on the part of one who is regularly associated but not yet baptized, similar steps will be taken.

While exercising watchful care over the flock, seeking to protect it from any elements that would be spiritually damaging, the elders will also endeavor to use their spiritual qualifications to restore or reprove any who have erred. (Jude 21-23) This would be in harmony with instructions given to Timothy by the apostle Paul. He wrote: "I solemnly charge you before God
and Christ Jesus, who is destined to judge the living and the dead, and by his manifestation and his kingdom, preach the word, be at it urgently in favorable season, in troublesome season, reprove, reprimand, exhort, with all long-suffering and art of teaching." (2 Tim. 4:1, 2) Doing this may take much time and effort, but it is a part of the hard work of the elders that the congregation appreciates and for which they give the elders double honor.—1 Tim. 5:17.

In every situation where guilt is established, a primary endeavor of the overseers is to restore the wrongdoer if he is genuinely repentant, as indicated, for example, by his producing "works that befit repentance." (Acts 26:20) If they are able to help him and he is repentant, their administering reproof, either privately or before onlookers concerned in the case, serves to discipline him and instill a wholesome fear in any such onlookers. (1 Tim. 5:20; compare 2 Samuel 12:13.) Thus, the wrongdoer may be helped to "make straight paths for his feet" thereafter. —Heb. 12:13.

However, the wrongdoer may have become hardened in his course of wrong conduct and fail to respond to the efforts of his brothers to help him. Fruits, or works, befitting repentance may not be in evidence, nor may genuine repentance be apparent at the time of the hearing. What then? In such cases it would be necessary for the responsible overseers to expel the unrepentant wrongdoer from the congregation, thus denying him fellowship with Jehovah's clean congregation. This would be done to protect other members of the congregation from the bad influence of the wrongdoer, safeguarding the moral and spiritual cleanness of the congregation and protecting its
good name. (Compare Deuteronomy 21:20, 21; 22:23, 24.) This is what the apostle Paul did when he became aware of the shameful conduct of a member of the congregation in Corinth. (1 Cor. 5:11-13) Also, this same apostle reports on the disfellowshipping of others who rebelled against the truth in the first century.—1 Tim. 1:20.

**IF THE DECISION IS TO DISFELLOWSHIP**

When a judicial committee handling a case of wrongdoing reaches the conclusion that the unrepentant person should be disfellowshipped, how should they deal with him?

It is appropriate for the committee to speak with him and let him know of their decision to disfellowship him from the congregation. They clearly state the Scriptural reason(s) for the disfellowshipping action. When informing the wrongdoer of their decision, the judicial committee should tell him that if he believes that a serious error in judgment has been made and he wishes to appeal the decision of the committee, he may do so by writing a letter clearly stating his reasons for the appeal. He will be allowed seven days for doing this. If such written appeal is received, the body of elders should arrange for an appeal committee to rehear the case. They may use local elders or elders from nearby congregations; they should be men who are experienced and qualified. The body of elders should request one of the traveling overseers to suggest who might serve on the appeal committee. Every effort should be made to conduct the appeal within one week after the written appeal is received. If there is an appeal, announcement of the disfellowshipping will be held in abeyance. In the meantime the accused person will be restricted from commenting and
praying at meetings or enjoying special privileges of service.

If the wrongdoer does not indicate that he wishes to appeal, the judicial committee should explain to him the need for repentance and what steps he can take toward being reinstated in due time. This would be both helpful and kind, with the hope that he will change his ways and in time qualify to return to Jehovah's organization. —2 Cor. 2:6, 7.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF DISFELLOWSHIPPING
When it becomes necessary to remove an unrepentant wrongdoer from the congregation, a brief announcement is made, simply stating that the person has been disfellowshipped. There is no need to say more. This will alert faithful members of the congregation to stop associating with that person.—1 Cor. 5:11.

NONBAPTIZED ASSOCIATES WHO ARE WRONGDOERS
What of nonbaptized individuals who have been recognized as approved associates, have shared in the field service with the congregation and perhaps have enrolled in the Theocratic Ministry School, but who have now become involved in serious wrongdoing? They should be dealt with in a way similar to that of baptized Witnesses with the exception that, not being recognized members of the congregation, they could not be formally expelled therefrom. It may be that they do not fully understand the Bible's standards, and kind counsel may help them to make straight paths for their feet.

If a nonbaptized wrongdoer is still unrepentant after a judicial committee has met with him and tried to help him, then it becomes necessary to
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inform the congregation. A brief announcement is made that the person is no longer recognized as an approved associate. (1 Cor. 15:33) The congregation will then view the wrongdoer as they would view one who has been disfellowshipped. No field service reports would be accepted from such a person.

REINSTALLMENT

A disfellowshipped person may be reinstated in the congregation when he gives clear evidence of repentance, demonstrating that he has abandoned his sinful course of conduct and is desirous of having a good relationship with Jehovah and his organization. The elders are careful to allow sufficient time, perhaps many months, a year or even longer, for the disfellowshipped person to prove that his profession of repentance is genuine. When the body of elders receives a written plea for reinstatement, the original judicial committee that disfellowshipped the person should, if possible, be the committee that speaks with that individual, evaluating the evidence and works of godly repentance on his part, and decides whether to reinstate him at that time or not.

If the person requesting reinstatement was disfellowshipped by another congregation, the local judicial committee may consider the person's plea. Thereafter, the local judicial committee will communicate with the body of elders of the congregation that disfellowshipped the individual, giving them their recommendation. However, the decision to reinstate is made by a judicial committee of the congregation that took the disfellowshipping action.

When the judicial committee is convinced that the disfellowshipped person is genuinely repentant and should be reinstated, an announcement
of the reinstatement is made, mentioning also any restrictions that apply until the person has regained a measure of spiritual strength.

Elders are acquainted with the procedure to follow in handling pleas for reinstatement by those disfellowshipped from the congregation. Before any decision can be made in such cases, they have to weigh the various factors that apply. A similar procedure is followed in dealing with unbaptized repentant wrongdoers, whether they be adults or minors, who wish to renew their association with the congregation. In such instances a brief announcement could be made that it would be proper to recognize the individuals once more as approved associates of the congregation.

**DISASSOCIATION**

The term *disassociation* applies to the action taken by a person who, although being a baptized member of the congregation, deliberately repudiates his Christian standing, rejecting the congregation and stating that he no longer wants to be recognized or known as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. As a *disassociated* person, his situation before Jehovah is far different from that of an *inactive* Christian who, having grown weak spiritually, no longer shares in the field ministry. Such an *inactive* person may have failed to study God's Word regularly, or his zeal for serving Jehovah may have cooled off due to his experiencing personal problems or persecution. (1 Cor. 11:30; Rom. 14:1) The elders, as well as other concerned members of the congregation, will continue rendering appropriate spiritual assistance to the *inactive* brother. (1 Thess. 5:14; Rom. 15:1; Heb. 12:12) However, the person who has *disassociated himself* by repudiating...
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the faith and deliberately abandoning Jehovah's worship is viewed in the same way as one who has been disfellowshipped. A brief announcement would be made to inform the congregation that the person has voluntarily disassociated himself from the congregation.

Concerning those who renounced their Christian faith in his day, the apostle John wrote: "They went out from us, but they were not of our sort; for if they had been of our sort, they would have remained with us." (1 John 2:19) Also, a person might renounce his place in the Christian congregation by his actions, such as by becoming part of a secular organization the objective of which is contrary to the Bible and, hence, is under judgment by Jehovah God. (Compare Revelation 19:17-21; Isaiah 2:4.) So if a person who is a Christian chooses to join those who are disapproved by God, it would be fitting for the congregation to acknowledge by a brief announcement that he has disassociated himself and is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Such a person would be viewed in the same way as a disfellowshipped person.

CASES INVOLVING MINOR CHILDREN

Serious wrongdoing on the part of minor children who are baptized members of the congregation should be reported to the elders. When the elders investigate and handle cases of serious sins where a minor is involved, it would be good if the dedicated parents of the young person would be present and cooperate with the elders acting in a judicial capacity, not attempting to shield the erring child from necessary disciplinary action. Just as in dealing with adult offenders, elders serving on the judicial committee where a minor is involved would endeavor to restore the wrong-
doer. However, if the young person is unrepentant, disfellowshipping action would be taken.

MARKING DISORDERLY ONES

In his second letter to the Thessalonians, Paul expressed a warning concerning certain ones who walk disorderly and who, if accorded full acceptance as being of good standing in the congregation, could be exerting an unhealthy influence upon others. Paul admonished the Thessalonian Christians "to withdraw from every brother walking disorderly and not according to the tradition you received from us." (2 Thess. 3:6) He further clarified that statement by writing: "But if anyone is not obedient to our word through this letter, keep this one marked, stop associating with him, that he may become ashamed. And yet do not be considering him as an enemy, but continue admonishing him as a brother."—2 Thess. 3:14, 15.

Occasionally, in the congregation today, there may be those who, although not known to be guilty of practicing a grave sin for which they could be expelled, nevertheless continue to display flagrant disregard for theocratic order.

After giving repeated admonitions to such individuals and finding that they persist in disregarding well-established Bible principles, the elders may decide to speak to the congregation and give appropriate admonitions concerning such disorderly conduct. Even though no name has been mentioned, individual members of the congregation would then be obliged to 'mark' a person, or persons, of that kind, just as Paul advised the brothers in Thessalonica. If the disorderly one should still persist in his wayward course of conduct, he remains in grave danger of eventually committing a serious sin that could lead
to his being disfellowshipped. On the other hand, the loving concern and firm stand of faithful members of the congregation could indeed move him to shame and repentance. When it is clearly evident that the individual has abandoned his disorderly course, it would no longer be necessary to treat him as a "marked" individual.

JEHOVAH BLESSES UNITED CLEAN WORSHIP
All who are associated with the congregation of God today can certainly rejoice in the rich spiritual estate Jehovah has given to his people. Our spiritual pastures have indeed been made fruitful and we have been provided with an abundance of refreshing waters of truth. We have experienced Jehovah's protective care through his theocratic arrangement under the headship of Christ. (Ps. 23; Isa. 32:1, 2) The spiritual paradise in which we find ourselves has given us a feeling of security in these troublesome last days. By our maintaining fine conduct as ministers of God's good news and by our example of Christian unity, the Kingdom truth will continue to shine forth through us. With Jehovah's blessing we will have the joy of seeing many more people come to know Jehovah and join us in fully accomplishing the ministry.

CHAPTER 13
A WORLDWIDE ASSOCIATION OF BROTHERS
AFTER dealing exclusively with one man, Abraham, and his descendants the Israelites for a period of 2,000 years, Jehovah God "turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a
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ity and other circumstances of each baptismal candidate. Our interest is in those whose hearts are turned to Jehovah and who have grasped the sense of fundamental Bible truths. With your loving assistance, those being baptized will be encouraged and helped to enter into the Christian ministry, adequately prepared to accomplish that important assignment.

QUESTIONS FOR THOSE DESIRING TO BE BAPTIZED

PART I ELEMENTARY BIBLE TEACHINGS—Heb. 5:11–6:3

During your study of the Bible with Jehovah’s Witnesses you have become acquainted with the pattern of truth and very likely find it is quite different from what you formerly believed. What you have learned has brought you great spiritual refreshment and has no doubt set before you the hope of future life and blessings on a Paradise earth under God’s Kingdom. Your faith in his Word has been strengthened, and through association with his organized people you have already experienced many blessings. You have come to appreciate how Jehovah is dealing with his chosen people today.—Zech. 8:23.

Now, as you prepare for water baptism in symbol of your personal dedication to Jehovah God, you will benefit from a review of elementary Bible teachings conducted by the congregation elders. If you do not understand some things so as to be able to give a reasonable answer to those who may ask or to persons you will approach in field service, the elders will kindly help you to improve your understanding.—1 Pet. 3:15.

Your desire should be in harmony with the words of the apostle Paul that we read at Hebrews 6: 1-3: “For this reason, now that we have left the primary doctrine about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying a foundation again, namely, repentance from dead works, and faith toward
Personal Relationships With Others

(1) What Christian quality should outstandingly characterize our relationship with our spiritual brothers and sisters?
I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves.—John 13:34, 35.
Clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union.—Col. 3:14.
Additional references: James 2:8; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

(2) What Christian principles should govern our dealings with persons who are not Jehovah's Witnesses?
Just as you want men to do to you, do the same way to them.—Luke 6:31.
As long as we have time favorable for it, let us work what is good toward all.—Gal. 6:10.

(3) How should Christians view the shortcomings of fellow believers?
Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also.—Col. 3:13.
Above all things, have intense love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.—1 Pet. 4:8.
Additional references: Matthew 7:1-5; Proverbs 17:9; 19:11; Matthew 6:12.

(4) If your brother sins against you personally and you find it difficult merely to overlook the transgression, or if his sin against you is of a serious nature and should not be covered over, what should you do?
Moreover, if your brother commits a sin, go lay bare his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take along with you one or two more, in order that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every matter may be established. If he does not listen even to the congregation, let him be to you just as a man of the nations and as a tax collector.—Matt. 18:15-17.
Additional references: Matthew 5:23, 24; Ephesians 4:25.
(4) What mention is made in the Bible of birthday celebrations? How does this affect your view of birthday celebrations?

But when Herod's birthday was being celebrated the daughter of Herodias danced at it and pleased Herod so much that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. Then she, under her mother's coaching, said: "Give me here upon a platter the head of John the Baptist." Grieved though he was, the king out of regard for his oaths and for those reclining with him commanded it to be given; and he sent and had John beheaded in the prison. And his head was brought on a platter and given to the maiden, and she brought it to her mother.—Matt. 14:6-11.

Additional references: Genesis 40:20-22; Ecclesiastes 7:1, 8.

Optional questions for discussion: (a) What are some of the holidays or celebrations popular in your community that true Christians avoid? (b) What do you need to do to keep from getting involved in worldly holidays or celebrations that run counter to Christian principles? (c) If you have minor children, how can you help them avoid unchristian practices related to worldly holidays?

Baptism

(1) Why do Jehovah's Witnesses baptize in water those who embrace the Christian faith?

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.—Matt. 28:19.

He commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.—Acts 10:48.

Additional references: Matthew 3:13-17; 1 Peter 2:21; Acts 8:12, 36-38.

(2) Who should be baptized? When?

Those who embraced his word heartily were baptized.—Acts 2:41.

When they believed Philip, who was declaring the good news of the kingdom of God and of the name of Jesus Christ, they proceeded to be baptized.—Acts 8:12.

Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.—Acts 2:38.

(3) What does it mean to be baptized in the name of (a) the Father? (b) the Son? (c) the holy spirit? You, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth.—Ps. 83:18.

God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the ground, and every tongue should openly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.—Phil. 2:9-11.

I will request the Father and he will give you another helper to be with you forever, the spirit of the truth.—John 14:16, 17.

Additional references: Revelation 1:5; Joel 2:28, 29.

Optional questions for discussion: (a) Why do you want to be baptized? (b) Have you already brought your life into harmony with Jehovah's righteous requirements according to what you have learned from your study of the Bible? (c) Are you at present sharing the good news of the Kingdom with others, demonstrating that you understand that this is Jehovah's will for you at this time? (d) Have you expressed to Jehovah in prayer your desire to be one of his dedicated Witnesses and to serve him in unity with his organized people?

PART III SUBMISSION TO JEHOWAH'S ARRANGEMENT OF THINGS

While still in Eden the first man and woman joined the rebellion led by "the original serpent," Satan the Devil. (Rev. 12:9) They ceased being submissive to Jehovah's arrangement of things. Having been introduced to a course of independence from God, they set out on their own. From that time forward the course taken by mankind has only served to confirm the truthfulness of Jeremiah's words recorded at Jeremiah 10:23, where we read: "I well know, O Jehovah, that to earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step."

Through your study of the Bible you have learned about Jehovah's purpose to bring all things back into subjection to himself, just as they were in the beginning. (Eph. 1:8-10; 1 Cor. 15:24-28)
APPENDIX

Having reached this point in your study you are also desirous of finding your place in Jehovah's arrangement of things and of being submissive to his rule. The following questions and related Scripture references will help you to examine your own understanding of submission to Jehovah's arrangements as regards congregation organization, Christian family life and the political rulers of the day.

Submission in the Congregation Arrangement

(1) What is the basic principle underlying Jehovah's arrangement of things within the Christian congregation?

But I want you to know that the head of every man is the Christ; in turn the head of a woman is the man; in turn the head of the Christ is God.—1 Cor. 11:3.

He [Jesus Christ] is the head of the body, the congregation.—Col. 1:18.


(2) Why is there a particular need for submitting to Jehovah's arrangement of things in the Christian congregation today?

For God is a God, not of disorder, but of peace. . . . But let all things take place decently and by arrangement.—1 Cor. 14:33, 40.

You, though, keep your senses in all things, . . . do the work of an evangelizer, fully accomplish your ministry.—2 Tim. 4:5.

Additional references: Ephesians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 12:18, 28.

(3) What are some examples of Jesus' disciples submitting to his instructions in order to carry out their ministry in an orderly way?

Now he summoned the twelve, and he initiated sending them out two by two, and he began to give them authority over the unclean spirits. And the apostles gathered together
before Jesus and reported to him all the things they had done and taught.—Mark 6:7, 30.

After these things the Lord designated seventy others and sent them forth by twos in advance of him into every city and place to which he himself was going to come.—Luke 10:1.


(4) How does Jesus exercise headship over the Christian congregation today?

Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time? Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings.—Matt. 24:45-47.

But the helper, the holy spirit, which the Father will send in my name, that one will teach you all things and bring back to your minds all the things I told you.—John 14:26.


(5) By what visible means is Christ's headship represented in the congregation?

However, from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the older men of the congregation. When they got to him he said to them: . . . "Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the congregation of God."—Acts 20:17, 18, 28.

Therefore, to the older men among you I give this exhortation, . . . Shepherd the flock of God in your care, not under compulsion, but willingly; neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly; neither as lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock.—1 Pet. 5:1-3.

Additional references: Titus 1:5; Isaiah 32:1, 2.

(6) How do members of the congregation demonstrate submission to the headship of Christ in the congregation?

Remember those who are taking the lead among you, who have spoken the word of God to you, and as you contemplate how their conduct turns out imitate their faith.—Heb. 13:7.

Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will render an account; that they may do this
with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you.—Heb. 13:17.

Additional references: 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13; 1 Corinthians 16:16.

Optional questions for discussion: (a) Are you able to identify "the faithful and discreet slave" today? How? (b) What is the Governing Body of the Christian congregation? What purpose does it serve? (See Acts 6:1-6; 8:14; 15:1-29; 16:4, 5.) (c) What legal agencies are used by the Governing Body today to accomplish the publishing of the good news worldwide? (d) Why would submitting to Jehovah's arrangement in the congregation include giving material support to the work of the congregation to the extent of your ability?

Submission in Christian Family Life

(1) In God's arrangement of things, who is the head of the married woman?

You wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as it is becoming in the Lord.—Col. 3:18.

Let wives be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord, because a husband is head of his wife as the Christ also is head of the congregation, he being a savior of this body.—Eph. 5:22, 23.


(2) How should a husband exercise headship over his wife? Whose example does he have to follow as a pattern?

In this way husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself, for no man ever hated his own flesh; but he feeds and cherishes it, as the Christ also does the congregation.—Eph. 5:28, 29.

You husbands, keep on loving your wives and do not be bitterly angry with them.—Col. 3:19.


(3) Is the wife whose husband is not a believer freed from his headship?

In like manner, you wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, in order that, if any are not obedient to the word, they may be won without a word through the conduct of their wives, because of having been eyewitnesess of your chaste conduct together with deep respect.—1 Pet. 3:1, 2.

Additional references: Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:10.
(4) Who is responsible before God for the training and disciplining of children?

And you, fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah.—Eph. 6:4.


(5) What responsibility do children have in the family arrangement?

Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous: "Honor your father and your mother"; which is the first command with a promise: "That it may go well with you and you may endure a long time on the earth."—Eph. 6:1-3.

You children, be obedient to your parents in everything, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord.—Col. 3:20.

Additional references: Deuteronomy 5:16; Proverbs 1:8; 4:1; 6:20; 23:22.

Optional questions for discussion: (a) If you are a married woman, in what way can you demonstrate your submission to your husband? (b) Does this seem to be righteous and just to you? (c) If your husband does not appreciate your cooperation in this regard, how do you still benefit? (d) If you are a man with family responsibilities, what worldly attitudes must you avoid if you are to exercise your headship in a Christlike manner? (e) If you are a minor child, what benefits will come to you and to the family as a result of your being submissive to your parents? (f) What factors may make it difficult for you to be submissive at times?

Submission to the Civil Authorities

(1) What is the proper attitude for Christians to maintain toward worldly rulers?

Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities, for there is no authority except by God; the existing authorities stand placed in their relative positions by God.—Rom. 13:1.

Continue reminding them to be in subjection and be obedient to governments and authorities as rulers.—Titus 3:1.

Additional references: 1 Peter 2:13, 14; Daniel 6:5; Acts 26:2, 3; 1 Timothy 2:1-3.
(2) Must a Christian pay all taxes and assessments demanded by law?

Render to all their dues, to him who calls for the tax, the tax; to him who calls for the tribute, the tribute; to him who calls for fear, such fear; to him who calls for honor, such honor.—Rom. 13:7.


(3) Are there any circumstances under which a Christian would refuse to obey the worldly rulers?

With that they called them and charged them, nowhere to make any utterance or to teach upon the basis of the name of Jesus. But in reply Peter and John said to them: "Whether it is righteous in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves. But as for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard."—Acts 4:18-20.

In answer Peter and the other apostles said: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men."—Acts 5:29.


(4) Should Christians comply with legal requirements such as the registering of marriages and births, respond to census inquiries or obtain required licenses and permits that do not conflict with God’s laws?

Now in those days a decree went forth . . . for all the inhabited earth to be registered ... Of course, Joseph also went up from Galilee . . . to get registered with Mary, who had been given him in marriage.—Luke 2:1-5.

Continue reminding them to be in subjection and be obedient to governments and authorities as rulers.—Titus 3:1.


Optional questions for discussion: (a) Why is it important for you to be submissive to the civil authorities even when their rule may seem to be oppressive? (b) How can you be submissive to the political rulers without violating Christian neutrality?

PART IV WORKS THAT DEMONSTRATE CHRISTIAN FAITH—Jas. 2:18

You have already observed in your association with Jehovah’s Witnesses that they are a busy