

OCTOBER 2020

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
DECEMBER 7, 2020–JANUARY 3, 2021

1920

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

AS THE decade of the 1920's dawned, Jehovah's people were energized for the work ahead. For 1920, they selected as their yeartext "The LORD is my strength and song." —Ps. 118:14, *King James Version*.

Jehovah did strengthen these eager preachers. During that year, the ranks of the colporteurs, or pioneers, increased from 225 to 350. And for the first time, more than 8,000 class workers, or publishers, reported their activity to headquarters. Jehovah blessed them with an overwhelming response.

SHOWING REMARKABLE ZEAL

On March 21, 1920, Joseph F. Rutherford, who at that time took the lead among the Bible Students, spoke on the subject "Millions Now Living Will Never Die." The Bible Students left no stone unturned in their quest to invite interested ones to this event. They rented one of the largest theaters in New York City and distributed some 320,000 invitations.

The public responded beyond all expectations. An audience of over 5,000 filled the theater to capacity, and as many as 7,000 had to be turned away. *The Watch Tower*

called it "one of the most successful meetings ever held by International Bible Students."

The Bible Students became well-known for proclaiming that "millions now living will never die." At the time, they did not understand that the Kingdom message had to be proclaimed more extensively. Still, their zeal was remarkable. Ida Olmstead, who began attending meetings in 1902, recalled, "We knew that for all mankind great blessings were in store, and we never failed to tell this good news to those we met in the ministry."

PRODUCING OUR OWN LITERATURE

To ensure a supply of spiritual food, the brothers at Bethel began printing some of the literature themselves. They purchased equipment and installed it in a rented building located at 35 Myrtle Avenue, Brooklyn, New York, a few blocks from the Bethel home.

Leo Pelle and Walter Kessler reported for Bethel service in January 1920. "When we arrived," recalled Walter, "the printery overseer looked at us and said, 'You have one and a half hours until lunch.' He put us to work pushing cartons of books up from the basement."

Leo recalled what happened the next day: "It was our job to wash walls on the first

floor of the building. It was the dirtiest job I ever had. But it was the Lord's work, and that made it worthwhile."

Within just a few weeks, *The Watch Tower* was being printed by zealous volunteer ministers. Sixty thousand copies of the February 1, 1920, issue of *The Watch Tower* rolled off the flatbed press on the second floor. Meanwhile, in the basement, the brothers set up a press they called the Battleship. Beginning with the April 14, 1920, issue, *The Golden Age* was also being produced. Undoubtedly, Jehovah blessed the efforts of those willing workers.

"It was the Lord's work,
and that made it
worthwhile"

"LET US DWELL IN PEACE"

Jehovah's loyal people were enjoying renewed activity and fellowship. However, some Bible Students had left the organization during the troubled times from 1917 to 1919. What could be done to help them?

The Watch Tower of April 1, 1920, contained the article "Let Us Dwell in Peace." It made this warm appeal: "We feel sure . . . that everyone possessing the spirit of the Lord . . . is willing to forget the things that are behind, . . . to dwell together in unity and proceed as one harmonious body."

Many responded to these kind words. One married couple wrote: "We are satisfied that the past year and more has been a mistake in standing idly by while others did the [preaching] work. . . . We hope that we may never more be led astray." These reactivated workers had plenty of work ahead of them.

DISTRIBUTING THE "ZG"

On June 21, 1920, the Bible Students began an intense campaign to distribute the "ZG," a paperback edition of *The Finished Mystery*.^{*} A large number of these books had been stored when the book was banned in 1918.

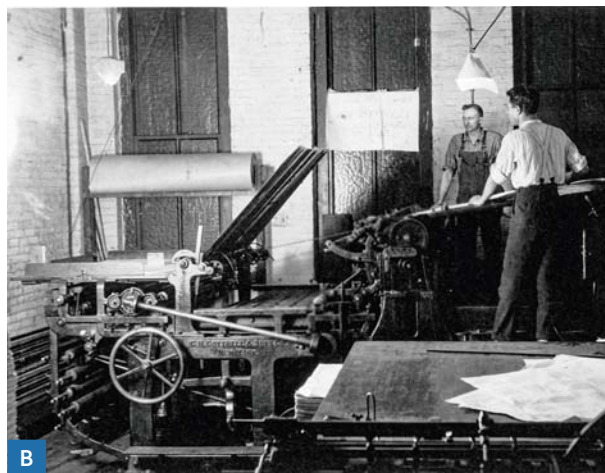
^{*} *The Finished Mystery* was the seventh volume of *Studies in the Scriptures*. "ZG" was the paperback edition, printed as the March 1, 1918, issue of *The Watch Tower*. "Z" referred to Zion's Watch Tower, and "G," the seventh letter of the alphabet, referred to the seventh volume.

A. Newspaper advertisement for the talk "Millions Now Living Will Never Die"



A

B. The flatbed press that was used to print *The Watch Tower*



B



All class workers, not just the colporteurs, were invited to share in the distribution work. “Every consecrated [baptized] person in every class who can participate should do so gladly. Let this be the motto of each one now: ‘This one thing I do’—put out the ZG.” Edmund Hooper recalled that this campaign was for many the first actual door-to-door work they had ever done. He added, “We really began to get the feel of the work that was to expand beyond our wildest expectations.”

REORGANIZING THE WORK IN EUROPE

Since communication with Bible Students in other countries had been difficult during World War I, Brother Rutherford wanted to encourage these brothers and reorganize the preaching activity. So on August 12, 1920, he and four other brothers departed for an extended tour of Britain, Continental Europe, and the Middle East.

When Rutherford visited Britain, the Bible Students held three conventions and 12 public meetings. The total attendance was estimated at 50,000. Summing up the visit, *The Watch Tower* stated: “The friends were refreshed and lifted up. They were more

closely united in love and in service, and many sad hearts made glad.” In Paris, Brother Rutherford again spoke on the subject “Millions Now Living Will Never Die.” When the lecture began, the hall was packed. Three hundred people requested additional information.

In the ensuing weeks, some brothers visited Athens, Cairo, and Jerusalem. To follow up on interest found in these locations, Brother Rutherford established a literature depot in the town of Ramallah, near Jerusalem. He then returned to Europe and established the Central European Office and arranged for literature to be printed there.

SHINING THE LIGHT ON INJUSTICE

In the fall of 1920, the Bible Students released No. 27 of *The Golden Age*, a special issue that exposed the persecution of the Bible Students during 1918. The Battleship, mentioned earlier, ran night and day to produce more than four million copies of this magazine.

Readers of that magazine learned about the unusual case of Emma Martin. Sister Martin was a colporteur in San Bernar-



C. Joseph F. Rutherford and other brothers during a visit to Europe

D. Brother Rutherford in Egypt

E. Poster advertising the lecture given in London's Royal Albert Hall

F. Police photo of Emma Martin

dino, California. On March 17, 1918, she and three brothers, E. Hamm, E. J. Sonnenburg, and E. A. Stevens, attended a small gathering of Bible Students.

One man in attendance was not there to learn about the Bible. "I went to this meeting . . . at the direction of the Prosecuting attorney's office," he later testified. "I went there for the purpose of securing evidence." He obtained the "evidence" that he was seeking, a copy of *The Finished Mystery*. A few days later, Sister Martin and the three brothers were arrested. They were charged with violating the Espionage Act by distributing copies of the banned book.

Emma and her friends were found guilty and sentenced to three years in prison. On May 17, 1920, their appeals exhausted, they began serving their sentences. But things soon changed for the better.

On June 20, 1920, Brother Rutherford related their experience at a convention in San Francisco. The audience, appalled at the treatment of these Christians, sent a telegram to the president of the United States. They wrote: "We regard the conviction . . . of Mrs. Martin . . . under the Espio-

nage law as unjust . . . The action of Federal officers in using the power of their office to . . . entrap . . . Mrs. Martin . . . and then to frame up against her a case to have her sent to prison we denounce as . . . outrageous."

The very next day, President Woodrow Wilson immediately commuted the sentences of Sister Martin and Brothers Hamm, Sonnenburg, and Stevens. Their unjust imprisonment was over.

As 1920 drew to a close, the Bible Students had much to be happy about. The work at headquarters continued to expand, and more than ever, true Christians actively proclaimed God's Kingdom as the solution to mankind's problems. (Matt. 24:14) The next year, 1921, would be an even greater year for advertising Kingdom truth.

SONG 78

“Teaching the Word
of God”

PREVIEW

To teach a person something means to help him “think, feel, or act in a new or different way.” Our 2020 yeartext, Matthew 28:19, has reminded us of the importance of studying the Bible with people and teaching them how to become baptized disciples of Jesus Christ. In this article and in the one that follows, we will see how we can improve in this all-important work.

How to Conduct a Bible Study That Leads to Baptism—Part One

*“You are shown to be a letter of Christ written
by us as ministers.”—2 COR. 3:3.*

HOW do you feel when you see a Bible student from your congregation territory get baptized? Surely it makes your heart rejoice. (Matt. 28:19) And if you are the one who studied with the new disciple, how thrilling for you to witness that one’s baptism! (1 Thess. 2:19, 20) Newly baptized disciples are fine “letters of recommendation,” not just for those who studied with them but also for the whole congregation.—**Read 2 Corinthians 3:1-3.**

² It is very good to see that for the past four years, on average, some 10,000,000 Bible studies* have been reported every month worldwide. And during those same years, on average, over 280,000 got baptized each year as Jehovah’s Witnesses and new disciples of Jesus Christ. How can we help more of those millions of Bible students to get baptized? As long as Jehovah is patiently allowing people the time and opportunity to become Christ’s disciples, we want to do all we can to help them progress to baptism as quickly as possible. Time is fast running out!—1 Cor. 7:29a; 1 Pet. 4:7.

*** EXPRESSION EXPLAINED:** If you regularly and systematically have discussions using the Bible, you are conducting a **Bible study**. You may report the study if you have conducted it two times after the study arrangement was demonstrated and if you have reason to believe that the study will continue.

1. How does 2 Corinthians 3:1-3 help us to appreciate the privilege we have of conducting a Bible study that leads to baptism? (See cover picture.)
2. (a) What important question do we need to consider, and why?
(b) What is a Bible study? (See footnote.)



Ask the student if you can sit down together to discuss the Bible
(See paragraphs 4-6)

³ To address the urgent need to make disciples, branch offices were surveyed to find out how we can help more of our Bible students progress to baptism. In this article and in the one that follows, we will see what we can learn from experienced pioneers, missionaries, and circuit overseers.* (Prov. 11:14; 15:22) They point out what Bible teachers and their students can do to make a Bible study more successful. In this article, we will consider five things every student needs to do to make steady progress toward baptism.

STUDY EVERY WEEK

⁴ Many of our brothers and sisters are conducting Bible studies right on the householder's doorstep. Although this is a good start for developing interest in the Bible, these discussions are usually quite brief and may not even be held every week. To cultivate the interest fur-

* These articles also include suggestions from the series "Conducting Progressive Bible Studies," which appeared in the July 2004 through May 2005 issues of *Our Kingdom Ministry*.

3. What will we consider in this article about conducting Bible studies?
4. What should we realize about a doorstep Bible study?

ther, some will ask for the interested person's contact information and then phone or text the person between visits to share a brief Scriptural thought. Such occasional discussions might continue for months without developing into a productive study of the Bible. Will a student really progress to dedication and baptism if that is all the time and effort that he* devotes to studying God's Word? Probably not.

⁵ On one occasion, Jesus illustrated the cost of becoming his disciple. He spoke about someone wanting to build a tower and about a king wanting to march into war. Jesus said that the builder must "first sit down and calculate the expense" to complete the tower and that the king must "first sit down and take counsel" to see whether his troops can accomplish what they intend to do. **(Read Luke 14:27-33.)** Likewise, Jesus knew that a person who wants to become his disciple should analyze very carefully what it means to follow him.

* Any reference to a male student also applies to a female student.

5. According to Luke 14:27-33, what did Jesus emphasize that can help us in our disciple-making work?

For that reason, we need to encourage prospective disciples to study with us every week. How can we do that?

⁶ Start by lengthening those doorstep studies. Perhaps you can discuss an additional Scriptural point each time you visit. When the householder feels comfortable with a longer visit, ask him if there is some place where you can sit down together and continue the discussion. The householder's reply will reveal how serious he is about studying the Bible. Eventually, to accelerate his progress, you might even ask the student if he would be willing to study twice a week. Yet, more is needed than to study once or twice every week.

PREPARE FOR EACH STUDY SESSION

⁷ As *the teacher*, you need to prepare well for each Bible study session. You can begin by reading the material and looking up the scriptures. Get the main points clearly in mind. Think about the

6. What might we try to do to have progressive studies?

7. How can the teacher prepare well for each Bible study session?

title of the lesson, the subheadings, the study questions, the “read” scriptures, the artwork, and any videos that may help explain the subject. Then with your student in mind, meditate in advance on how to present the information simply and clearly so that your student can easily understand and apply it.—Neh. 8:8; Prov. 15:28a.

⁸ As part of your preparation, pray to Jehovah about the student and his needs. Ask Jehovah to help you teach from the Bible in a way that will reach the person's heart. (**Read Colossians 1:9, 10.**) Try to anticipate anything that the student may have difficulty understanding or accepting. Keep in mind that your goal is to help him progress to baptism.

⁹ It is our hope that through a regular Bible study, the student will appreciate what Jehovah and Jesus have done and will want to learn more. (Matt. 5:3, 6) To benefit fully from the study, *the stu-*

8. What do the apostle Paul's words recorded at Colossians 1:9, 10 teach us about praying for our Bible students?

9. How can the teacher help the student to prepare for his study? Explain.

Prepare well for
your Bible study,
and show the
student how to
prepare
(See paragraphs 7-9)





Teach your Bible student how to communicate with Jehovah
(See paragraphs 10-11)

dent needs to concentrate on what he is learning. To that end, impress on him how important it is that he prepare for each study session by reading the lesson beforehand and reflecting on how the material applies to him. How can the teacher help? Prepare a lesson together with the student to show him how this is done.* Explain how to find the direct answers to the study questions, and show how highlighting only key words or phrases will help him recall the answer. Then ask him to give the answer in his own words. When he does so, you will be able to determine how well he has understood the material. There is something else, though, that you can encourage your student to do.

TEACH HIM TO COMMUNICATE WITH JEHOVAH EVERY DAY

¹⁰ In addition to studying every week with his teacher, the student would benefit from doing some things every day on his own. He needs to communicate with

* Watch the four-minute video *Teaching Our Students to Prepare*. In *JW Library*®, go to MEDIA > OUR MEETINGS AND MINISTRY > IMPROVING OUR SKILLS.

10. Why is it important to read the Bible daily, and what is needed to get the most out of Bible reading?

Jehovah. How? By listening to and talking to Jehovah. He can listen to God by **reading the Bible daily**. (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:1-3) Show him how to use the printable “Bible Reading Schedule” that is posted on jw.org.* Of course, to help him get the most out of his Bible reading, encourage him to meditate on what the Bible is teaching him about Jehovah and how he can apply what he is learning to his personal life.—Acts 17:11; Jas. 1:25.

¹¹ Encourage your student to talk to Jehovah by **praying each day**. Offer heartfelt prayers at the beginning and at the end of each study session, praying with and for your student. As he listens to your prayers, he will learn how to pray from his heart and sincerely address his prayers to Jehovah God in the name of Jesus Christ. (Matt. 6:9; John 15:16) Imagine how reading the Bible **daily** (listening to Jehovah) and praying (talking to Jehovah) will help your student draw ever closer to God! (Jas. 4:8) Developing these habits will help your student

* Go to BIBLE TEACHINGS > BIBLE STUDY TOOLS.

11. How can a student learn to pray properly, and why is it important for him to pray to Jehovah often?



Encourage your student to start attending meetings as soon as possible! (See paragraphs 14-15)

acquire something else that can lead to his dedication and baptism.

HELP HIM TO DEVELOP A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JEHOVAH

¹² What a student learns on a Bible study should appeal not just to his mind but also to his heart. Why? Our heart—which includes our desires, emotions, and feelings—motivates us to action. Jesus used logical reasoning that appealed to the mind. But people followed him because he also stirred their heart. (Luke 24:15, 27, 32) Your student needs to see Jehovah as a real Person, someone with whom he can develop a relationship, and to see Him as his Father, his God, and his Friend. (Ps. 25: 4, 5) During the Bible study, make our God’s personality come alive. (Ex. 34: 5, 6; 1 Pet. 5:6, 7) Regardless of the topic you are discussing, focus attention on the kind of Person Jehovah is. Help the student to appreciate Jehovah’s beautiful qualities—his love, kindness, and compassion. Jesus said that “the greatest and first commandment” is to “love Jehovah your God.” (Matt. 22:37, 38)

12. How can a teacher help a student to develop a relationship with Jehovah?

Try to instill deep love for God in your student’s heart.

¹³ In your conversations with your student, express your deep feelings for Jehovah. This may help your student to realize that he needs to develop his own warm, personal relationship with God. (Ps. 73:28) For example, is there a phrase in the study publication or in a scripture that reveals something about Jehovah—his love, wisdom, justice, or power—that touches your heart? Mention it to your student, and let him know that this is one of the many reasons why you love our heavenly Father. There is something else that every Bible student needs to do in order to progress to baptism.

ENCOURAGE HIM TO ATTEND CONGREGATION MEETINGS

¹⁴ All of us want our students to progress to baptism. One important way we can help them is by encouraging them to attend congregation meetings. Experienced teachers say that students who at-

13. Give an example of how to help a student learn about Jehovah’s personality.

14. What does Hebrews 10:24, 25 tell us about congregation meetings that can help a Bible student make progress?

tend meetings right away make the fastest progress. (Ps. 111:1) Some teachers explain to their students that they will receive half of their Bible education from the study and the other half from the meetings. **Read Hebrews 10:24, 25** with your student, and explain to him the benefits that he will receive if he comes to the meetings. Play for him the video *What Happens at a Kingdom Hall?** Help your student to make weekly meeting attendance an important part of his life.

¹⁵ What can you do if your student has not yet attended a meeting or is not attending regularly? Enthusiastically share something you learned at a recent meeting. That is more motivating than just inviting the student to attend. Give him the *Watchtower* or the *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook* that is currently being studied at the meeting. Show him what will be discussed at the next meeting,

* In *JW Library*®, go to MEDIA > OUR MEETINGS AND MINISTRY > TOOLS FOR THE MINISTRY.

15. What can we do to encourage a student to attend meetings regularly?

and ask him what part of it sounds most interesting to him. What your student experiences at his first meeting will far exceed anything he ever experienced at any other type of religious gathering. (1 Cor. 14:24, 25) He will meet others whose good example he can imitate and who will help him progress to baptism.

¹⁶ How can we conduct Bible studies that lead to baptism? We can help each student take the study seriously by encouraging him to study every week and prepare for each study session. We also want to encourage him to communicate with Jehovah every day and to develop a personal relationship with Him. We want to motivate the student to attend congregation meetings. (See the box on page 12, “What Students Need to Do to Progress to Baptism.”) However, as the next article will explain, there are five additional things that Bible teachers can do to lead students to baptism.

16. What is needed to conduct Bible studies that lead to baptism, and what will we learn in the next article?

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ■ How can we make doorstep Bible discussions more productive? | ■ How can we teach students to communicate with Jehovah every day, and why is that necessary? | ■ How can we encourage students to attend congregation meetings? |
|---|---|--|

What Students Need to Do to Progress to Baptism



1 | Study every week

- Devote the needed time and effort to study regularly
- If possible, study twice a week

2 | Prepare for each study session

- Read the lesson beforehand
- Highlight key words or phrases that answer each study question
- Think of how the material applies to them

3 | Communicate with Jehovah every day

- Listen to Jehovah by reading the Bible daily
- Think of what the Bible is teaching about Jehovah
- Speak to Jehovah by praying each day

4 | Develop a personal relationship with Jehovah

- See Jehovah as a real Person
- Appreciate Jehovah's beautiful qualities and personality
- Learn to love Jehovah from the heart

5 | Attend congregation meetings

- Accept this as part of the Bible study program
- See the benefits they can receive by attending the meetings
- Meet others whose good example they can imitate

1 | Let the Bible do the teaching

- Exercise self-control by not talking too much
- Ask experienced teachers to help you improve your teaching

2 | Teach with enthusiasm and conviction

- Let the student see that you are excited about Bible truths
- Share examples of others who applied what they learned
- Encourage the student to share what he is learning

3 | Encourage the student to make friends in the congregation

- Show genuine, personal interest in your student
- Introduce him to others who can have a good influence on him
- Help him to feel that he belongs in the congregation

4 | Emphasize the goal of dedication and baptism

- Step-by-step, lead the student to baptism
- Be generous with your commendation and encouragement

5 | Periodically evaluate the student's progress

- Look for signs that reveal his desire to serve Jehovah
- If he is not making progress, discuss the matter with him kindly but frankly

What Teachers Need to Do to Lead Students to Baptism



SONG 77

Light in a Darkened World

PREVIEW

When we conduct Bible studies, we have the privilege of helping people learn how Jehovah wants them to begin thinking, feeling, and acting. This article will further explain how we can improve in our teaching skills.

How to Conduct a Bible Study That Leads to Baptism—Part Two

“Pay constant attention to yourself and to your teaching.”

—1 TIM. 4:16.

THE disciple-making work is a lifesaving work! How do we know? When Jesus gave the command that is recorded at Matthew 28:19, 20, he said: “Go, . . . make disciples . . . , baptizing them.” What do we know about the importance of baptism? It is a requirement for those seeking salvation. The baptism candidate must have faith that salvation is possible only because Jesus died a sacrificial death and was resurrected. That is why the apostle Peter told fellow Christians: “Baptism [is] now *saving* you . . . through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet. 3:21) So when a new disciple gets baptized, he puts himself in line for salvation.

² To make disciples, we need to develop the “art of teaching.” (**Read 2 Timothy 4:1, 2.**) Why? Because Jesus commanded us: “Go, . . . make disciples . . . , teaching them.” The apostle Paul said to “persevere” in that work, “for by doing this you will *save* both yourself and those who listen to you.” For good reason, then, Paul said: “Pay constant attention to . . . your teaching.” (1 Tim. 4:16) Since teaching is linked to disciple-making, we want our teaching to be the best.

³ We are regularly teaching millions of people the truths found in the Bible. But as noted in the preceding article, we want to know how we can help more of them to become baptized disciples of Jesus Christ. In this

1. How do we know that the disciple-making work is a lifesaving work?
2. What does 2 Timothy 4:1, 2 impress on us as teachers?
3. In this article, what will we consider about conducting Bible studies?



Ask an experienced teacher to help you improve your skills in letting the Bible do the teaching
(See paragraphs 4-6)

article, we will consider five additional things that every teacher needs to do to help a student progress to baptism.

LET THE BIBLE DO THE TEACHING

⁴ We love what we teach from God's Word. So we may be tempted to talk at length about what we love. However, whether conducting the *Watchtower* Study, the Congregation Bible Study, or a home Bible study, the conductor should not do too much talking. In order to let the Bible do the teaching, the teacher has to exercise self-control and not try to explain everything he knows about a certain Bible passage or subject.* (John 16:12) Compare the Bible knowledge that you had at the time of your baptism with what you have now. Likely back then, you understood just the primary doctrines. (Heb. 6:1) It has taken you years to learn what you know today, so do not try to teach a new student everything all at once.

* See the article "Avoid These Pitfalls When Conducting a Bible Study" in the September 2016 issue of the *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook*.

4. Why must a teacher exercise self-control when conducting a Bible study? (See also footnote.)

⁵ We want our student to understand that what he is learning comes from God's inspired Word. (**Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13.**) How can we do that? Encourage the student to talk about the things he is learning. Instead of always explaining Bible texts to the student, ask him to explain some of them to you. Help the student to see how God's Word applies to him personally. Ask leading and viewpoint questions that draw him out—what he thinks and feels about the scriptures he reads. (Luke 10:25-28) For example, ask him: "How has this scripture helped you to see one of Jehovah's qualities?" "How can you benefit from this Bible truth?" "How do you feel about what you just learned?" (Prov. 20:5) What matters most is, not how much a student knows, but how much he loves and applies what he knows.

⁶ When conducting a Bible study, do you ever take with you publishers who are experienced teachers? If you do, you can ask them for their observations

5. (a) In harmony with 1 Thessalonians 2:13, what do we want our student to understand from his study? (b) How can we encourage a student to talk about the things he is learning?

6. Why might it be good to take an experienced teacher with us on a Bible study?

about the way you conduct the study and how well you do in letting the Bible do the teaching. You must be humble if you are to improve your teaching skills. (Compare Acts 18:24-26.) Afterward, ask the experienced publisher if he thinks that the student is grasping the truth. You could also ask the same publisher to conduct the study for you if you will be away for one or more weeks. That will keep the study regular and will emphasize to the student the importance of his study. Never feel that this is “your” study and that no one else can conduct it. After all, you want what is best for the student so that he can make consistent progress in learning the truth.

TEACH WITH ENTHUSIASM AND CONVICTION

⁷ A student needs to see your enthusiasm and to hear your conviction about the truths that are found in the Bible. (1 Thess. 1:5) Then he will be more likely to get excited about what he is learning. If appropriate, tell him how living by

7. What will help a student to get excited about what he is learning?

Bible principles has helped you personally. Then he will come to realize that the Bible contains practical guidance that can benefit him too.

⁸ During the Bible study, tell your student about real-life examples of those who faced challenges similar to his and overcame them. You could bring along on the study someone from the congregation whose example might benefit the student. Or you can find touching experiences on jw.org in the series “The Bible Changes Lives.”* Such articles and videos will help your student to see how wise it is to apply Bible principles in his life.

⁹ If the student is married, is the spouse also studying? If not, invite the mate to join in the study. Encourage your student to share what he is learning with his family and friends. (John 1:40-45) How? You might simply ask: “How would you explain this truth to your

* Go to ABOUT US > EXPERIENCES.

8. What can you do to supplement the Bible study, and why would you do so?

9. How can you encourage a student to share what he is learning with his family and friends?

Share real-life
examples to help
your student
understand how
to apply Bible
principles
(See paragraphs 7-9)





Encourage the student to make friends in the congregation
(See paragraphs 10-11)

family?” or “What scripture would you use to prove this to a friend?” In this way, you will be training the student to be a teacher. Then when he qualifies, he can begin sharing in the ministry as an unbaptized publisher. You could ask the student if he knows anyone else who would like to study the Bible. If he does, contact the person right away and offer to study with him. Show him the video *What Happens at a Bible Study?**

ENCOURAGE THE STUDENT TO MAKE FRIENDS IN THE CONGREGATION

¹⁰ Teachers must show genuine, personal interest in their students. View them as your future spiritual brothers or sisters. **(Read 1 Thessalonians 2:7, 8.)** It is not easy for them to give up friends in the world and to make all the necessary changes to serve Jehovah. We need to help them find true friends in the congregation. Be a friend to your student by spending time with him not only during the Bible study but also on other occasions. A phone call, a text message, or a

short visit in between studies shows that you really care about him.

¹¹ It has been said: “It takes a village to raise a child.” We could say: “It takes a congregation to make a disciple.” That is why effective Bible teachers introduce their students to others in the congregation who can have a good influence on them. The students can then enjoy associating with God’s people, who can give them spiritual and emotional support. We want each student to feel that he belongs in the congregation and is part of our spiritual family. We want him to be drawn to our warm and loving Christian brotherhood. Then it will be easier for him to stop having close association with people who do not help him to love Jehovah. (Prov. 13:20) If his former associates reject him, he will know that he can find true friends in Jehovah’s organization.—Mark 10:29, 30; 1 Pet. 4:4.

EMPHASIZE THE GOAL OF DEDICATION AND BAPTISM

¹² Talk openly about Christian dedication and baptism. After all, our goal in

* In *JW Library*®, go to MEDIA > OUR MEETINGS AND MINISTRY > TOOLS FOR THE MINISTRY.

10. As described at 1 Thessalonians 2:7, 8, how can a teacher imitate Paul’s example?

11. What do we want our students to find in the congregation, and why?

12. Why should we talk about Christian dedication and baptism with our student?

Step-by-step, a sincere Bible student can reach the goal of baptism!
(See paragraphs 12-13)



conducting a Bible study is to help a person become a baptized disciple. Within a few months of having a regular Bible study and especially after beginning to attend meetings, the student should understand that the purpose of the Bible study is to help him to start serving Jehovah as one of His Witnesses.

¹³ Step-by-step, a sincere Bible student can reach the goal of baptism! First, the student comes to know and love Jehovah and put faith in Him. (John 3:16; 17:3) The student then forms a relationship with Jehovah and begins to bond with the congregation. (Heb. 10:24, 25; Jas. 4:8) Eventually, the student rejects bad practices and repents of his sins. (Acts 3:19) Meanwhile, his faith impels him to share the truth with others. (2 Cor. 4:13) Then he dedicates himself to Jehovah and symbolizes his dedication by getting baptized. (1 Pet. 3:21; 4:2) And what a joyous day that is for everyone! As the student takes each step toward his goal, be generous with sincere commendation

13. What steps does a student take as he progresses to baptism?

and encourage him to continue his progress in the right direction.

PERIODICALLY EVALUATE THE STUDENT'S PROGRESS

¹⁴ We need to be patient when helping a student progress to dedication and baptism. But at some point, we need to find out if he has the desire to serve Jehovah God. Do you see signs that the student is trying to obey Jesus' commandments? Or does he only want to learn facts from the Bible?

¹⁵ Regularly analyze the progress that the student is making. For example, does he express his feelings for Jehovah? Does he pray to Jehovah? (Ps. 116:1, 2) Does he enjoy reading the Bible? (Ps. 119:97) Is he attending the meetings regularly? (Ps. 22:22) Has he made any needed changes in his lifestyle? (Ps. 119:112) Has he started sharing what he is learning with his family and friends? (Ps. 9:1) Most important, does he want to be-

14. How can a teacher evaluate a student's progress?

15. What signs of progress must a teacher look for in a student?

come one of Jehovah's Witnesses? (Ps. 40:8) If the student is not making progress in any of these areas, tactfully try to find out why and then discuss the matter with him kindly but frankly.*

16 Periodically evaluate whether you should continue studying with someone. Ask yourself: 'Does the student fail to prepare for the study? Does he lack interest in attending meetings? Does he still have bad habits? Is he still a member of a false religion?' If the answer is yes, continuing to study with him would be like trying to give swimming lessons to someone who does not want to get wet! If the student does not truly appreciate what he is learning and is not willing to make changes, why continue studying with him?

17 We take seriously our responsibility

* See the articles "Love and Appreciation for Jehovah Lead to Baptism" and "Are You Ready to Get Baptized?" in the March 2020 issue of *The Watchtower*.

16. What might indicate that a Bible study should be discontinued?

17. According to 1 Timothy 4:16, what must all Bible teachers do?

to make disciples, and we want to help our Bible students progress to baptism. That is why we will let the Bible do the teaching and we will teach with enthusiasm and conviction. We will encourage the student to make friends in the congregation. And we will emphasize the goal of dedication and baptism, periodically evaluating the student's progress. (See the box on page 13, "What Teachers Need to Do to Lead Students to Baptism.") We rejoice that we can share in this lifesaving work! May we be determined to do our best to conduct progressive Bible studies that lead to baptism.

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS **Page 15:** Sometime after the Bible study, the experienced sister helps the one who conducted it to see how not to do so much of the talking during the study.

Page 16: During the study, the student learns how to be a better wife. Later, she shares with her husband what she has learned. **Page 17:** The student and her husband enjoy association at the home of one of the friends she met at the Kingdom Hall.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

- How must a teacher exercise self-control when conducting a study?
- How can we help Bible students draw close to the congregation?
- Why should we not hesitate to emphasize the goal of dedication and baptism?

SONG 40

To Whom Do We Belong?

PREVIEW

Are you convinced that Jehovah is directing his organization today? In this article, we will consider how Jehovah directed the early Christian congregation and how he continues to direct his people today.

Jehovah Is Directing His Organization

“Not by a military force, nor by power, but by my spirit,” says Jehovah of armies.”—ZECH. 4:6.

ARE you baptized? If so, you have publicly expressed your faith in Jehovah and your willingness to serve with his organization.* Of course, your faith in Jehovah must continue to grow. And you need to keep building your confidence that Jehovah is using his organization today.

² Today, Jehovah directs his organization in a way that reflects his personality, purpose, and standards. Let us consider three of Jehovah’s attributes that are reflected in his organization.

³ First, **“God is not partial.”** (Acts 10:34) Love moved Jehovah to give his Son as a “ransom for all.” (1 Tim. 2:6; John 3:16) Jehovah uses his people to preach the good news to all who will listen, thereby helping as many as possible to benefit from the ransom. Second, **Jehovah is a God of order and peace.** (1 Cor. 14:33, 40) Therefore, we should expect that his worshippers serve him as an orderly, peaceful group. Third, **Jehovah is the “Grand Instructor.”** (Isa. 30:20, 21) Thus, his organization focuses on teaching his inspired Word, both in the congregation and in the public ministry. How were those three aspects of Jehovah’s personality evident in the early Christian

* **EXPRESSION EXPLAINED:** Jehovah’s universal organization has a heavenly part and an earthly part. In this article, the word **“organization”** refers to the earthly part.

1. What must baptized Christians continue to do?
- 2-3. In what way does Jehovah direct his organization today? Give examples.

congregation? How are they manifest in modern times? And how can holy spirit help you as you serve with Jehovah's organization today?

GOD IS NOT PARTIAL

⁴ *In the first century.* The message that Jesus preached offered hope to all mankind. (Luke 4:43) He commanded his followers to continue the work he started, to give a witness "to the most distant part of the earth." (**Read Acts 1:8.**) Of course, they could not do this work in their own strength. They would need holy spirit—"the helper" that Jesus had promised them.—John 14:26; Zech. 4:6.

⁵ Jesus' followers received the holy spirit at Pentecost 33 C.E. With the help of that spirit, they immediately began to preach, and in a short time, thousands accepted the good news. (Acts 2:41; 4:4) When opposition arose, the disciples did not give in to fear but turned to God for help. They prayed: "Grant to your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness." They were then filled with holy spirit and kept "speaking the word of God with boldness."—Acts 4:18-20, 29, 31.

⁶ Jesus' disciples faced other challenges too. For example, copies of the Scriptures were few. There were no study aids such as we have today. And the disciples had to preach to people who spoke many different languages. In spite of all those challenges, those zeal-

ous disciples did the seemingly impossible—within just a few decades, they had preached the good news "in all creation under heaven."—Col. 1:6, 23.

⁷ *In modern times.* Jehovah continues to direct and empower his people. The direction, of course, comes largely through God's spirit-inspired Word. There we find a record of Jesus' ministry and his command that his followers continue the work he started. (Matt. 28:19, 20) As far back as July 1881, this magazine could say: "We were not *called*, *nor anointed* to receive honor and amass wealth but to spend and be spent, and to *preach* the good news." *To Whom the Work Is Entrusted*, a booklet published in 1919, stated: "The work appears stupendous, but it is the Lord's, and in his strength we will perform it." Yes, like the early Christians, these brothers courageously poured themselves into the work, confident that holy spirit would help them to preach to all sorts of people. We continue to have the same confidence today.

⁸ Jehovah's organization has used the best tools available to spread the good news. These tools have included printed publications, the "Photo-Drama of Creation," phonographs, sound cars, radio broadcasts and, more recently, digital technology. God's organization is also engaged in the greatest translation effort in history! Why? So that all sorts of people can hear the good news in their

4. As stated at Acts 1:8, what did Jesus command his followers to do, and what help would they receive?

5-6. In what ways did holy spirit help Jesus' followers?

7. More than 100 years ago, how did Jehovah's servants know what God required of them, and how did they respond?

8-9. What methods has Jehovah's organization used to further the preaching work?

Jehovah's organization has used the best tools available to spread the good news (See paragraphs 8-9)



own language. Jehovah is impartial; he foretold that the good news would be declared “to every nation and tribe and tongue and people.” (Rev. 14:6, 7) He wants the Kingdom message to be available to all.

⁹ What about those who are hard to reach, perhaps because they live in high-security apartments? With a view to reaching more of these people, Jehovah's organization was moved to consider various forms of public witnessing. For example, in 2001, the Governing Body approved the use of literature carts and other displays in France and later in other places as well. The results were positive. In 2011 a pilot program was started in the United States in one of the busiest parts of New York City. During the first year, 102,-129 books and 68,911 magazines were placed. And 4,701 people asked for a Bible study! Clearly, holy spirit was backing this work. So the Governing Body ap-

proved the use of literature displays in the worldwide field.

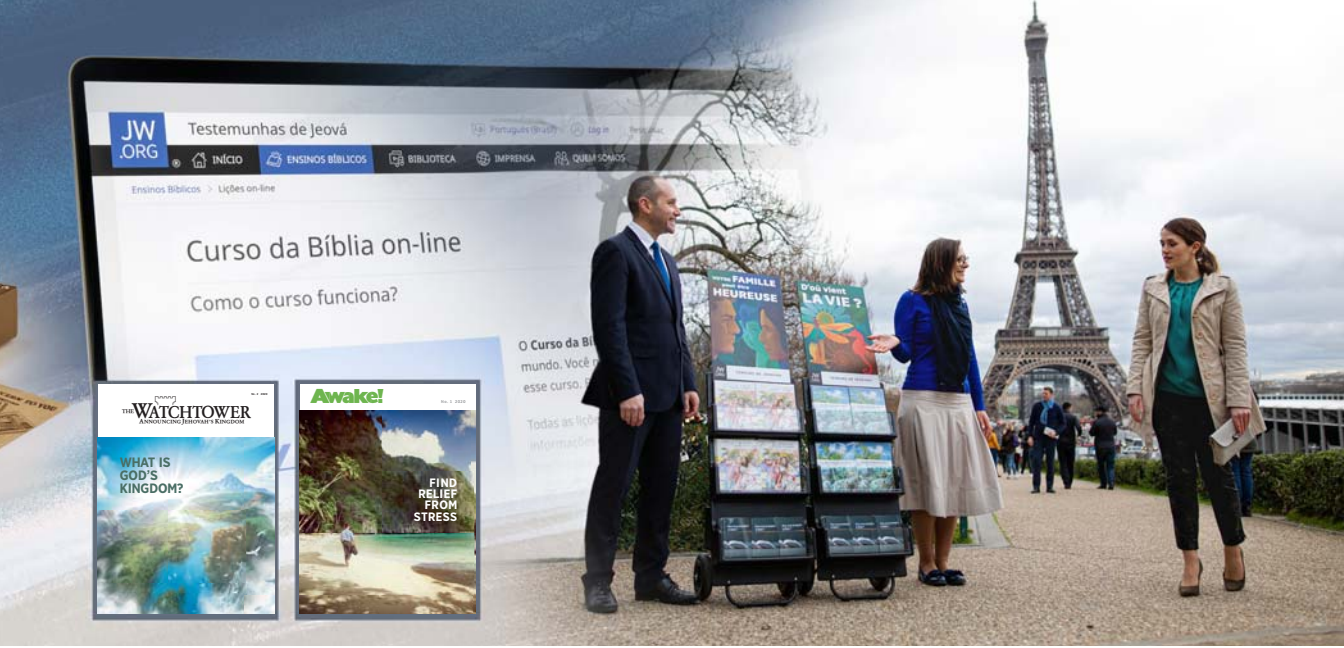
¹⁰ **What you can do.** Take full advantage of the training Jehovah provides at Christian meetings. Work regularly with your field service group. There you can get personal help in areas where you may need it, as well as encouragement from the fine example of others. Endure in the ministry. As our theme text reminds us, we accomplish God's will, not in our own power, but by holy spirit. (Zech. 4:6) After all, we are doing God's work.

JEHOVAH IS A GOD OF ORDER AND PEACE

¹¹ **In the first century.** The governing body in Jerusalem worked unitedly to maintain order and peace among God's people. (Acts 2:42) For example, when the issue of circumcision came to a head about 49 C.E., the governing body, un-

10. What can we do to improve in our ministry?

11. How did the first-century governing body work unitedly to maintain order among God's people?



der the direction of holy spirit, considered the matter. If the congregation had remained divided over this issue, the preaching work would have been hindered. Even though they were Jewish, the apostles and older men were not influenced by Jewish tradition or by those strongly promoting it. Rather, they looked to God’s Word and spirit for guidance. (Acts 15:1, 2, 5-20, 28) The result? Jehovah blessed their decision, peace and unity prevailed, and the preaching work moved ahead.—Acts 15: 30, 31; 16:4, 5.

¹² **In modern times.** Jehovah’s organization has worked to maintain order and peace among Jehovah’s people. As far back as 1895, *Zion’s Watch Tower and Herald of Christ’s Presence* of November 15 had an article entitled “Decently and in Order,” based on 1 Corinthians 14: 40. The article stated: “The apostles had

much to say to the early Church concerning *order* . . . It is safe to continue to heed very carefully ‘the things written aforetime for our admonition.’” (Rom. 15:4) Yes, the same desire for order and peace that marked the early Christians is evident in Jehovah’s organization today. To illustrate: If you were to attend a *Watchtower* Study in another congregation—even in another land—you would know how the study would be conducted and which article would be considered. Immediately, you would feel at home! What else but God’s spirit can account for this precious unity?—Zeph. 3:9, ftn.

¹³ **What you can do.** Jehovah wants his people to “maintain the oneness of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace.” (Eph. 4:1-3) So ask yourself: ‘Do I promote unity and peace in the congregation? Am I obedient to those taking the lead? Can others depend on me,

12. What shows that order and peace exist in Jehovah’s organization today?

13. With James 3:17 in mind, what questions should we ask ourselves?

especially if I have responsibilities in the congregation? Am I punctual, helpful, and eager to serve?’ **(Read James 3:17.)** If you see room for improvement, pray for holy spirit. The more you allow it to mold your personality and influence your actions, the more your brothers and sisters will love you and value you.

JEHOVAH EDUCATES US AND EQUIPS US

14 *In the first century.* Jehovah takes great pleasure in educating his people. (Ps. 32:8) He wants them to know him, to love him, and to live forever as his beloved children. All of this would be impossible without the education he provides. (John 17:3) Jehovah used the first-century Christian congregation to

14. According to Colossians 1:9, 10, how did Jehovah educate his people in the first century?

educate his people. **(Read Colossians 1:9, 10.)** Holy spirit—the “helper” that Jesus had promised—played a major role. (John 14:16) It gave the disciples more insight into God’s Word, and it brought back to their mind the many things Jesus said and did, as later recorded in the Gospels. This knowledge strengthened the early Christians’ faith as well as their love for God, for his Son, and for one another.

15 *In modern times.* Jehovah foretold that “in the final part of the days,” people of all nations would flock to his figurative mountain to be instructed about his ways. **(Read Isaiah 2:2, 3.)** We are seeing that prophecy being fulfilled. True worship has been exalted far above all forms of unclean worship. And what a spiritual banquet Jehovah is providing!

15. In what ways have you seen Jehovah fulfill his promise found at Isaiah 2:2, 3?

Impress the truth on your heart,
and apply it in your life
(See paragraph 16)



(Isa. 25:6) By means of “the faithful and discreet slave,” he is giving us not just an abundance but also an amazing variety, from articles and talks to digital animations and videos. (Matt. 24:45) We feel as did Job’s friend Elihu, who rightly said: “What instructor is like [God]?” —Job 36:22.

¹⁶ **What you can do.** God’s spirit will help you to make practical application of what you read and study in God’s Word. Pray as did the psalmist: “Instruct me, O Jehovah, about your way. I will walk in your truth. Unify my heart to fear your name.” (Ps. 86:11) So continue to take in the spiritual food that Jehovah provides through his Word and his organization. Of course, your goal is not just to gain knowledge. You want to impress the truth on your heart and apply it in your life. Jehovah’s spirit can help you to do that. You also want to encourage your brothers and sisters. (Heb. 10:24, 25) Why? Because they are your spiritual family. Pray for God’s spirit to help you to give heartfelt comments at

16. What can you do to grow spiritually?

Christian meetings and to do your very best when you have a part on the program. In these ways you show Jehovah and his Son that you love their precious “sheep.”—John 21:15-17.

¹⁷ Soon, the only organization left on earth will be the one led by God’s spirit. So zealously work with Jehovah’s organization. Reflect God’s impartial love for people by proclaiming the good news to all you meet. Imitate his love for order and peace by promoting unity in the congregation. And listen to your Grand Instructor by taking full advantage of the spiritual banquet he provides. Then as Satan’s world comes to its end, you will not be fearful. Instead, you will confidently stand among those who are loyally serving with Jehovah’s organization.

17. In what ways can you show that you faithfully support Jehovah’s organization?

PICTURE DESCRIPTION Page 24: After watching videos and seeing others who are serving in lands where the need is greater, a pioneer sister is motivated to follow their example. She eventually realizes her goal of serving in such territory.

HOW DOES JEHOVAH’S ORGANIZATION HELP US TO . . .

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| ■ preach to all sorts of people? | ■ serve together as an orderly and peaceful group? | ■ benefit from divine education? |
|----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|

SONG 134

Children Are a
Trust From God

PREVIEW

Christian parents want their children to grow up to be happy servants of Jehovah. What choices can parents make that will help their children to reach that goal? What choices do Christian youths need to make to find real success in life? This article will answer those questions.

Will They Grow Up to Serve God?

“Jesus went on progressing in wisdom and in physical growth and in favor with God and men.”—LUKE 2:52.

OFTEN, the choices that parents make affect their children for a long time. If parents make poor choices, they can cause problems for their children. But if they make wise choices, they give their children the best chance of having a happy, satisfying life. Of course, children must also make good decisions. The best decision anyone can make is to serve our loving heavenly Father, Jehovah. —Ps. 73:28.

² Jesus’ parents were determined to help their children to serve Jehovah, and the choices the parents made proved that this was their main goal in life. (Luke 2:40, 41, 52) Jesus likewise made good choices that helped him to fulfill his role in Jehovah’s purpose. (Matt. 4:1-10) Jesus grew up to be a kind, loyal, and courageous man—the type of son who would bring pride and joy to the heart of any God-fearing parent.

³ In this article, we will examine the following questions: What good choices did Jehovah make regarding Jesus? What can Christian parents learn from the choices that Jesus’ human parents made? And what can Christian youths learn from the choices that Jesus made?

LEARN FROM JEHOVAH

⁴ Jehovah chose excellent parents for Jesus. (Matt. 1:

1. What is the best decision that anyone could make?
2. What good choices did Jesus and his parents make?
3. What questions will we answer in this article?
4. What important choice did Jehovah make regarding his Son?

18-23; Luke 1:26-38) Mary's heartfelt expressions recorded in the Bible reveal her deep love for Jehovah and his Word. (Luke 1:46-55) And the way that Joseph reacted to Jehovah's direction shows that he feared God and wanted to please him.—Matt. 1:24.

⁵ Note that Jehovah did not choose wealthy parents for Jesus. The sacrifice Joseph and Mary offered after Jesus' birth shows that they were poor. (Luke 2:24) Joseph may have had a small shop next to his home in Nazareth where he worked as a carpenter. Their way of living must have been simple, especially as the family grew in size to include at least seven children.—Matt. 13:55, 56.

⁶ Jehovah protected Jesus from certain dangers, but He did not shield His Son from all challenges. (Matt. 2:13-15) For example, Jesus had to deal with unbelieving relatives. Imagine how disappointing it must have been for Jesus to have members of his own family who did

not initially accept him as the Messiah. (Mark 3:21; John 7:5) Likely, Jesus also had to cope with the death of his adoptive father, Joseph. Such a loss may have meant that Jesus, the oldest son, had to take over the family business. (Mark 6:3) As he grew up, Jesus learned to be responsible for the welfare of his family. He likely had to work hard to support them. So he knew firsthand how it felt to be physically tired at the end of the day.

⁷ If you are a married couple and would like to have children, ask yourselves: 'Are we the kind of humble, spiritually-minded people whom Jehovah would choose to care for a precious new life?' (Ps. 127:3, 4) If you are already a parent, ask yourself: 'Am I teaching my children the value of hard work?' (Eccl. 3:12, 13) 'Do I do my best to protect my children from the physical and moral dangers that they may encounter in Satan's world?' (Prov. 22:3) You cannot

5-6. What did Jehovah allow his Son to experience?

7. (a) What questions will help married couples in parenting their children? (b) How can Proverbs 2:1-6 be helpful in training one's children?



Parents, prepare your children for the realities of life by teaching them how to turn to God's Word for advice
(See paragraph 7)



It is heartwarming to see Christian parents making good spiritual choices for their families! (See paragraph 11)

shield your children from all the challenges they may face. That is an impossible task. But you can progressively and lovingly prepare them for the realities of life by teaching them how to turn to God's Word for advice. **(Read Proverbs 2:1-6.)** For example, if a relative chooses to reject true worship, help your children to learn from God's Word why it is so important to remain loyal to Jehovah. (Ps. 31:23) Or if death claims a loved one, show your children how to use God's Word to cope with grief and to find peace.—2 Cor. 1:3, 4; 2 Tim. 3:16.

LEARN FROM JOSEPH AND MARY

⁸ Jesus' earthly parents helped Jesus to grow up to have God's favor; they followed Jehovah's directions to parents. **(Read Deuteronomy 6:6, 7.)** Joseph and Mary had a deep love for Jehovah, and their priority was to encourage their children to develop that same kind of love.

8. According to Deuteronomy 6:6, 7, what did Joseph and Mary have to do?

⁹ Joseph and Mary chose to maintain a good spiritual routine as a family. No doubt, they attended weekly meetings at the synagogue in Nazareth, as well as the annual Passover in Jerusalem. (Luke 2:41; 4:16) They may have used those family trips to Jerusalem to teach Jesus and his siblings about the history of Jehovah's people, possibly along the way visiting locations that are mentioned in the Scriptures. As their family grew in number, it must not have been easy for Joseph and Mary to keep a good spiritual routine. But look at the benefits they enjoyed! Because they put worship of Jehovah first, their family was well cared for spiritually.

¹⁰ What can God-fearing parents learn from Joseph and Mary? Most important, teach your children in word and action that you love Jehovah deeply. Realize that the greatest gift that you can give them is the opportunity to love

9. What important choices did Joseph and Mary make?

10. What lessons can Christian parents learn from Joseph and Mary?

Jehovah. And one of the most valuable lessons that you can teach them is how to keep a good spiritual routine of study, prayer, meetings, and participation in the ministry. (1 Tim. 6:6) Of course, you must give your children the material things they need. (1 Tim. 5:8) But remember that it will be your children's close relationship with Jehovah, not their material possessions, that will help them to survive the end of this old system and make it into God's new world.*—Ezek. 7:19; 1 Tim. 4:8.

¹¹ How heartwarming it is to see so many Christian parents who are making good spiritual choices for their families! They consistently worship together. They attend congregation meetings and conventions. And they share in the field ministry. Some families are even able to preach in seldom-worked territory. Others visit a Bethel home or support theocratic construction projects. Families who choose these activities must make financial sacrifices, and they will likely face some challenges. But the benefits they receive truly make them spiritually rich. **(Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19.)** Children who are raised in such families often continue with the good habits they learned, and they have no regrets!#—Prov. 10:22.

* See *Pure Worship of Jehovah—Restored At Last!*, pp. 69-70, pars. 17-18.

See the box "I Couldn't Imagine Having Better Parents" in *Awake!*, October 2011, p. 20, and the article "A Special Letter to Their Parents" in *Awake!*, March 8, 1999, p. 25.

11. (a) How will the admonition found at 1 Timothy 6:17-19 help parents to make good choices when they are raising their children? (b) What goals might your family consider, and what blessings could result? (See the box "What Goals Will You Pursue?")

What Goals Will You Pursue?

- 1 Auxiliary pioneer as a family when the circuit overseer visits
- 2 Spend a week in seldom-worked territory
- 3 Volunteer to work on a Kingdom Hall or at an Assembly Hall
- 4 Visit and tour the local branch office

LEARN FROM JESUS

¹² Jesus' heavenly Father always makes good choices, and his earthly parents also made wise decisions. However, as Jesus grew up, he had to make his own choices. (Gal. 6:5) Like all of us, he had the gift of free will. He could have chosen to seek his own interests first. Instead, he chose to maintain a good relationship with Jehovah. (John 8:29) How might his example help young ones today?

¹³ Early in his human life, Jesus chose to be submissive to his parents. He never rejected his parents' direction, reasoning that he knew more than they did. Rather, "he continued subject to them." (Luke 2:51) Jesus no doubt took his responsibility as the oldest son seriously. He surely worked hard to learn a trade from

12. What did Jesus have to do as he grew up?

13. What important choice did Jesus make while still young?



Youths, never
reject your
parents' direction
(See paragraph 13)

his adoptive father so that he could help support his family.

¹⁴ Jesus' parents likely told him about his miraculous birth and what God's messengers had said about him. (Luke 2:8-19, 25-38) Jesus was not satisfied with what he was told; he also studied the Scriptures for himself. How do we know that Jesus was a good student of God's Word? Because while he was still a boy, the teachers in Jerusalem were "in constant amazement at his understanding and his answers." (Luke 2:46, 47) And at only 12 years of age, Jesus had already proved to himself that Jehovah was his Father.—Luke 2:42, 43, 49.

¹⁵ As Jesus learned about his role in Jehovah's purpose, he chose to accept his assignment. (John 6:38) He knew that he would be hated by many, and that thought must have been sobering for him to contemplate. Yet, he chose to submit

himself to Jehovah. When Jesus got baptized in 29 C.E., his main focus in life was that of doing what Jehovah required of him. (Heb. 10:5-7) Even when he was dying on the torture stake, Jesus never wavered in doing his Father's will.—John 19:30.

¹⁶ **Obey your parents.** Like Joseph and Mary, your parents are not perfect. However, your parents have been assigned by Jehovah to protect, train, and guide you. If you value their advice and respect their authority, it will "go well with you." —Eph. 6:1-4.

¹⁷ **Decide whom you will serve.** You have to prove to yourself who Jehovah is, what his purpose involves, and how his will relates to your life. (Rom. 12:2) Then you will be able to make the most important decision of your life, the decision to serve Jehovah. **(Read Joshua 24:15; Eccl. 12:1)** If you keep a regular schedule

14. How do we know that Jesus was a good student of God's Word?

15. How did Jesus show that he chose to do Jehovah's will?

16. What is one lesson that children can learn from Jesus?

17. According to Joshua 24:15, what decision do young ones have to make for themselves?

of Bible reading and study, your love for Jehovah will continue to grow and your faith in him will become stronger.

¹⁸ **Choose to put Jehovah's will first in your life.** Satan's world promises that if you use your talents for your own benefit, you will be happy. In truth, those who focus on material goals stab themselves "all over with many pains." (1 Tim. 6:9, 10) On the other hand, if you listen to Jehovah and choose to put his will first in your life, you will be successful and "you will act wisely."—Josh. 1:8.

WHAT WILL YOU CHOOSE TO DO?

¹⁹ Parents, do your best to help your family serve Jehovah. Rely on him, and he will help you to make wise choices. (Prov. 3:5, 6) Remember that your children will be influenced more by what you

18. What is a choice that young ones must make, and in what will it result?

19. What must parents remember?

do than by what you say. So make decisions that give them the best chance possible of gaining Jehovah's favor.

²⁰ Young ones, your parents can help you make wise choices in life. But it is up to you to win God's favor. So imitate Jesus and choose to serve your loving heavenly Father. If you do, you will have a busy, rewarding, exciting life now. (1 Tim. 4:16) And in the future, you will enjoy the most satisfying life possible!

20. What blessings will young ones receive if they choose to serve Jehovah?

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS **Page 27:** Mary must have instilled deep love for Jehovah in young Jesus. Mothers today can likewise instill love for Jehovah in their children. **Page 28:** Joseph must have valued attending the synagogue with his family. Fathers today can value attending congregation meetings with their family. **Page 30:** Jesus learned practical skills from his father. Youths today can learn skills from their father.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ■ What can Christian parents learn from the choices that Jehovah, Joseph, and Mary made regarding Jesus? | ■ What can Christian youths learn from the choices that Jesus made? | ■ What blessings have you seen from putting Jehovah's will first in your life? |
|--|---|--|

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Will They Grow Up to Serve God?

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COVER PICTURE:

What could be more thrilling to an entire congregation than seeing a Bible student whom they have grown to love get baptized? (See study article 41, paragraph 1)

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