

**"Pay Attention to Yourself
and to
All the Flock"**

**"Pay Attention to Yourselves
and to
All the Flock."—Acts 20:28.**

**Kingdom Ministry School
Textbook**

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KINGDOM MINISTRY SCHOOL COURSE

(Each Unit comprises three hours)

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Explanation of School Course

TO THE STUDENT: "*Pay Attention to Yourself and to All the Flock*" is a continuation of the Kingdom Ministry School Course published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society to help overseers to fulfill their responsibilities as undershepherds of the flock of God. This current portion of the course, prepared under the direction of the Governing Body, has been designed to provide overseers with instruction and counsel to aid them to teach, to lead in the field service and to handle judicial matters.—Acts 20:28.

All elders have a serious responsibility before our loving Overseer, Jehovah God, to see to it that the flock is well fed. This calls for helpful teaching of the congregation as a whole through instructive meetings. It calls for appropriate teaching on a personal basis, to enlighten, to give counsel, to exhort and reprove. Improving your ability as a teacher will be a vital consideration in the course.

An important part of the work involves taking the lead in the field service. Therefore, emphasis is placed on your participation and lead in the field service.

With so many outside pressures bearing upon the brothers, you are often faced with matters involving counsel and judgment. How can you be sure that you are viewing matters from Jehovah's standpoint? How can you be balanced in judging cases that come to your attention, while showing loving concern for the brothers involved? How, at the same time, can you make sure that Jehovah's righteousness is upheld in the congregation? These are matters that will also be given careful consideration in the course.

You will observe that there are five units of study. Each of these units will be considered in a period of

three hours. Two subjects are considered in each unit. And each unit concludes with a twenty-minute period of open class discussion during which time you may ask questions on the material just considered. The instructor will arrange for a ten-minute break about halfway through each study period.

To derive the greatest benefit, we suggest that before coming to class, you read the outlines that will be covered that day.

You will be permitted to take this textbook with you upon finishing the course. Therefore, if you wish to make some brief personal notes in it you may do so. Space has been left in the margin and at the foot of each page for this purpose. We discourage the taking of extensive notes during class sessions. Often brothers miss important information when they are trying to take too many notes.

There should be no reason for anyone to feel anxious or apprehensive during the course. There will be no written reviews and there will be no grading of those in attendance. The school has been prepared to help you so that you will be in a better position to aid and encourage your brothers. We encourage you to concentrate on what is said and to participate fully. This will aid you to get the most from the course.

We are confident that you appreciate the privilege of serving Jehovah's people as an elder in the congregation. Your life is filled with many responsibilities; it is also subject to many pressures. May this course prove to be refreshing to you and make it possible for you to serve your brothers with greater effectiveness and with a happy heart under our loving Overseer, Jehovah God.

TO THE INSTRUCTORS: In most cases there will be two instructors for each school. Both of you will be

present during class sessions. You will each handle a class during each teaching unit and will share in the open discussion sessions at the end of each unit.

You are not expected to have the answers to all questions the elders may bring up. Be careful that you do not give your own opinions on matters. Rather, direct the brothers to what the Bible says and what has been published most recently in the Society's literature.

Be kind, loving and patient in dealing with the students and in handling various situations. Help the brothers to derive the greatest benefit from the Kingdom Ministry School Course.

At the conclusion of the course, each of the instructors will give a 15-minute talk to the class. You can plan together what points each of you wishes to cover. Review and emphasize the high points of the course, which the elders need to remember and put into practice. Encourage all unitedly to follow through on the material presented in school. Recommend to the elders that, upon returning to their congregation, they review lessons needing local application. This could be done at their regular meetings of the body of elders.

Do your best to move the hearts of the brothers to continue faithfully serving Jehovah and their brothers, following the example of our model, Jesus Christ.

The scheduling of school sessions can be flexible. Three units could be covered on Saturday and two units on Sunday. In this way the school could be conducted over a weekend. Or one unit could be covered each evening, with the course running for five evenings. Perhaps daytime classes would be preferable, with the course running for two and a half days. It will be up to the branch office to schedule school sessions in harmony with what is best locally.

Imitate Jehovah, Our Loving Overseer

Jehovah, the great God of love, is the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls. (1 Pet. 2:25) How glad we are to have him over us! The inspired command is that we "become imitators of God." (Eph. 5:1) While we should imitate our loving Overseer in all areas of life, we will be considering the example that Jehovah has set in three fields: (1) He is our Grand Instructor. (2) He is the Great Evangelizer who is sponsoring the preaching of the good news world wide. And, (3) when he judges he is just in all his ways.

In your efforts to be like him, you need to continue to develop your abilities as teachers. You need to take the lead in Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making. You need to be judges who render just decisions among Jehovah's people. And in all that you do, you need to exercise your oversight in a loving way.

OUR LOVING OVERSEER

How many expressions of love Jehovah has showered down on us!

Each day we have reason to thank him for the measure of health and life we enjoy, our homes, food, clothing, our families, our brothers and sisters.

We thank him for the truth, for the privilege of being in his service and for the fact that he has preserved us to this day.

Yes, "we love, because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19)

As overseers we have still more reasons to thank Jehovah.

He has given us the direction we need in order to look after his people.

He has given us his Word to direct us and his spirit to aid us to carry responsibilities beyond what are normal.

When we have made mistakes, not handling situations as well as we should have, Jehovah has been patient with us. And how much we appreciate his expression of love, as we continue to learn and progress!

In imitation of Jehovah, there will be opportunities for you as overseers to show love for others.

There may be opportunities for you to help others physically.

What are some opportunities to help others in this way that you have taken advantage of in the past?

What opportunities do you see ahead of you to help your brothers and others in this way?

In addition to handling parts on the meetings, what opportunities do you have to feed your brothers spiritually?

How do situations like the following afford you with opportunities to show love for your brothers and patience with them?

When they forget to turn in their field service reports.

When children do not behave well in the Kingdom Hall.

When a person needs help in getting to the Kingdom Hall or to an assembly.

When a shy or inexperienced person needs help in preparing talks for the Theocratic School.

When a young person begins to associate and his parents are not in the truth.

When a brother does not handle a matter to completion.

When someone stays too long on a call, causing others to wait.

When a brother or sister appears to be discouraged.

When someone comes to you seeking information and does not readily understand after you explain it to him.

When dealing with a wrongdoer who does not appear to appreciate your efforts to help him.

THE GRAND INSTRUCTOR

Jehovah is the Grand Instructor of his people. (Isa. 30:20) In fact, "who is an instructor like him?" (Job 36:22) Jehovah instructed his only-begotten Son so well that he could be described as a 'Master Worker' beside his Father. And, significantly, he is described as being "glad before him all the time." (Prov. 8:30)

Since the creation of man, Jehovah has provided divine instruction.

He created man with the mental capacity to be taught and to teach.

He gave Adam divine instruction in the way of everlasting life.

Through his prophets he continued to instruct his people.

The priests of Israel were to be teachers of the law.

Nehemiah described their activity on one occasion, saying that they were "reading aloud" from the law, there was a "putting of meaning into it," they 'gave understanding in the reading' and "were explaining the law to the people." (Neh. 8:7, 8)

Christian overseers today need to do such teaching of God's Word too.

As a perfect reflection of his Father, God's Son was a Master Teacher.

The Scriptures relate that those who heard him were "astounded at his way of teaching." (Matt. 7:28)

Noteworthy is the fact that Jesus himself said: "What I teach is not mine." "I do nothing of my own initiative; but just as the Father taught me I speak these things." (John 7:16; 8:28)

Are you careful to teach God's Word, rather than give your own opinion? (1 Cor. 4:6; 2 Tim. 4:2)

Are there methods that were used by Jesus in his teaching that you are trying to use? How?

Use of questions?

Use of illustrations?

Simplicity of expression?

Clear explanations?

Object lessons?

Use of scriptures?

Reaching the hearts of those to whom you speak?

In our time Jehovah continues to provide grand instruction for his people. An evidence of this is the schooling provided by means of "the faithful and discreet slave":

Kingdom Ministry School

Gilead School

Pioneer Service School

Theocratic School

Literacy classes

How can you help the brothers in your congregation to take full advantage of the schooling provided by our Grand Instructor?

What other opportunities, besides when you are on the platform, do you have to teach Jehovah's people and interested ones?

JEHOVAH, THE GREAT EVANGELIZER, IS SPONSORING THE PREACHING OF THE GOOD NEWS WORLD WIDE

He provided good news of deliverance when uttering the first prophecy in Eden. (Gen. 3:15)

Through his angel he declared good news to Abraham. (Gal. 3:8)

It was foretold that the Messiah, Jesus Christ, would "tell good news to the meek ones," and he did that, sharing fully in the work. (Isa. 61:1)

Jesus directed that in this time of the end 'the good news (evangel) of the Kingdom would be preached

in all the inhabited earth for a witness'; in fact, he said: "The good news has to be preached." (Mark 13:10) This is good news that God wants people to hear.

Overseers of the flock of God have the privilege and responsibility to take the lead in this evangelizing work. (2 Tim. 4:5) Are you doing this?

Why is there a need for you to be in the field service when the rest of the congregation is sharing in this activity?

What arrangements do you have for field service in the congregation that serve the brothers well and get good support?

What arrangements do you have so that the elders are taking the lead in the field and working with the brothers?

When the elders take the lead and actually work with the brothers in the field service, what effect do you observe that this has on the activity of the congregation?

What obstacles do you face in trying to provide the lead needed in the field service in your congregation?

Invite other students to comment on how they deal with similar situations.

JEHOVAH IS A LOVER OF JUSTICE AND A GOD OF MERCY

Observe how these qualities showed up in the way he handled the case of the rebellion in Eden.

Justice was shown in his judgment against those who proved to be unrepentant rebels against his sovereignty.

Yet in mercy he foretold a deliverer for the then-unborn offspring of Adam and Eve. (Gen. 3:15)

In justice Jehovah has allowed mankind to suffer the due recompense for sin. (Deut. 32:4, 5)

But in mercy he has made provision for their redemption and given them hope of everlasting life.

The ransom provision itself is based on justice, a perfect life for a perfect life. (1 Tim. 2:6)

Yet, what mercy the provision reflects!

It is, in fact, undeserved kindness to those in need. (John 1:17)

Jehovah shows himself to be just and merciful in everything. Do you?

Jehovah extended the opportunity first to his covenant people to become members of the bride of Christ. But when an insufficient number responded, Jehovah mercifully extended the invitation to Gentile people. (Acts 15:14)

David was worthy of death because of his sin with Bath-sheba. He was extended mercy because of his sincere repentance.

Yet he was punished for his sin, by the death of the son of his adultery and by repeated domestic difficulties in later life.

Are you both merciful and just? Do you show these qualities in your dealings with others? In giving coun-

sel and in judging, do you hold to the same standard, God's standard, with all?

What does Micah 6:8 reveal that Jehovah expects of you? Matthew 5:7? Deuteronomy 1:16, 17?

How are you called upon to show that you are impartial, just and merciful when it comes to dealing with: (a) Those you may consider more prominent in the Christian congregation, and those you may not consider so? (b) Those of other races and nationalities? (c) Younger members of the congregation, as well as adults? (d) Wrongdoers who are sincerely repentant?

Jehovah has shown himself a Guardian and Protector of his people both physically and spiritually. (Ps. 145:20; Prov. 18:10) The basic idea inherent in the Greek word for overseer (*episkopos*) is protective care. We should be guardians and protectors of Jehovah's people too.

Are you alert to the needs of your brothers?

Do you step forward to assist when you see there is a need?

Imitate Jehovah, our loving Overseer.

Loving Overseers

Working with the Congregation

Overseers working with the congregation should make it their goal to imitate the loving ways of the Great Overseer, Jehovah. As Jehovah has shown consideration for the disadvantaged and needy, so loving overseers will be sensitive to the needs of the aged, the sick, the new ones, the young and those in need of material assistance in the congregation. Even as our heavenly Father has shown interest in the spiritual growth and advancement of all his intelligent creatures, so overseers today ought to demonstrate a constant interest in the spiritual well-being and advancement of all in the congregation. (Ps. 146:7-9) No doubt if it is possible you would like to be of even greater assistance to your brothers in these matters than you are at present.

WHAT KIND OF OVERSEER ARE YOU?

Very likely you are a busy person. Most overseers have many responsibilities and their lives are full.

Many have families and so have wives and children to encourage and to care for physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Most have secular employment.

Then there are personal study, preparation for the meetings, field service, and publishers who need help and encouragement in many ways.

There is work around the Kingdom Hall and there are times when a new hall needs to be built.

You also need to get your personal rest and there are times when periods of relaxation are needed.

Are you one who can handle such responsibilities and keep the needed balance so that all matters receive their proper attention?

The apostle Paul at 2 Corinthians 11:24-27 mentioned great pressures that he faced and yet he said in verse 28 that from day to day there was also rushing in on him "anxiety for all the congregations."

No doubt you, as a loving overseer, feel a similar concern for all the brothers and sisters in your congregation.

Paul wrote to Timothy and said, "I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who imparted power to me, because he considered me faithful by assigning me to a ministry." (1 Tim. 1:12)

Do you not feel the same? Do you not feel grateful to Jesus and his heavenly Father that they have assigned you to a ministry?

No doubt you do. And it is our appreciation for the loving-kindness and mercy shown us by Jehovah, as well as our love for Jehovah and for our brothers, that moves us to serve as fully as possible, even with so many other responsibilities.

Do not rely on your own wisdom and strength.

Always petition Jehovah for his wisdom to direct you in doing his work. (Jas. 1:5)

Pray for his holy spirit. It can provide the needed

strength beyond what is normal. (Luke 11:13; 2 Cor. 4:7, 8, 16)

We pray that Jehovah will bless you in your continued efforts to serve him and his people as a loving overseer.

WORKING WITH THOSE WHO HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS IN THE CONGREGATION

At 1 Peter 2:17 we are encouraged to “honor men of all sorts” and to have “love for the whole association of brothers.”

Are you taking such personal interest in your brothers and sisters? Are you aware of their needs so you can show them appropriate love and honor?

Among those who often need special attention are the aged and sickly ones of the congregation.

They may need assistance in practical ways. They may need someone to cook for them, iron their clothes, clean the floor, run errands, and so forth.

They often need encouragement. (1 Thess. 5:14)

They may need someone to help them get to the meetings, to read to them or assist them in other ways to stay spiritually strong.

What can you do to provide such practical assistance?

How can you use the assistance of other brothers and sisters to help you carry the load?

Why is it important to check to see that arrangements for assistance are followed through on?

Your being alert to such needs and providing the appropriate aid will mark you as a loving overseer.

You can be sure that such a course will be well pleasing to Jehovah. (Heb. 13:1, 16)

Newly associated ones are especially in need of attention.

When they begin to come to the Kingdom Hall they often feel like "strangers." We want to change that feeling to one of warm friendship.

Have you ever seen a new one standing by himself, or talking alone with the one with whom he studied? Often others feel they do not want to "interrupt" the conversation. The result may be that few approach and greet the new one.

Do you have attendants to greet such ones?

Do you encourage all the brothers and sisters to take the initiative in approaching and encouraging those with whom they are not acquainted?

Do you take the lead in greeting such ones?

To encourage and help others, it is suggested that you arrive at the meetings early and stay for a little while after the program.

Can you associate with new ones at other times, or perhaps accompany them in the field service or visit in their home or yours?

Such kindly interest lets them see that genuine love exists among Jehovah's people. (John 13:35)

It also fills the void created when new ones cut off former associations and worldly entertainment.

Young members of the congregation need protection from desires that are "incidental to youth." (2 Tim. 2:22)

Parents have the primary responsibility to care for the needs of their children. (Eph. 6:1-4)

However, the young ones are a part of the congregation, and elders have a responsibility toward them also.

Many youths do not have fathers in the truth. Some have no relatives in the truth. They deserve the consideration that is to be shown to the 'fatherless boy.' (Jas. 1:27)

[EXPERIENCE: One teen-ager was given attention by an elder. He would stop and pick the boy up every time he was going to help with the building of the Kingdom Hall. Each day after they finished their work on the hall, they would stop and get some refreshments and converse. The boy has grown up now and is a circuit overseer. But he still remembers this elder's concern as one of the highlights in his spiritual development.]

Note some ways that elders and others can assist and encourage young ones in the congregation.

Engage them in conversation at the Kingdom Hall and elsewhere.

Encourage them to express themselves. Listen to their viewpoints and problems.

Help them to realize that they can be helpful and encouraging to others by their presence and participation at the meetings.

Commend them for efforts to apply themselves.

When possible, give them something to do.

Suggest attainable goals for them.

Talk with them about pioneer work, Bethel and missionary service, auxiliary pioneering, and so forth.

Share with them in the field service. Help them to make progress in this activity.

What are you doing to encourage and assist young members of the congregation? (2 Tim. 3:14)

Pioneers need encouragement and help in many ways.

What needs to be done to encourage pioneers and to assist them in practical ways?

Assist those who are in need materially.

It is not enough just to wish them well. (Jas. 2:15-17; 1 John 3:16-18)

Do they need advice or assistance to get appropriate secular employment?

Do they need advice and assistance in order to receive aid provided by Caesar for the needy?

Are there children, grandchildren or other family members who could help? (1 Tim. 5:4, 8)

Are there those who would like to help if they knew the need existed?

If other assistance is not available, do they qualify to receive assistance from the congregation? (1 Tim. 5:3-10)

When there are official restrictions on the work, the

brothers are in special need of encouragement and direction. (Isa. 32:1, 2)

What arrangements would you make so that all members of the congregation would be well fed spiritually on a regular basis?

What could the brothers do to continue to share in the witnessing activity? (Rom. 10:10)

What if there were a natural disaster?

What would you do to assist the brothers physically?

What aid might be available from government agencies?

What arrangements would you make for the brothers to be fed spiritually on a regular basis?

Following such a disaster, how can the brothers make good use of opportunities to comfort mourning ones and bind up brokenhearted ones?

Brothers and sisters witnessing in dangerous territory need loving assistance too. (Matt. 10:16)

What precautions do you believe would be advisable for publishers who witness in dangerous areas?

What precautions have you encouraged the brothers to take in caring for your territory?

Aiding the brothers in these ways takes time and effort.

Elders are understandably limited in what they can do.

But love for the whole association of brothers will prompt us to do what we can to help those in need. (2 Cor. 8:8-12)

HELP YOUR BROTHERS TO MAKE PROGRESS

As an elder you can make progress. (1 Tim. 4:12-15)

What goals have you set for yourself? In what areas are you endeavoring to make progress? (Phil. 3:16)

Are there others who can be aided to make progress?

Before being appointed as an elder or a ministerial servant, a brother must be "tested as to fitness first." (1 Tim. 3:10)

Your being alert to give such brothers something to do in the congregation will provide an opportunity for such 'testing' and will also give them added training.

Keep in mind that not all have the same abilities. So be discreet in what you assign a brother to do. (1 Cor. 12:4-7)

If a brother is lacking in certain qualifications to be an elder or a ministerial servant, it would be a kindness to speak with him about the matter and endeavor to give practical suggestions and assistance to aid him to develop the needed qualifications.

It may be that a ministerial servant reaching out for the office of overseer needs experience in shepherding.

Could you take him on shepherding calls?

After the call you might ask him how he would have handled certain things that came up.

This may enable you to see how he reasons.

You may be able to help him improve his ability to exhort.

After he has expressed himself, you might explain to him why you did or said what you did.

The body of elders may want to give ministerial servants who are making good progress in teaching some opportunities to teach on the meetings.

Then appropriate counsel can be given to these brothers in harmony with what may be needed.

Those who are not yet ministerial servants can also be used in various ways, and the elders will be able to determine what would be best.

According to what is needed and appropriate, encourage reliability, industriousness and humility. (Prov. 9:8)

To encourage them, to build them up spiritually and to get better acquainted with them, you may wish to visit with them on occasion in their homes or yours.

Accompany them in the evangelizing work.

Help them to make progress in this activity, to develop their ability and to find pleasure in sharing the good news.

Encourage them to show an interest in their brothers and to take others along with them as often as possible.

Could they set a better example in aiding and encouraging their wives and children, and others, in this activity?

Be generous in commending when progress is made.

Commendation is a powerful force that often motivates one to continue progressing. (1 Cor. 11:2)

Our sisters will never be ministerial servants or elders, yet they need help in making progress also.

How do you encourage the sisters and others to share in auxiliary or regular pioneer service?

What arrangements have you made for the sisters to share in the service when you are not able to be there?

In what other ways are you encouraging and helping your sisters?

In what other ways, not discussed above, could you help your brothers and sisters to advance?

What are you doing to help others advance?

What more could be done? Invite suggestions from students.

How, along with your many other responsibilities, do you arrange your activities to help others advance?

Are there times when you can combine this activity with another, thus accomplishing both at once?

THE RESULTS

The brothers feel secure when they experience such concern, assistance and protection from loving overseers working with them. (Ezek. 34:11-16)

There is joy in the congregation. And happy servants of Jehovah are glad to cooperate and exert themselves vigorously in Jehovah's work. (Prov. 15:13)

Many are motivated to imitate the faith of such loving overseers as they see how their course of conduct turns out. (Heb. 13:7)

Jehovah is honored by such devoted imitators of himself.

How Overseers Teach

Teaching is a Scriptural requirement for overseers. (1 Tim. 3:2) The apostle Paul counsels, "Pay constant attention . . . to your teaching." (1 Tim. 4:16) All of us should do this and we should strive to be good teachers. We can learn much from Jesus, the Master Teacher, by observing how he taught. But, remember, teaching is not a matter of mastering techniques; effective teaching requires love, getting the spirit of things, motivation, reaching the person's heart.

A review of this material should enhance your desire to be a better teacher and it will give you some practical suggestions.

LEARNING HOW TO TEACH BY STUDYING JESUS' EXAMPLE

Notice some of the things that made Jesus such an effective teacher:

He based his teaching on God's Word. (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10)

His motive was to honor Jehovah. (John 8:49, 50)

He presented matters with simplicity, brevity and clarity. (Matthew chapters 5-7)

He used questions to involve his hearers and help them to think and draw conclusions. (Matt. 16:13-16)

He used illustrations that fit those to whom he was speaking, such as fishermen, housewives, shep-

herds, and so forth. (Matt. 4:18, 19; Luke 15:3-10)

He explained matters that were not clear to his hearers. (Matt. 18:1-5; Mark 4:34)

He used object lessons. (John 13:2-16)

He reached the hearts of those to whom he spoke. (Luke 24:32)

The result of his ministry was "that the crowds were astounded at his way of teaching." (Matt. 7:28)

IMPROVING YOUR TEACHING ABILITY

Above all, hold to God's Word in your teaching. (Titus 1:9)

It is God's Word that has power and that will move people to action.

It is God's Word that is the truth. Our opinions may be in error.

In your presentation seek God's honor. Endeavor to avoid drawing attention to yourself.

We are God's servants and should seek his honor in all that we do and say.

Jokes and humorous stories are not necessary to effective teaching.

The Bible does not indicate that Jesus used such devices.

Present specific material. Jesus did. A talk dealing with generalities lacks weight and authority; it is vague.

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

done. (Notice *Jesus'* specific instructions in Matthew 10:11-14.)

Logical development can aid greatly in effective teaching.

Avoid presenting too much material.

Do not introduce more material than can be clearly developed in the allotted time.

Keep your presentation simple, uncomplicated.

Allow time to repeat the main points.

Teaching involves more than simply *reading* a Bible text; rather, there is a need also to *explain* it, to *illustrate* it and to *apply* it.

Emphasize key portions of the text under consideration.

Seek to apply the points to your audience. It will aid you to hold their attention and move them to apply what they learn.

Illustrations formed an important feature of Jesus' teaching and can help you to be effective. (Luke 7:41-43)

Work to make your illustration simple. Complex ones may be difficult to follow or even detract from your argument.

Note the simplicity and power of the illustrations used by James. (Jas. 3:5, 6)

How practical these illustrations would be in giving counsel, for example, against gossip!

Effective questions can be used to stimulate thinking and to aid individuals to draw conclusions.

Note how Jesus used them with a group. (Matt. 16:13-16)

Note how Jesus used them with an individual. (Luke 10:25-28, 36)

Leading questions on the basis of what a person already knows can aid you to direct his mind so that he comes to a correct conclusion.

[EXAMPLE: A new brother comes to you and tells you that his secular job requires him to overcharge the customers in the store where he is employed. He asks you what he should do.

Now, will you tell him what to do, or, as a teacher, will you aid him to reason on the matter and draw his own conclusion based on the Scriptures?

How wise it might be to draw him out and ask him, "Is such action being dishonest? Would you like a person to do that to you? What does the Bible say about dishonesty? How do you feel about it?" As you read and discuss appropriate scriptures with him, you will aid him to draw a right conclusion based on the Bible and he may be motivated by a good heart to follow through on the counsel of the Scriptures.]

Viewpoint questions (asking a person what he thinks) aid you to find out what a person believes on a matter.

This will aid you to know what counsel or encouragement he needs.

ARE YOU
A TEACHER?

It can also help you to appreciate what is needed to reach his heart.

For example, if a brother asks you about marrying an unbeliever, you might ask him: "What do you think about it? Do you remember any scriptures that bear on the subject?"

After reading with him 1 Corinthians 7:39 and 2 Corinthians 6:14, 15, you might ask: "What do those scriptures tell you as to God's view on the matter? Do you agree with this counsel? What benefits can you foresee coming to the person who follows this counsel from God?"

Visual aids such as maps, an outline on a chalkboard of main points to be covered, and so forth, may also be used at times.

APPEAL TO THE HEART IN YOUR TEACHING

The heart is involved in motivation and is tied in intimately with one's affections. (Ps. 119:11)

Heartfelt appreciation is very important; the truth must get into one's heart for him to apply it.

How can you reach the heart?

One way to reach the heart is to encourage the person to *ponder* on what he learns. You can help him do this by *emphasizing* the main points and encouraging him to review these.

Another way is to *ask probing questions*, such as: "Do you believe what we just considered from the Bible? How do you feel about it? How could you apply this in your life?"

A third way to impress the truth on hearts is to help your listeners to think in terms of their relationship with Jehovah.

Encourage them to ask themselves questions like: "Why do I want to do this or that? Am I seeking to please God or my own fleshly desires?"

Emphasize the importance of seeking Jehovah's direction before making decisions.

There needs to be a 'willing heart' for one to be properly motivated. (Ex. 35:5, 21, 22)

Do not try to get the brothers in the field service by exerting pressure on them; however, *encouragement* is proper.

Endeavor to *stimulate* their hearts so there is a *desire* to serve Jehovah whole-souled and to have as full a share as possible. (Mark 12:30)

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

Do not expect all to be accomplishing the same in witnessing. People are different, with different conditions of health and circumstances. We can render whole-souled devotion, producing thirtyfold, sixtyfold or a hundredfold. (Matt. 13:23)

On the other hand, help the brothers to appreciate that participation in proclaiming the good news is a sacred duty, a requirement on which our life depends. (1 Cor. 9:16; Rom. 10:10)

Keep before the brothers the fact that our work relates to the supreme issue of the rightness of Jehovah's sovereignty. This alone should stir our hearts and move us to zealous service. (Luke 6:45)

Help them to see that our share in Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making shows how much God's kingdom really means to us individually. To reach the heart, show that lives are at stake, that we are doing a work never to be repeated, that the work is not in vain, that the reward for endurance in God's service is certain.

As overseers you have a great privilege and responsibility to teach God's law.

Pay 'constant attention to your teaching'; "you will save both yourself and those who listen to you."
(1 Tim. 4:16)

What a joyful prospect!

What a praise to Jehovah!

Unit 2 (b)

Teaching at Congregation Meetings

The spiritual level of the congregation depends to a great extent on the quality of teaching at the meetings. The five weekly meetings form an integral and important part of our theocratic education. The brothers come to these meetings expecting to be instructed in God's Word and encouraged in his work. You have a great and wonderful privilege to stand before your

brothers, God's flock "in your care," to feed them and build them up. Do this willingly, with joy and earnestness. (1.Pet. 5:2) This will result in spiritual encouragement to your brothers, motivate them to zealous service and increase your own happiness.

TEACHING AT THE "WATCHTOWER" STUDY

The Watchtower is a means of dispensing spiritual food at the proper time.

The information it contains can greatly aid one to establish and maintain a good relationship with Jehovah.

How can we be teachers in the *Watchtower* study and aid our brothers to have and maintain a good relationship with Jehovah?

The opening remarks and comments of the conductor should be brief and to the point.

Be warm, enthusiastic, encouraging.

You might set the theme of the lesson and stimulate interest in the material by one or two questions that will be answered, a statement to be proved or a problem that needs a solution, and so forth.

The conductor should not comment excessively. A teacher does not do the thinking for the students; rather, he helps them to think in an orderly manner and arrive at the correct conclusion.

When important points are missed by the commentators, or the application of the scripture is overlooked, it can be helpful if you ask specific questions to draw out the points.

However, a caution: Do not ask additional questions unnecessarily or you may stifle comments on other points that the audience has in mind. Draw them out with additional questions only when needed. You can easily find yourself talking too much or unintentionally directing the minds of the brothers to concentrate on details rather than on the main points.

Tactfully and kindly encourage the brothers to participate.

This may be done by being warm and friendly yourself and by commending them for their comments and efforts.

Encourage personal and family preparation.

Recommend that the brothers comment in their own words briefly and to the point.

Some *Watchtower* study conductors have encouraged that the first comment be a direct answer to the printed question, with additional comments drawing attention to how the scriptures apply, to supporting arguments and to practical application of the material. This is optional.

Make good use of the Bible during the study. (Acts 17:11)

Encourage the brothers to look up and comment on the scriptures in the study as time permits.

The conductor might invite all in attendance to look up some scriptures as they are read and commented on.

Some scriptures might be assigned in advance for individuals to read and comment on.

Help the congregation to appreciate that every study is designed to aid us to understand the Bible itself, its prophecies and teachings.

Brief concluding comments (or review questions) can draw attention to the main points and how we as Christians can apply the counsel in our lives. (Jas. 1:22, 25)

To teach effectively at the *Watchtower* study you will need to study carefully, look up the scriptures, know how they apply, and take an interest in the material and in your brothers.

How could you improve in teaching at the *Watchtower* study?

TEACHING AT THE CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY

In conducting the study, seek to build appreciation for the material.

Help those attending to see, not only the answers to the questions, but also the reasons for them, the value of the information and how it applies to them.

Your opening remarks can be brief.

At the beginning you may wish to read the portion of the Bible that will be considered during the study if the material lends itself to that.

Draw attention to the main points rather than to minor ones.

For example, if you were studying about *the ransom and what it is* and were considering John 3:16, you

would draw attention to the point that God gave his "only-begotten Son" as a ransom rather than becoming involved in a discussion of the expression "the world," although this is also mentioned in the verse.

Have unquoted scriptures read and discussed as time allows.

Long citations may be read, they may be assigned to be summarized or key verses may be read.

The conductor may decide how they may best be handled.

Watch the response of those in attendance or the lack of it.

Can you help so the material is reaching both the mind and heart?

When a comment is read, you may wish to ask the person if he would like to repeat the point in just a few words.

When would you not want to do this?

Be alert to commend the brothers for what they do.

Do not comment excessively yourself. Rather, a teacher will want to draw out answers from the audience whenever possible.

To aid in understanding points that are not clear, various types of questions can be employed.

You might use true-or-false statements, multiple-choice, leading or viewpoint questions.

Help the brothers to see the practical value of the material.

Watch for points that the brothers can use in field service.

Are there points that would aid those in divided households? Or that would aid the brothers at their place of employment, at school or in other situations?

Encourage all to participate: young ones, new ones as well as the mature ones.

How do you do this?

Perhaps you can help some prepare for the study.

Timid ones may be willing to read a scripture.

Help all to think on the material, understand it, appreciate it and how it applies.

Conduct your study so as to motivate the brothers to act on what they learn, so they want to do Jehovah's will. (Ps. 110:3)

It is good to have the closing review from the Bible rather than from the book if the material lends itself to this.

How could you improve in teaching your brothers at the book study?

TEACHING AT THE PUBLIC MEETING, THE SERVICE MEETING AND THEOCRATIC SCHOOL

The public meeting is generally presented in the form of a discourse, although slide presentations are also used on occasion.

The information should be spiritually upbuilding to new ones and regular attenders.

When preparing a public talk, ask yourself: "Why is this information needed? Can I present it and illustrate it so that all will be benefited and can see how the information can be used?"

For example: If your talk is on evolution, you would not want to present the material in such a way that it ridicules those who believe in evolution. While the brothers might consider such a presentation humorous, it would not appeal to one who believes in evolution.

Rather, present the information so that an unbelieving husband sitting in the audience might see the reasonableness of it.

UNBELIEVERS VIEW
SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

Help the brothers to see how they could use the material and present it in such a way that it would appeal to those in the territory who believe in evolution.

We want to help people, not ridicule them.
We want to appeal to their reason and better judgment.

Use terms that are easily understood by all.

Involving your audience by the use of questions or having them read and comment on scriptures may do much to hold their attention and add to the instructiveness of your presentation.

Enthusiasm is very important in your teaching.

Without it, well-prepared material may not be conveyed.

Put your heart into your talk.

Look to Jehovah for his help.

How could the public meetings in your congregation be improved?

Have slide presentations that you have had been spiritually upbuilding? Should not be merely entertaining.

Could you be a better teacher when you give public talks? How?

The purpose of the service meeting is to equip and stimulate the brothers to share fully in the preaching and disciple-making work.

Endeavor to follow the suggestions outlined under "Your Service Meetings" in *Our Kingdom Service*. They have been well thought out and provide the outlines for balanced and upbuilding programs.

To teach effectively, careful preparation, as well as the rehearsal of demonstrations, is necessary.

When preparing to present material from *Our Kingdom Service*, consider the needs of the local congregation.

Ask yourself: "Why does our congregation need this information? What points will be of greatest value to the publishers?" Then highlight these points.

Help the brothers to see how the information presented is practical and can be helpful to them and in their territory.

It stimulates interest when different members of the congregation who are qualified are impartially used on the program.

For your instruction and counsel to be most effective, you need to be one who appreciates the value of field service yourself and one who takes a good lead in the work. (1 Tim. 4:12)

The brothers appreciate it when the meetings are concluded on time.

Both songs and the closing prayer should be within one hour.

If someone before you on the program takes too much time, can you reduce your part?

If someone makes a practice of going overtime, speak to him in a kindly way, give practical suggestions and help him to see the need to make adjustments.

Perhaps he should prepare less material.

Perhaps he should spend less time on introductory remarks and get right into the assigned material.

What do you believe would improve the service meetings in your congregation?

What practical suggestions do you have?

Could you be a more effective teacher when you have a part on the service meeting? How?

The Theocratic School has done much to train God's people to present the Kingdom message in a clear and effective way.

Prepare well so you know the material to be covered by the speakers and will be in a position to draw attention to points that will be instructive and spiritually upbuilding to all.

Your introductory remarks could call attention to points that the congregation can look forward to learning during the school.

At times this can be effectively done by raising

questions and inviting the brothers to look for the answers.

If the student does not cover the point, you can draw attention to it during the time you have between the talks.

Keep the audience involved to the extent possible.

It may be that you could draw the audience out on some of the material that the speaker did not have time to consider.

Draw attention to material that will be of spiritual value to the brothers.

Material that can be used in field service.

Or points that will be of value in their everyday lives.

Take the initiative to approach each student speaker personally after the meeting, not just to return his Speech Counsel form, but to encourage and help him.

Commend the brothers for what they do.

Help them to be glad that they had a part in the school, could build up their brothers and speak to Jehovah's praise.

Give helpful and practical counsel.

If some need additional help, could you arrange for this to be given by yourself or another member of the congregation?

Are there some who need help to improve their reading ability?

Why is it important that each person be able to read well and to understand what he reads?

Can arrangements be made to help them by using

READING

an auxiliary classroom when the school is being conducted or at another time that is convenient?

What arrangements do you have to help members of the congregation who need assistance to improve their reading ability?

What results have you seen?

Meetings should always be conducted in such a way that they honor Jehovah, spiritually build up those in attendance, and cause us to grow ever stronger in our love for Jehovah, his service and our brothers.

What have you been doing in your congregation to accomplish these goals?

Unit 3 (a)

Be Whole-souled in the Evangelizing Work

Jehovah has given his people an evangelizing work. This involves preaching and teaching the good news of the Kingdom by means of every appropriate method we are able to use.

This work is one of the most important that has ever been done on the earth. Why? Because it is a "touchstone" by which mankind is being judged. Acceptance of the good news and obedience to it result in salvation; rejection and disobedience mean destruction. This in itself impresses us with the urgency of the work.

The apostle Paul stated, "Whatever you are doing, work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah, and not to men."

Being whole-souled in the evangelizing work means putting your whole soul into the work.—Col. 3:23.

WHAT IS WHOLE-SOULED SERVICE?

Whole-souled service involves using your whole soul, including your heart, mind and strength.

Loving Jehovah with your “whole soul” means that every fiber of your existence is involved in lovingly serving God; no function, capacity or desire in life is excepted.

Whole-souled service does not require that we be physically perfect.

Imperfect people are urged to be whole-souled.
(Mark 12:30)

It is a matter of using all our imperfect faculties in God’s service.

People have different abilities and so their accomplishments differ.

Jesus spoke of those in “fine soil” producing a hundredfold or sixty, or thirty. (Matt. 13:18, 23)

Was the one bearing thirty not whole-souled?
Jesus did not say that.

One may have more energy or other resources to use in God’s service than another does.

Two women in Bible times received honorable mention by Jesus for their contributions to God’s service, though the monetary value of their gifts and what they gave differed greatly. (Luke 21:1-4; Mark 14:6-9)

Similarly today, circumstances in life differ—there

are differences in health, vigor, mental ability, obligations and responsibilities, time in the truth, knowledge of the Scriptures; all of these can affect how much a person can accomplish.

Realize that some who do very little in God's service because of limitations may be whole-souled.

Help your brothers to enjoy what they are able to do in the evangelizing work whether it appears to be little or much.

Help your brothers and sisters also to use their whole soul in the evangelizing work.

Do they put their whole heart into their presentations of the Kingdom message?

People can sense this and it may have much to do with their reaction to the good news.

Do you put your heart into your presentation of the good news?

When in the service, is their mind on their work—their efforts to reach people and present the good news effectively—or is it on other matters?

Do you keep your mind on what you are doing when you share in the evangelizing work?

Do they exert themselves physically, using their strength in the evangelizing work? (1 Tim. 4:10)

For an older or sickly person, an hour may be all his soul may wisely do.

Do some discontinue their activity because others cannot stay longer, when their strength and circumstances permit them to do more?

Do you use your whole strength in the evangelizing work?

TAKE THE LEAD IN EVANGELIZING

Jesus set the pattern for Christian elders. Kingdom-preaching was a major part of his earthly activity. (John 18:37)

Jesus was willing to extend himself in behalf of others even when he was tired. (Mark 6:30-34)

Elders should take the lead in Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making as "examples to the flock." (1 Pet. 5:2, 3)

Your brothers are benefited when they see—

Your efforts to make room in your busy schedule to 'work hard' in Kingdom-preaching. (Eph. 5:15, 16; 1 Thess. 5:12, 13)

Your joy in the work. (Ps. 145:7, 11, 12)

Your interest in helping and encouraging your brothers. (Phil. 2:4)

Your relating field service experiences and encouraging others to do so.

Your keeping the field service to the fore in the meetings.

Help those who are 'reaching out' for privileges in the congregation to appreciate that overseers are to be examples to the flock in all respects, including having as full a share in the field service as their circumstances permit.

MAKE ARRANGEMENTS SO THAT THE MOST IS ACCOMPLISHED

Good organization is needed to accomplish the most in your personal activity and in your efforts to assist others.

When there is group witnessing, are you careful to see that you have enough territory to keep the brothers busy during the time they will be in the service?

Do you see that midweek groups have the territory they will need?

Are you alert to see that there is a balanced coverage of the territory?

What advantage would there be in making a definite schedule for working in the field service?

What benefit can you see in setting aside a specific time to share with members of your own family in the field service? Or making appointments to accompany other members of the congregation?

When you work with others, it is not just a matter of being with them in the service. There is a need to teach them and help them to make progress in the field service.

When you see a deficiency, what do you do to help a brother—

Use his Bible in witnessing?

Introduce subjects that have local appeal?

Converse with the people?

Show a genuine concern for the people?

Make return visits?

Start Bible studies?

Conduct instructive studies?

Appeal to the heart of the householder?

Remember, not all have the same abilities.

Commend the brothers for what they are able to do. (1 Cor. 12:4-7)

Do what you can to help each one make progress.

Be loving and upbuilding in all that you do and say.

ENCOURAGE PIONEER SERVICE

One of the best ways to encourage pioneer service is for elders and members of their families to share in the pioneer work to the extent their circumstances allow.

Elders who pioneer have been a great blessing to others.

Some elders, in the following situations, have found it possible to get into the regular pioneer work. Could you?

Those who are retired.

Those who have no dependent children.

Those who have secular work that does not consume all their time.

Some have made adjustments in their secular employment so they could pioneer.

Some elders who do not have such favorable circumstances have been able to engage in auxiliary pioneer service one or more times during the year.

They do it because they have the evangelizing spirit, are whole-souled and feel that they can do it.

Is this a matter to which you could give more serious thought and prayer?

Many elders have encouraged their wives and children to share in either regular or auxiliary pioneer work.

Sometimes cooperation and encouragement from other family members help to make this possible.

They may need help to work out practical schedules, assistance to find part-time secular work, encouragement to develop the godly view of wanting to help people. (2 Pet. 3:9)

Do you make the pioneer service a matter of enthusiastic conversation in your household? (Luke 6:45)

Be alert to the needs and problems of those already in pioneer service.

What could be done to help a pioneer who—

Does not have sufficient territory?

Does not get the literature supplies needed?

Needs someone to work with in the field service?

Needs assistance in starting studies?

Has financial problems?

May not be properly caring for his health?

Is discouraged over indifference in the territory?

How have you been able to encourage and assist pioneers in your congregation? What more could you do?

Be alert to take advantage of all opportunities to preach and teach the good news.

By example and word, motivate your brothers to share as fully as they can in spreading the good news on all occasions and in every appropriate way.

Help Your Brothers to Reach All by Evangelizing

The Christian congregation serves in Jehovah's purpose by declaring abroad his excellencies. (1 Pet. 2:9) This involves sharing the good news with all who will hear. The overseers as shepherds of the flock not only themselves take the lead in evangelizing, but also serve an important role in encouraging and helping all in the congregation to share in the evangelizing work.

Jesus said, "The good news has to be preached," but he did not indicate that the work must be done in one particular way. Rather, the disciples were encouraged to be illuminators in the world, taking advantage of every opportunity to help others learn the truth of God's Word.—Mark 13:10; Phil. 2:15.

Likewise, overseers today should not try to legislate exactly how the brothers do the evangelizing work. Rather, concern yourselves with encouraging a proper attitude toward the preaching work, give helpful suggestions as to ways in which the evangelizing work can be done and how people can be reached. Take the lead, work with the brothers in the field and help them to find pleasure in serving God and bringing the good news to others.

A PROPER MOTIVE IMPORTANT IN THE EVANGELIZING WORK

Help the brothers to see that love for Jehovah and for neighbor is demonstrated through the evangelizing work. (Mark 12:28-31)

It is a privilege to share in the work assigned by Jesus. Jesus demonstrated the proper attitude toward people, serving them in a self-sacrificing way. (Mark 6:31-34)

Remind the brothers of the example of the apostle Paul and help them to realize the joy that comes from giving. (Acts 20:24, 35)

Help the brothers to understand that their appreciation for the sanctity of life is reflected in their attitude toward the evangelizing work. (Acts 20:26, 27)

Brothers should feel a personal obligation toward those who will hear, just as did the apostle Paul. (1 Cor. 9:16)

A discussion of James 1:2-4, 12 will encourage the brothers to remain firm in the evangelizing work even when suffering persecution. (Acts 5:41, 42)

HELP THE BROTHERS TO SHINE AS ILLUMINATORS ON EVERY APPROPRIATE OCCASION

When proper spiritual feeding has filled their hearts with good things, it is only natural that the brothers will want to share the good news with others on every appropriate occasion.

It is encouraging to the brothers to know that there is Scriptural backing for engaging in the evangelizing work in various manners:

Going into the homes of the people to speak with them. (Luke 19:1-10)

Preaching publicly from city to city. (Matt. 9:35)

Witnessing to people in public places such as a marketplace. (Acts 17:17)

Speaking to groups of people assembled in public meeting places. (Acts 13:14-16; Matt. 13:54)

Speaking to more informal groups. (Acts 16:13)

Approaching relatives and people who are traveling. (John 1:40, 41; Acts 8:27-30)

Similarly today, opportunities to evangelize present themselves while visiting relatives or friends; in day-by-day contacts with neighbors; when talking with workmates, business associates; while traveling; on vacation (holiday), and so forth.

Recognize opportunities for informal witnessing in your locality and suggest these to the brothers.

When you take the lead in this activity, and take advantage of such appropriate opportunities to evangelize, others will be encouraged to follow your example.

If the brothers are reluctant to take the initiative to evangelize informally, experiences on the service meeting and demonstrations of how to do this may be helpful to the brothers.

What opportunities have you used for informal witnessing?

How do you get the conversation started?

How do you handle things so that the conversation does not become objectionable to the other person and so he does not feel that he is being "preached" to? (Col. 4:6)

How do you know when to drop the subject?

It is often good to make a statement or two and then pause to see what response you get.

Notice how Jesus did this as illustrated at John 4:7-26.

A few brief but appropriate statements from time to time may accomplish more than if you try to say it all at once.

Help the brothers to appreciate the need for tactfulness and discretion when evangelizing informally.

Mention situations where it would not be particularly appropriate for extensive informal witnessing.

What preparation can the brothers make in order to be ready for such opportunities of service?

How is it possible that our Christian conduct may open the way for conversations with others? (Titus 2:1-14)

ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN PREARRANGED EVANGELIZING WORK

There are various ways to share in the evangelizing work, and often the elders can arrange for individuals to share together in this activity.

A most effective method of reaching people with the good news in many parts of the world is by calling on them from house to house.

NOTE: In cases involving Jehovah's Witnesses the United States Supreme Court has made the following favorable statements as to our evangelizing work.

"Preaching from house to house is an age-old method of proselyting. . . . For centuries it has been a common practice in this and other countries for persons not specifically invited to go from home to home and knock on doors or

ring doorbells to communicate ideas to the occupants." *Martin v. City of Struthers*, 319 U.S. pp. 150, 141.

"The hand distribution of religious tracts is an age-old form of missionary evangelism—as old as the history of printing presses." *Murdock v. Pennsylvania*, 319 U.S. p. 105. See also *Defending and Legally Establishing the Good News*, 1950, pp. 34, 35.

How do you arrange to share in the evangelizing activity with your wife and children?

How do you endeavor to make this a pleasant and an upbuilding time for them?

Other publishers need the help and encouragement you can give them by sharing with them in the house-to-house activity also.

The brothers can learn from your presentation how the evangelizing work can be done effectively in the local territory.

By being with other publishers when they speak at the doors, you can recognize problems they may be having and tactfully offer suggestions for improving their service.

But be careful that you do not convey the idea that the evangelizing work should be done only in the way you do it or that it should be done only in the way you suggest.

Do not be critical of the brothers and do not try to fit them into a mold.

Be upbuilding and helpful in what you say.

Are those who were not at home on the first call called on again?

Do some of you have group arrangements for this?
What could be arranged?

What time have you found to be best for reaching people in your territory?

What success have you or other publishers in your congregation had in witnessing in the late afternoon or early evening?

Why might this be a good time to contact people?
Are there publishers who, with a little encouragement and assistance from the elders or other publishers, might be able to share in the service at this time?

How are you handling the expiring subscription return visit slips you receive from the Society?

What arrangements do you have to see that these people are approached quickly so there is no break in their subscription, if this is what they desire? Or to start a study with them, if they are agreeable?

What arrangements do you have in your congregation—

To contact the people at their places of business?

To witness to people on public streets, in shopping centers or at marketplaces?

To talk to people waiting in automobiles or waiting at bus or train stops?

To visit hospitals, rest homes, jails, and so forth?

Are there other ways you can reach people in your territory?

Some brothers may be timid about speaking to persons in public places in the ways that we have just discussed.

If the elders will take the lead in this activity, often other publishers will be encouraged to follow and to share in this public evangelizing service also.

Some, on the other hand, may be able to do well in another activity.

OTHER WAYS YOU CAN HELP YOUR BROTHERS IN THE EVANGELIZING WORK

It may be helpful to some publishers if you can visit them in their homes and help them prepare Bible discussions or topics for conversation for use in the field.

It may be a fine opportunity for them to practice giving their presentations and for you to demonstrate the Scriptural discussions you are using.

Accompany the publishers from house to house if at all possible.

This is a most effective way to give personal assistance.

They can listen to you and observe what you do and by your suggestions they can be aided to be more effective in their evangelizing work.

If you cannot personally accompany some publishers, make arrangements for other effective evangelizers to go with them.

Encourage parents to assist their children in the witnessing activity.

Some of you may be able to share with others in the midweek evangelizing work. Do so, if you can.

This may prove to be very encouraging and helpful to sisters and others who cannot share in the field service on weekends.

Overseers 'Ruling for Justice Itself'

Jehovah, as a wonderful Provider, has provided overseers to "rule as princes for justice itself." (Isa. 32:1, 2) Jehovah God is holy. He requires that all those who worship him be spiritually and morally clean. (1 Pet. 1:14-16) You have a large part in safeguarding the cleanness of the congregation.

Protective care is a basic idea in the word overseer (*e-pi'sko-pos*), which carries also the thought of one who watches over, a guardian, a shepherd of the flock. You have the responsibility to cultivate in the hearts of the brothers a love for what is good and a hatred for what is bad, wicked. (Rom. 12:9) By holding to God's Word and by effectively using the art of teaching, you will be able to help your brothers not only to understand what is right and what is wrong, but also to have an active part in keeping the congregation clean and chaste for public service to Jehovah.

ALL ELDERS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY

Not just the elders on the designated judicial committee but all elders are responsible to shepherd the flock, to teach, reprove, reprimand and exhort as necessary. (Titus 1:9-14)

By your teaching, make clear what God requires and encourage faithful obedience to his righteous principles.

At the meetings and in personal conversation help the brothers to appreciate their responsibility to keep the congregation clean.

Help them to understand that this is done by—
Their own personal conduct.

Resisting temptations.

Refusing to feed their minds on wrong ideas.

Parents' properly training and disciplining their children.

Younger ones' being obedient to parents.

Refusing to imitate the world and its ways.

Properly teaching interested persons the Bible's high moral standards.

If a person is guilty of serious wrongdoing it is wise for him to speak to one or more of the elders.
(Jas. 5:16)

Where one has certain knowledge of wrongdoing that poses a threat of or indicates contamination of the congregation, such a one is obligated to report the matter in order to keep the congregation clean. (Deut. 13:12-14; Num. 15:32-34)

Set a fine example in conduct, attitude and speech, so others can imitate your "faith." (Heb. 13:7)

Display the traits of a "spiritual man." Do not give way to unclean practices as a "physical man" would. Your example will help your brothers to "have the mind of Christ." (1 Cor. 2:14-16)

Take the initiative to help any in the congregation who may take "some false step"; "try to readjust" him. (Gal. 6:1)

Encourage good association. Warn the brothers to be on guard against bad association both inside and outside the congregation. (1 Cor. 15:33)

Some associated with the congregation do not yet have perceptive powers that have been trained to distinguish right and wrong. (Heb. 5:14) 'Keep a watch over their souls.' You will render an account for them too. (Heb. 13:17)

Deal with your brothers as Jehovah would deal with them. (Eph. 5:1)

Give them direction from his Word, not your opinions. (2 Tim. 4:2)

Be just, kind, humble in all your dealings.

"He has told you, O earthling man, what is good. And what is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to love kindness and to be modest in walking with your God?" (Mic. 6:8)

WHAT IS BAD IN JEHOVAH'S EYES

(As time permits, discuss the following items or those that will be most appropriate.)

What Scriptural evidence is there that Jehovah forbids the following among his clean people? Also, what benefits come to those who obey Jehovah's laws on these matters?

Manslaughter: also suicide, which is self-murder. (1 John 3:15; Prov. 6:17)

How could a degree of guilt result from careless driving habits? Careless maintenance of one's automobile? (Compare Deuteronomy 22:8.) Or participation in violent sports?

Adultery, fornication (porneia): includes all perverted sex practices and lewd acts, among which

are homosexuality, sodomy, lesbianism, bestiality. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Rom. 1:24, 26, 27, 32; Lev. 20:10, 13, 15, 16)

Apostasy: teaching false doctrines; supporting or promoting false religion and its holidays; interfaith activities. (Deut. 13:13, 15; 2 Cor. 6:14, 15, 17, 18; 2 John 7, 9, 10; Rev. 18:4)

Why could working secularly for a false religious organization put one in a position similar to that of one preaching false doctrine? (2 Cor. 6:14-16)

How would you explain that celebrating a false religious holiday is similar to performing any other act of false worship? (Jer. 7:16-19)

What does the Bible say about: (1) causing divisions and promoting sects? (Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10, 11) (2) the practice of spiritism? (Deut. 18:9-13; 1 Cor. 10:21, 22; Gal. 5:20) (3) idolatry? (1 Cor. 6:9, 10; 10:14)

Why could idolatry include the possession and use of images and pictures that are used in false religion?

Drunkenness. (1 Cor. 5:11; 6:9, 10)

Stealing, thievery, fraud. (Lev. 6:2, 4; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Eph. 4:28)

Lying, bearing false witness. (Prov. 6:16, 19; Col. 3:9; Rev. 22:15)

Reviling, slander. (Lev. 19:16; 1 Cor. 6:10)

Obscene speech. (Eph. 5:3-5; Col. 3:8)

Failure to 'abstain from blood.' (Gen. 9:4; Acts 15:20, 28, 29)

Greed—gambling, extortion. (1 Cor. 5:10, 11; 6:10; 1 Tim. 3:8)

Refusal to provide materially for those of your family. (1 Tim. 5:8)

Nonneutral activities. (Isa. 2:4; John 6:15; 17:16)

Fits of anger, violence. (Prov. 22:24, 25; Mal. 2:16; Gal. 5:20)

Misuse of tobacco and other addictive drugs. (2 Cor. 7:1; Mark 15:23; Rev. 21:8; 22:15, *Int.*—druggers)

— CHILD ABUSE
11/89 DIST OVERSEER & CAR.
ASS.
ALWAYS CONTACT THE
SOCIETY FIRST WHEN
DEALING W/ CHILD ABUSE.

CAN YOU HELP THE PERSON?

We want to help people if we can.

Some matters may be handled by the elder who hears of the wrongdoing. (Gal. 6:1)

If you feel that your counsel will suffice to restore the individual, it is advisable also to inform the presiding overseer of the matter. There may be other factors involved; the matter may have come up before or there may have been other wrongdoing concerning which he has knowledge.

There are cases that the body of elders is responsible to investigate and, where necessary, appoint a committee to handle. (See Unit 4 [b], page 68.) These include:

Gross sins that have brought the congregation into public disrepute. (Rom. 2:21-24; 1 Cor. 5:1; 2 Cor. 7:11)

Any serious sin that constitutes a clear threat of contaminating the cleanness of the congregation. (1 Cor. 5:6, 9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Tim. 1:9, 10)

Where an individual is an elder or a ministerial servant and commits a gross wrong, he is morally obligated to inform the body of elders of his being reprehensible.

Such ones should serve with a clean conscience.
(1 Tim. 3:2, 8, 9; Titus 1:6)

Baptized minors.

When a baptized minor becomes involved in wrongdoing that becomes a threat to the cleanness of the congregation, the committee should meet with such an individual just as they would with any other member of the congregation.

It would be best to meet with the youth and his parents.

They have the responsibility to raise him and train him.

Try to restore the individual if this is possible.

If efforts bring no response, then disfellowship.

Married people.

If the wrongdoer is the wife, it would be best to meet with her and her husband. He is her head and his efforts to restore her and direct her can be very helpful.

Try to lead the person to repentance.

If there is no response to efforts to bring about repentance, then wrongdoer should be disfellowshipped.

Unbaptized associates.

Even unbaptized ones who have been regularly associating and who by their serious wrongdoing pose

a threat to the cleanness of the congregation, thus constituting 'leaven,' should be dealt with in a way similar to that for baptized individuals.

If the individual is a minor, it would be best to meet with the youth and his parents, as outlined above.

Your goal in dealing with unbaptized associates, whether youths or adults, is to help them.

If they are unrepentant and thus are found not to be good associates, a brief announcement to the congregation is made that all should avoid close association with them to protect the congregation where there is a clear threat of contamination.

Baptized persons who have not associated for some time.

If you learn of serious wrongdoing on the part of such a person, the matter should be investigated if it poses a threat to the congregation's welfare or causes a public scandal.

If there is no repentance, disfellowshipping action would be taken.

The fact that the individual has isolated himself for some time does not absolve the committee from taking action where needed.

If there is great difficulty in locating the individual and gathering all the facts, and the individual is not now recognized by the congregation or outsiders as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, the elders need not spend a lot of time pursuing the matter.

If a baptized person insists that he wants to be no part of the congregation and he wants his name removed from all our records, we can comply with his request.

If he takes such an adamant position, it would be well to encourage him to put his request in writing and it can be held in the congregation files.

In a case like this the Society should be notified and a brief announcement should be made to the congregation. The person will be viewed as "disassociated" and he would have to apply for reinstatement in the regular way in order to become a member of the congregation again.

Remember, our goal is to help people if we can.

IF THE DECISION IS TO DISFELLOWSHIP

The Branch should be notified of the person's name, the reason for the disfellowshipping, a brief review of the evidence that was presented and the date of the action.

Those who are disfellowshipped should be viewed as such.

There is no reason for publishers to seek them out to greet them.

In cases of occurrences of real trouble, humanitarian help could be extended to such. (Luke 10:29-37)

The disfellowshipping of a mate does not end one's responsibilities in marriage.

When minors are disfellowshipped, parents of disfellowshipped minors are still responsible for raising, training and teaching them, even using God's Word in doing so.

If an individual has changed his course and gives evidence of repentance, it would be proper for an elder

to approach him and tell him what steps he can take to gain reinstatement, if this is his wish. Such repentant ones could be greeted but are not to be sought after by members of the congregation.

If an individual is trying to influence others to take a wrong course or is trying to deceive others, all should avoid him. He is described at 2 John 9-11.

If an individual believes he has not been dealt with fairly, he can appeal the decision to disfellowship.

In this case it would be best for the elders to write the Society and get their recommendation of who might best serve on the appeal committee.

The appeal committee will rehear the whole case. Their decision should be final.

REINSTATEMENT

If the wrongdoer is sincerely repentant, has discontinued his former wrong conduct and is "doing works that befit repentance," he can be reinstated. (Acts 26:20)

Sincere repentance, not the passage of a certain amount of time or the attitude of others, is what determines when reinstatement can be granted. (Compare 1 Corinthians 5:1, 11-13; 2 Corinthians 2:6, 7.) It may take time, however, for repentance to become evident. (2 Cor. 12:21)

It may be best for the elders of the congregation that disfellowshipped to handle the plea for reinstatement, assigning certain of their number as a committee.

When an individual is reinstated, he may still need much spiritual assistance. The elders should see that this is provided.

It will be up to the elders to decide when certain privileges may be restored.

The privilege of sharing with the congregation in the field service is restored when the individual is reinstated.

Other privileges, such as commenting at meetings, handling parts on the program, offering prayer at meetings, and so forth, can be restored when it is determined that the individual has progressed spiritually to the point that he is eligible for them and when it is judged by the elders that the extending of such privileges will not be offensive to the congregation.

The privilege of serving as a ministerial servant or an elder can be recommended only when the individual is again "free from accusation." (1 Tim. 3:10)

He must 'live down' the reproach and build up a convincing record of righteousness, which may take a number of years.

COOPERATION

When a case requires the cooperation of two congregations, do not hesitate to provide the assistance needed.

If more than one congregation is involved, do not make the matter of jurisdiction an issue.

Do you have the facts? Can you handle the case

most effectively? Then it may be appropriate for you to follow through without delay.

If another congregation is involved, seek their assistance, benefit from their observations.

Do not let a matter remain unattended.

CONFIDENTIALITY

*11/89 DIST. OVER. @ CIR. ASS.
MEANS NOT EVEN REVEALING THE FACT OF A JUDICIAL
COMMUNITY*

NOTE: Reports have been received where elders have revealed confidential matters to their wives or others in the congregation. This has caused bad feelings to develop and undermines the confidence in and respect for the body of elders. Publishers expect personal matters will be kept confidential and hesitate to approach elders who have been indiscreet, and failed to do so. Sometimes elders will discuss certain matters on the telephone or in other places where other members of the family can hear the conversation or do so at the Kingdom Hall within earshot of other brothers.

Why is failing to keep confidence Scripturally unwise? (See Proverbs 11:13; 25:9, 10.)

Where there is a lack of good judgment in this matter, what could result? (See James 3:5.)

BE "IMITATORS OF GOD"

Jehovah is a God of justice; he is merciful, kind, loving and patient. (Ps. 37:28; Ex. 34:6, 7)

As you deal with your brothers, imitate Jehovah in displaying these qualities and you will be an honor to him and a blessing to your brothers.

Sharing on the Judicial Committee

“When having a hearing between your brothers, you must judge with righteousness.” (Deut. 1:16) Judging matters that affect people’s lives and relationships is a serious responsibility. Elders cannot properly decide matters on the basis of limited knowledge, but must have a reasonably *complete* picture when hearing a matter. They also need *heavenly wisdom* to make proper application of God’s Word and in order to determine how far their showing *mercy* should extend. At all times they must act with impartiality.—1 Tim. 5:21; see w77, pp. 146-152.

ELDERS ARE TEACHERS AND JUDGES

Jehovah has raised up elders who are in a position to serve as counselors and judges. (Isa. 1:26)

Your responsibility not only involves handling judicial matters; you must also teach and make clear what God requires and encourage the rendering of whole-souled service to God and faithful obedience to his righteous principles.

Cases of serious wrongdoing require special attention by the elders to determine what is needed to preserve the spiritual health of all.

In such cases, elders serving as a judicial committee must weigh matters carefully, knowing that certain factors may distinguish one situation from another. Instead of looking for rigid rules for guidance, you will need to think in terms of principles and judge each case on its own merits.

You should be confident that, with accurate knowledge, with experience and discernment, and with the help of God's spirit, you can judge in righteousness, wisdom and mercy.

JUDICIAL COMMITTEES ADMINISTERING GOD'S LAWS

NOTE: Adjustments in the operation of the judicial committees were announced at the 1977 District Assemblies to become effective as of September 1977.

What will be some of the benefits the congregation will receive from the following judicial committee adjustments?

There will be no permanent judicial committee of three elders as in the past made up of the current service committee of three—the presiding overseer, the field overseer and the Bible study overseer.

A suitable judicial committee is formed to handle judicial cases as they arise.

At such time one elder is designated to serve as the chairman for that case.

Elders present at the Kingdom Hall assume responsibility to select the judicial committee necessary for the case.

These will take into consideration that the problem may require certain elders who are experienced in handling the particular type of case that has arisen.

More than one judicial committee may operate at a given time depending on cases that arise.

The judicial committee need not be limited to three members. Where the gravity of the case involved

warrants having four or even five experienced elders to serve, this may be arranged.

HEARINGS BEFORE THE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE

REMEMBER: There are cases that the body of elders is responsible to investigate and, where necessary, appoint a committee to handle. These include:

Gross sins that have brought the congregation into public disrepute. (Rom. 2:21-24; 1 Cor. 5:1; 2 Cor. 7:11)

Any serious sin that constitutes a clear threat of contaminating the cleanness of the congregation. (1 Cor. 5:6, 9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Tim. 1:9, 10)

Where an individual is an elder or a ministerial servant and commits a gross wrong, he is morally obligated to inform the body of elders of his being reprehensible. (1 Tim. 3:2, 8, 9; Titus 1:6)

In some cases the individual will come voluntarily seeking aid and confessing his wrongdoing.

In other cases an accusation may be brought against some member of the congregation.

The committee should consider whether the accusation gives evidence of having substance or not and if a meeting with the committee is required.

Some accusations involve misunderstandings and can best be handled on a personal basis.

When you invite an individual to meet with the committee, at times a written invitation may be advisable.

Information should be given as to the time and place

of the hearing, the reason for it, and what the person's course of action is supposed to have been.

If he wishes to bring witnesses who can speak in his defense regarding the matter, he may do so.

If the person repeatedly fails to come to the hearing, the committee will go ahead with the hearing, but will not make a decision until evidence and testimony are considered. The committee should not take action against the person unless the evidence clearly proves this necessary.

What kind of evidence is acceptable?

There must be two or three eyewitnesses, not just persons repeating what they have heard; no action can be taken if there is only one witness. (Deut. 19:15; John 8:17)

Confession (admission of wrongdoing) can be accepted as conclusive proof without other corroborating evidence. (1 John 1:9)

Strong circumstantial evidence, such as pregnancy, or evidence (testified to by at least two witnesses) that one stayed all night in the same house with a person of the opposite sex (or in the same house with a known homosexual) under improper circumstances, is acceptable.

The testimony of youths may be considered.

It is up to the elders to determine if it has the ring of truth.

The testimony of unbelievers may also be considered, but it must be carefully weighed.

If there are two or three witnesses to wrongdoing but each of them is a witness to a separate event, this

also can be considered. Such witnesses may be allowable but it is preferable to have two witnesses to the same event.

JUDGING WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS, WISDOM AND MERCY

Elders must exercise godly qualities in their judging.

In giving counsel or rendering decisions it is one thing to express an opinion; it is quite another matter to judge in *righteousness*. (Deut. 1:16, 17)

To isolate main points and to see how a problem developed, or why something was done, you must ask pertinent, discreet questions and seek divine *wisdom* to relate Bible laws to the issues raised or the charges being considered. (Jas. 1:5; 3:17, 18)

You must exercise *mercy* in matters of judgment, not only by showing compassion to soften the judgment but by expressing kind consideration and pity in an effort to heal and restore those who are repentant and by trying to bring them to repentance. (Rom. 2:14; Jude 22, 23)

In cases where it is established that a serious offense was actually committed, the judicial committee can consider such factors as these (Students explain why these are important):

What were the circumstances leading up to the wrongdoing?

Was there evidence of the person's craving wrongful things or 'courting trouble'? (Jas. 4:1)

Has he been admonished before that his course was leading toward danger? (1 Thess. 5:14).

Was it a single offense or was it committed more than once?

Was his confession voluntary or did he have to be accused by others before confessing?

And, above all, does he show true repentance and manifest a heartfelt desire to avoid repetition of the wrong?

Even though the wrongdoer is guilty of a serious offense, elders on the judicial committee realize that their aim is to help, whenever possible, the one who has fallen into a wrong course.

If he 'listens to them,' showing true repentance, it may be that he can be "gained" as a brother and thus spared from being disfellowshipped. (Matt. 18:15-17)

Neither the gravity of the wrong nor bad publicity is what finally determines if the person(s) should be disfellowshipped; rather the determining factor is the individual's sincere repentance or lack of it.

Some manifest repentance right after their sin and take steps immediately to confess; others do so later, even at the meeting with the judicial committee.

It is to the person's favor when he voluntarily confesses, but still the important factor is, Is he repentant?

There is good reason for you to weigh claims of repentance carefully where the individual has shown himself to be guilty of hypocrisy, lying and deliberate efforts to deceive, or where it is apparent that the wrong act was preceded by deliberate scheming, perhaps in a cold, calculating way. *

This is quite different from an individual's 'caving in' due to human weakness under the unexpected pressure of certain tempting circumstances.

How can true repentance be recognized by the judicial committee?

Has the individual contritely prayed to Jehovah and sought his forgiveness and mercy?

Has he admitted his wrongdoing either voluntarily to some of the elders before the hearing or when confronted by his accusers?

What motivates whatever sadness, remorse and regret he shows? Is it worldly sadness or godly sadness? (2 Cor. 7:8-11)

Does he have a deep regret over a damaged relationship with Jehovah, a heartfelt wanting to come back into God's favor, a remorse over the reproach he has brought upon Jehovah's name and people? (2 Cor. 7:11, 12)

Does his attitude include a heart-motivated rejection of the bad course as repugnant, hated? (Rom. 12:9)

Is he displaying "works that befit repentance"? (Acts 26:20) May take time to determine this.

EXERCISING BALANCE AND JUDGMENT IN WEIGHING THE NEED

In any case of serious wrongdoing, whether the repentant one seeks your help or you, instead, go to him, as a judicial committee you will want to be satisfied that there is sincere repentance and that he is earnestly endeavoring to hold to a right course. (w76, pp. 717-735)

If the person's own heart has not reproved him and moved him to abandon the wrong, then the respon-

sible elders should reprove him so as to bring about this needed result.

If a Christian commits some wrong one or more times, but thereafter his conscience moves him to repent and he turns away from such wrongdoing, abandoning it, the wrongdoer himself, in effect, has already reproved himself.

His own conscience does the accusing, God's Word and spirit do the convicting and his heart moves him to repent; he does not require someone else to "lay bare his fault" in order to get him to acknowledge and correct his wrong.

This does not mean that he does not need help to strengthen his resolve and determination not to return to his wrong. (Luke 22:31, 32)

He would do well to speak to an elder about the matter and if the wrong committed is of a nature serious enough to be handled by a selected judicial committee, this may be arranged.

Such a one is like one physically ill; he still needs a physician to help him recover. (Luke 5:31)

Your responsibility would be to give sound Scriptural counsel to impress upon him the seriousness of the situation and get him to appreciate more fully the danger of 'letting down his guard' even momentarily, and his need to 'keep working out his own salvation with fear and trembling.' (Phil. 2:12)

The fact that a person has reproved himself in his own heart and no disfellowshipping has resulted does not necessarily mean that he would continue to carry out all the functions in the congregation that he did up until that time.

The judicial committee may judge it advisable not to use such a one in matters of responsibility for a time, perhaps feeling that this restriction could contribute to the person's becoming 'readjusted.' (Gal. 6:1)

Where circumstances show that a person's own heart has not reprovved him and the wrong is not acknowledged, the elders are obliged to present the wrongdoer with the "convincing evidence" of his wrong course. (John 16:8)

The person who persists in wrongdoing generally excuses himself in his own mind, even convinces himself that God will condone what he is doing.

You should seek to help him to see the wrong in its true colors and why it should be hated by him; your aim is to bring him to repentance and an abandoning of the wrong course, not only in deed but in mind and heart. (Titus 1:9)

If you feel that more time is needed for him to think and pray about what you have said in counsel and reproof as a judicial committee, this may be allowed; you may need to talk with him several times to bring him to restored spiritual health. Endeavor to do so "with all long-suffering and art of teaching." (2 Tim. 4:2)

What, then, of the apostle Paul's instruction to reprove "before all onlookers" those persisting in sin? (1 Tim. 5:20)

Since we cannot be dogmatic as to just how comprehensive the phrase "before all onlookers" is in its application, it would seem that the *need existing* should guide the judicial committee in the way it is applied.

If you determine that the reproof needs to be brought to the attention of the whole congregation by announcement and later on by a Scriptural talk on the matter, then this should be done. Or the reproof may be given before all who are concerned in the matter, when the judicial committee is handling the case, that they "also may have fear." (1 Tim. 5:20)

In many cases, you as members of the judicial committee may determine that a talk at a later meeting by an elder is all that is needed; such a talk could show how it is that people are led into the particular kind of wrongdoing involved, why it is so condemnable and harmful, as well as giving sound counsel on ways to fortify oneself against falling into such a snare.

On the occasion of such a talk, however, there would be no names mentioned.

In the case of one who repents only as a result of being convinced (by reproof) of his sinful course, the removal of responsibility or privileges would likely follow as contributing to a "disciplining in righteousness." (2 Tim. 3:16)

If you decide that restrictions should be applied, such as not to use the person to represent the congregation in prayer or to share in the giving of instructions from the platform, and so forth, then he would be removed also from responsibilities as an elder, a ministerial servant or a pioneer.

In all cases, the elders on the judicial committee must weigh such factors as the seriousness of the wrong committed, the length of time that has passed since

it occurred, the circumstances that led up to it, and the extent to which a measure of willfulness was shown or there was failure to give heed to earlier warning counsel.

After reasonable efforts to "readjust" the wrongdoer have been exhausted, those who have committed serious sins and are unrepentant must be disfellowshipped.

You must show respect for Jehovah's standard of righteousness and holiness; also, you must protect the congregation from willful sinners. The text at 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 demonstrates that there may be flagrant cases where there is no need to delay prompt action to disfellowship.

The same principles will govern the judgment on the part of a judicial committee in cases of reinstatement.

Genuine repentance and the turning away from the wrong course, not the specific act committed nor merely the time elapsed, are the chief determining factors in deciding when a person may be reinstated.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF JUDGMENT IS A WEIGHTY ONE

Judging matters that affect people's lives and relationships is a serious responsibility; it calls for balance and judgment, discernment and understanding.

Elders on a judicial committee must weigh carefully both the interests of the individual and of those of the congregation as a whole.

On the other hand, you must feel keenly your obligation before God to prevent wrongdoing from infiltrating and spreading within the congregation.

At the same time, you must show just as deep a concern that your manner of dealing with your brothers always reflects Jehovah's own wise and merciful ways. (Jude 3, 4, 21-23)

Unit 5 (a)

How the Elders Work Together as a Body

Proverbs 15:22 states, "In the multitude of counselors there is accomplishment." A congregation is blessed to have a "body of older men" who work closely together. But what is the key to their being able to work in unity? What is involved in their recognizing Jesus Christ as head of the Christian congregation, and how will this affect their unity?

When elders meet together, their meetings should be well arranged. (1 Cor. 14:40) They should try to reach decisions on matters discussed. Arrangements should be made for someone to carry out the decisions that are made. What can the presiding overseer do to work toward meaningful elders' meetings? What must each individual elder do to make a positive contribution to these meetings? These are the matters we will be discussing now.

RECOGNIZING THE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST UNITES THE BODY

Although Jehovah God is the "shepherd and overseer of [our] souls," he has appointed Jesus Christ as head of the Christian congregation. (1 Pet. 2:25; Eph. 1:22, 23)

Why does accepting Jesus Christ as head of

the Christian congregation move elders to—

Let the Bible guide decisions? (John 7:16, 17)

Respect information and direction coming from agencies used by the “faithful and discreet slave”? (Matt. 24:45-47)

Avoid trying to enforce *own* individual viewpoints, opinions or rules in the congregation or the body of elders? (Matt. 26:39-42)

Listen carefully to the expression of fellow elders? (Matt. 18:20)

Pray when a discussion among elders seems to falter?

Deal in a kind and loving manner with all in the congregation? (Matt. 11:28-30)

(For additional information, see w72, pp. 755-757.)

Jesus Christ controls all bodies of elders. They are likened to ‘seven stars upon his right hand’ in Revelation 1:20.

Jesus can influence any elder on the body to provide the Bible-based suggestions needed for any given situation. (Acts 15:13-17)

So listen carefully to the Scriptural suggestions of all.

How will our recognizing these facts help us to work together as a body?

WHAT ENABLES ELDERS TO DISPLAY THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION

Paul states, “God makes all his works cooperate together for the good of those who love God.” (Rom. 8:28)

Elders are really cooperating with Jehovah when

they cooperate as a body for the good of the congregation. (Eph. 4:16)

Why do the actions described below indicate that we are trying to work in harmony with Romans 8:28?

Working with the elder who is assigned to care for the duties that you have handled and doing so *as long as he may need your assistance.*

Not finding fault with fellow elders as they are learning new duties.

Requesting assistance and suggestions from elders who have much experience.

Making sure that reports and records that other elders need to refer to are available and up-to-date.

At Romans 12:10, Paul exhorts all of us: "In showing honor to one another take the lead."

If elders "honor" one another, they will not insist that their personal viewpoints be adopted when issues are being discussed. They will cooperate closely with what the body of elders as a whole feels to be in the best interests of the congregation.

If the majority of elders decide that a matter should be handled in a certain way, then the minority would usually give support to such decision.

However, if those in the minority have a Bible reference and comments in print from the "faithful and discreet slave" on the matter, then the majority should appreciate their bringing such corrective information to the fore so a Bible-based decision can be reached.

It should be possible for bodies of elders to be unanimous in most of their decisions. (Acts 15:25)

If Bible principles are involved, all the elders will

want their decision to be in harmony with these. If there is counsel from the "faithful and discreet slave" on the matter, the elders will want to take that counsel to heart.

Other matters could be decided generally on the basis of the sound judgment of the majority of the elders.

None of the elders, not even as a majority, should insist on rights or personal viewpoints, if such do not take into consideration Scriptural principles and the peace, unity and spiritual welfare of all the members of the congregation.

Give examples of situations you are familiar with that were or could have been resolved in the manner described above.

Once a decision has been made by the body of elders, what should be the attitude of each elder toward carrying out the decision made by the body?

Why will 'taking the lead in honoring one another' result in a unified body of elders in spite of problems that come up?

If all elders are sure that their decisions are based on God's Word, there will be much benefit to the congregation. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17)

WORKING TOGETHER AS A BODY OF ELDERS

Working together as a body does not mean that all share in performing each task or making each decision.

Individual members of the human body carry out certain functions without direct participation by other body members. (1 Cor. 12:12-31)

Give examples of decisions that individual elders may make without necessarily consulting with other elders.

How can the other elders show support for these decisions?

Honoring one another, elders will grant the presiding overseer and other elders the initiative to make decisions that will get necessary things done.

On the other hand, there should be good communication and close cooperation among all the elders and in their relationship with the ministerial servants, offering helpful suggestions and listening to thoughtful recommendations.

What advantage is there to doing this?

WHEN ELDERS' MEETINGS MAY WELL BE HELD

Regular meetings, at the beginning of September, December, March and June, are recommended.

Others may be arranged at any time that circumstances make them appropriate.

It is good to keep additional meetings limited to just what is actually needed.

This allows elders time for their families, to declare the good news and to share in shepherding the congregation. (1 Tim. 5:8; Matt. 24:14; 1 Pet. 5:2)

HOW CAN THE CHAIRMAN PREPARE FOR THE ELDERS' MEETINGS?

Romans 12:8 says, "He that presides, let him do it in real earnest."

The chairman would compile an agenda of matters that *need* discussion by the whole body of elders.

To this end it is recommended that he contact the other elders in advance to determine what they feel needs discussion by the body.

Then he can make an agenda of the items that warrant the consideration of the entire body.

In harmony with Proverbs 21:5, why is it beneficial to give a copy of the agenda to each elder in advance of the meeting?

This should be done long enough in advance of the meeting so that the brothers can give the points due thought.

Why might there be an advantage in calling on various elders at the elders' meeting to lead in presenting for discussion certain items that they may have recommended for the agenda?

Letting a brother know in advance will give him the opportunity to prepare a clear presentation together with the facts.

In what way will the body of elders be benefited if the chairman of the elders' meeting 'presides in real earnest'?

How will this affect the length of your elders' meetings?

HOW YOU CAN PREPARE FOR ELDERS' MEETINGS

Once the elders get the agenda from the chairman, they should give prayerful and careful thought to each point itemized.

Listed below are some questions that each elder may want to ponder in connection with major items on the agenda:

How did this situation come about?

What Scriptural principles should guide us in deciding what to do?

Is there more that *I* can do to deal effectively with this issue?

In what way can the entire body of elders improve in handling this matter?

Should this suggestion be put into operation? Why?

WHAT MATTERS MIGHT BE INCLUDED ON THE AGENDA FOR ELDERS' MEETINGS

Spiritual matters should be of principal concern. (Phil. 1:9-11)

Appropriate ideas can be obtained by thinking on the shepherding counsel found in the letters to Timothy and Titus and in such passages as Acts 20:17-35 and 1 Peter 5:1-11.

On pages 65 and 66 of the *Organization* book is a list of matters that can be considered by the body of elders, depending on the need of each congregation.

Time can also be allowed on the agenda for matters of a mechanical, nonspiritual nature.

These should be discussed only when they involve problems that an individual elder, the building committee or maintenance committee cannot care for on their own initiative.

MAKE MEANINGFUL EXPRESSIONS DURING YOUR ELDERS' MEETINGS

The chairman should keep the discussion moving forward by keeping the main points or issues to the fore.

He would do well to conclude each matter before another is discussed to avoid bogging the meeting down or letting it ramble.

Some Scriptural principles that will improve our elders' meetings when applied are:

Speak only when you have something meaningful to add on the point under discussion. (Prov. 10:19)

There should be no "wrath" or "debates" evident in elders' meetings. (1 Tim. 2:8)

Speak up, use "freeness of speech"; much time can be wasted if there are long pauses due to hesitancy to speak. (1 Tim. 3:13)

Applying such principles will result in productive elders' meetings that are shorter. At the end of this lesson see the Chart of Suggestions listing some items that you may wish to include on an agenda for consideration by your elders from time to time.

(For additional information, see w75, pp. 471-474.)

SECRETARY OF THE CONGREGATION

NOTE: A new position of elder service was announced at the 1977 District Assemblies. Begins in September 1977. To be filled by a qualified elder and recommended by the local body of elders during the next visit of the circuit overseer. Such a one will not rotate out of secretary assignment—will serve continuously.

Considering some of the secretary's duties, what advantages will this bring to the congregation?

He will maintain the vital records in an orderly way.

Circulate among elders all letters from Society and traveling overseers and file for reference.

Keep records concerning Kingdom Hall ownership, legal corporation, loans, insurance, deeds and other documents.

Control records on disciplinary cases and reports made up by the judicial committees.

Keep a diary of future business items that elders or congregation must handle, such as utility bills, tax and government items, sending in orders to the Branch, getting reports sent off on time, sending in communications prepared by other brothers.

Keep Publisher Record cards; compile field service reports.

Secretary will personally care for these duties. If necessary an elder or a capable ministerial servant may be assigned to assist.

THE "WATCHTOWER" STUDY CONDUCTOR AND THE THEOCRATIC SCHOOL OVERSEER

NOTE: As announced at the 1977 District Assemblies, these two positions of elder service are not bound by annual rotation—elders to serve continuously. Effective beginning September 1977.

How are these following adjustments likely to affect the congregation?

Those elders with special teaching abilities should be recommended by the body of elders, at the time of next visit by the circuit overseer.

The permanent selection by the body of elders of the *Watchtower* study conductor and Theocratic School overseer will be shown on the S-2 form that is submitted to the Branch, a copy of which is returned for the congregation file.

Other elders may be selected to assist these two designated elders in these teaching positions.

For assigned periods (perhaps a month at a time) these other selected assistants (elders) may be scheduled by the *Watchtower* conductor to conduct the weekly *Watchtower* study of the congregation.

Watchtower conductor makes up the schedule with himself listed likewise for several monthly turns.

Some of these other teaching elders may be designated to conduct one of the school classes for a two-month period.

The Theocratic School overseer makes up the schedule.

CIRCUIT OVERSEER'S VISIT

NOTE: An adjustment in the schedule of the circuit overseer's visit was announced at the 1977 District Assemblies effective as of September 1977.

How will the following adjustments prove to be beneficial?

Tuesday evening at the Kingdom Hall. The Theocratic School for 60 minutes followed by a service meeting of 30 minutes. The circuit overseer will then present a closing service talk.

Thursday (or *Friday*) evening at the Kingdom Hall. One combined congregational book study will be conducted by a designated elder for 45 minutes to cover the assigned portion for that week. This will be followed by a feature of audience participation for 30 minutes entitled "Continue in the Things That You Learned." This meeting is then concluded by a service talk by the circuit overseer.

Sunday at the Kingdom Hall. There will be a public talk by the circuit overseer for 55 minutes. This is followed by a *Watchtower* study of 30 minutes without the reading of paragraphs. Finally the circuit overseer presents his 30 minutes of concluding remarks.

Elders should work in unity, setting a good example of cooperation for all in the congregation. It is a pleasure to see brothers work together in unity. (Ps. 133:1)

CHART OF SUGGESTIONS FOR AGENDAS USED FOR ELDERS' MEETINGS

(Outlined are some of the topics, along with related questions, that could be used on agendas.)

Overall spirit of the congregation

Is love manifest by warmth among the brothers?

Are hospitality and friendliness being shown?

Is there freedom from class distinctions?

Are we helpful in cases of need?

Is there a joyful spirit?

Are the brothers taking the truth seriously as a way of life?

Being well acquainted with the flock

Who needs encouragement?

Who are the new ones and how are they progressing?

Is due consideration being given to the sick, the handicapped, those with unbelieving mates, the youths?

Is there need for more home visitation?

Congregation meetings

Can there be more local and personal application?

What public talks will be worth while for us?

Are presentations from the platform sufficiently warm and encouraging?

Do presentations show good balance and understanding of the brothers' circumstances and difficulties?

Are the brothers mechanical in their answers?

Can the brothers be helped to participate more?

Are there transportation needs?

Are more study groups needed?

Witnessing and teaching work in the field

Are there practical arrangements during the week and on the weekends?

Are elders balancing shepherding work with field service?

Are the elders setting good example in the field service? (Heb. 13:7)

What help is being given to new ones?

Do publishers simply cover territory or are they finding and following through to aid interested ones?

Auxiliary and regular pioneer activity

How can more be encouraged to share?

Can those pioneering assist others now?

How much encouragement are we giving the pioneers?

Are there any problems that the pioneers are experiencing?

How well are the people in the territory being reached?

Are the brothers resourceful, taking advantage of opportunities to witness informally on all occasions?

How thoroughly is the territory being covered?

Are there foreign-language groups needing attention?

Moral cleanness

Are there matters about which a selected judicial committee needs to inform the whole body of elders, for the protection of the congregation?

Of course, confidential matters should be kept confidential.

Are there trends toward worldliness?

Aiding other males to qualify for service responsibilities

Who needs help and how can we give it?

How can ministerial servants be better utilized?

Articles in "The Watchtower" or other publications

(When special need arises, the body of elders can review articles that are appropriate to the need, such as: mercy, reproof, working together, and so forth.)

Matters of less-spiritual nature

(Only when there is a problem that cannot be handled by an elder or by the responsible committee.)

Better care and protection of Kingdom Hall property.

Better attention to certain congregation records.

Caring for certain financial obligations.

Unit 5 (b)

Our Loving Overseer Provides Counsel and Discipline for All

The overseers in the congregation have the responsibility of shepherding the flock of God. This involves giving counsel and administering discipline from Jehovah. At the same time, the overseers themselves must be subject to Jehovah's loving oversight, accepting and applying his counsel and discipline in their own lives. To the overseers as well as to all others in the congregation Jehovah says, "Listen to counsel and accept discipline, in order that you may become wise in your future."—Prov. 19:20.

THE MEANING AND BENEFITS OF DISCIPLINE AND COUNSEL

The Greek word for discipline means, basically, 'instruction,' 'a course of training.' (Acts 7:22; 22:3)

It includes the thought of there being restrictions or corrective measures available to cause the disciple to adhere to the course being taught.

Counsel or advice often includes commendation and corrective suggestions. It is linked with discipline at Proverbs 19:20.

Discipline from Jehovah is a proof of his love for his

sons and, when accepted and applied, it leads them to everlasting life. (Heb. 12:5-9)

God disciplines his sons, even "scourges" them, which indicates severity, allowing them to undergo difficult trials.

Suffering is of value if it corrects a wrong. We can learn in this way. (Ps. 119:71)

Also it provides a refinement as in the case of Jesus' benefiting from suffering as a man. (Heb. 5:8-10)

MEANS BY WHICH COUNSEL IS GIVEN

Jehovah gives us much counsel through his written Word, the Bible.

He instructs his collective people, giving them practical counsel as to worship. This counsel helps them to maintain a good relationship with God. (Heb. 10:25)

The Bible also gives counsel as to personal conduct, helping us individually to have a clean moral standing. (Eph. 4:28)

We all have a need for study and meditation in order to discern the application of principles.

Jehovah uses the "faithful and discreet slave" class to provide us with good counsel. (Matt. 24:45)

Not only does this "slave" class help us to understand the meaning of Scripture texts, but it also gives us valuable counsel indicating how to apply Bible principles, and suggestions as to how to remain spiritually strong.

[EXAMPLES: (1) *Our Kingdom Service* outlines ways of presenting the good news to others. (2) Five

meetings are outlined for us each week, and we are encouraged to attend these. (3) Orderly arrangements are made for the functioning and cooperation of a local body of elders in each congregation, and so forth.]

Counsel from the 'faithful slave' comes to us through Bible-based publications of the Watch Tower Society and through congregation meetings.

Helpful counsel is given on mental attitude toward our field service, spiritual maturity, personal study, working in cooperation with our brothers and many other aspects of our sacred service.

Husbands and fathers have the responsibility to counsel their wives and children, and mothers share in counseling the children. (Eph. 5:22, 23; 6:1, 4)

Older men in the congregation must shoulder the responsibility of giving counsel when needed.

This is an obligation that comes with their appointment as elders: (Titus 1:9)

Self-discipline can be applied in many aspects of life.

Suggest Bible principles that would help you to discipline yourself with regard to the following:

Work habits. (1 Cor. 15:58; Col. 3:23)

Keeping agreements. (Matt. 5:37; Eccl. 5:4-6)

Recreation and entertainment. (1 Tim. 4:8; Eccl. 3:1; 1 Cor. 10:32)

Conduct with those of the opposite sex. (Matt. 5:28; 1 Tim. 5:1, 2; 1 Cor. 7:1)

Associates. (Jas. 4:4, 5; Prov. 4:14, 15)

Manners. (Matt. 7:12; 1 Cor. 10:31; Lev. 19:32; Titus 3:2)

Personal grooming and dress. (1 Tim. 2:9; 1 Pet. 3:3, 4)

Speech. (Prov. 17:27; Eph. 4:29-5:5)

GIVING APPROPRIATE AND EFFECTIVE COUNSEL

Elders may have occasion to give counsel to individuals who are seeking it, or they may have to search out the one needing the counsel.

The effectiveness of the counsel given can often be determined by the results it produces; however, good counsel will not produce results unless it is accepted and applied by the one toward whom it is directed.

The counsel may be in the form of commendation.

[EXAMPLE: If a brother is commended for the fine emphasis he uses when reading scriptures in his talk, he will probably give special attention to doing the same, or even strive to improve in his manner of reading scriptures, in future talks.]

Counsel may give something to work on, or it may offer suggestions or remedies where errors are being made.

Care should be exercised not to get unnecessarily involved in handling matters that are Scripturally the prerogative of someone else.

Parents should take the responsibility over their minor children, but they may seek help from the elders.

Married couples should settle their differences, but they may request the elders to give counsel.

Brothers having personal disputes may request the

elders to help them settle their differences. Elders should listen carefully to both sides and then offer appropriate Scriptural counsel.

Individual elders should not take it upon themselves to handle matters that ought to be judged by an assigned judicial committee of the congregation or be decided by the body of elders.

MANNER OF GIVING COUNSEL

No rules or set pattern for giving counsel can be prescribed, since circumstances and individuals vary.

Counsel may be given either directly or indirectly, but in either case the counsel should be clear and specific enough to be understood by the person or persons needing the counsel.

Direct counsel is specific and leaves no question in the mind of the person as to the nature of the problem or as to what is expected of him to correct the matter.

Indirect counsel leaves much to the discernment of the person being counseled. The facts or circumstances may or may not be specifically stated.

Indirect counsel may be given as group counsel, allowing each one to apply it as it fits.

Questions may be effective in helping an individual to analyze his own situation or needs.

There are certain matters you should always keep in mind when giving counsel.

Remember that the person is one of Jehovah's "sheep."

If he has sinned, your endeavor should be to readjust him so that he will grow spiritually. (Gal. 6:1)

Prayerfully seek Jehovah's direction and give appropriate counsel in a loving manner.

Be sure the counsel is based solidly on God's Word.

Take sufficient time, and endeavor to reach the heart of the person.

Take time to listen. Be sure you have all the facts. Discuss the application of the scriptures that apply and be sure that he understands.

Take time for research, if that is needed, before you give counsel or answer his questions.

If you cannot take the necessary time, it would be well to let another elder handle the matter.

For corrective counsel to be effective and constructive, all pertinent factors must be understood on both sides.

The one being counseled must know exactly what was done that is being called into question, why it was wrong and what to do to correct the situation. He needs to be encouraged to turn around and take a right course. (Heb. 12:12, 13)

ELDERS THEMSELVES NEED DISCIPLINE AND COUNSEL FROM JEHOVAH

Elders should not consider themselves to be above needing counsel. (Rom. 3:23)

*NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
COUNSEL & ADVICE FROM
A CLOSE FRIEND.*

Elders should take time regularly to read and meditate on Jehovah's Word. (Ps. 1:1, 2)

We can learn from our own mistakes and those of others. (1 Tim. 5:20)

We need to pay attention to the counsel of the "faithful and discreet slave" class, or its appointed representatives. (2 Cor. 13:10)

At times elders may have to offer counsel to a fellow elder. (Gal. 2:11-14)

Individually counsel may come to us in a kind or direct remark from a fellow Christian. (Prov. 15:31)

Whatever the source, accept the counsel and benefit from it as long as it is in harmony with God's Word.

PROPER ATTITUDE WHEN BEING COUNSELED

Accept the counsel as deserved, not trying to justify or excuse yourself. (Heb. 12:5-7)

Appreciate the discipline received as from Jehovah. (Prov 12:1-3)

Listen carefully.

Do not be thinking of self or feeling sorry for self so as to miss the good counsel being given.

Jesus admonished his disciples to get the sense of instruction.

Apply the counsel. (Prov. 3:7)

In our discussions here at the Kingdom Ministry School we have been receiving counsel from God's Word and through the "slave" class. A proper attitude toward that counsel will help us to be diligent to apply it.

The benefits are great:

"Listen to counsel and accept discipline, in order that you may become wise in your future." "Take hold on discipline; do not let go. Safeguard it, for it itself is your life." (Prov. 19:20; 4:13)

