

# OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

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For United States of America

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## "Keep Awake"

<sup>1</sup> After describing the momentous events that would mark the last days of this system of things, Jesus urged his disciples to "keep awake." (Mark 13:33) Why must Christians keep awake? Because we are living in the most perilous time in human history. We cannot afford to become spiritually drowsy. That would result in our failing to appreciate the work that Jehovah has given us to do in this time of the end. What work is that?

<sup>2</sup> Jehovah is having his people proclaim throughout the earth the good news about his Kingdom—the only hope for mankind. Our working closely with God's organization identifies us as true Christians, who are mindful of the times and of

*(2)* the need to help others hear the "sayings of everlasting life." (John 6:68) By zealously sharing in this all-important work, we give evidence of being spiritually awake.

<sup>3</sup> **Moved to Preach:** As Witnesses of Jehovah, we should be positive about our ministry. Love for God and neighbor moves us personally to share in the preaching work. (1 Cor. 9:16, 17) Doing so, we will save ourselves as well as those who listen to us. (1 Tim. 4:16) Let it be our determination to share as regularly as possible and as long as necessary in preaching about the best government that mankind could ever have—God's Kingdom!

*What is our message?*

*Have important work.*

<sup>4</sup> The urgency of our ministry is impressed upon us by an important fact—the outbreak of the great tribulation will come while we are still engaged in this work. Our not knowing the day and hour requires that we keep awake and ready all the time, prayerfully relying on Jehovah. (Eph. 6:18) The scope of the preaching activity continues to expand. But one day soon, the greatest witness work in human history will reach a climax.

<sup>5</sup> Faithfully follow the command of Jesus to "keep awake." This is more critical now than ever before. May we respond with a sense of urgency. Today and every day, let us remain spiritually sober, alert, and active in Jehovah's service. Yes, may we "stay awake and keep our senses."—1 Thess. 5:1-6

## A Privilege Available to Younger Ones

<sup>1</sup> Many who are now parents fondly recall a privilege they enjoyed as children growing up in the truth—Magazine Day activity. That work was instituted in all congregations in 1949. One day a week, everyone was to concentrate on distributing *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* on the streets, from house to house, from store to store, and in other ways. Younger publishers especially looked forward to participating in this work because it gave them an opportunity to share in the same activity as the adults in the congregation. Was this true of you when you were a child?

<sup>2</sup> **Involve Your Children:** Very young children who are not ready to initiate a Scriptur-

al discussion at the door can still offer magazines. It requires learning only a simple presentation of a few short sentences. A brief comment, perhaps on the cover illustration, may be sufficient. Many householders readily accept the journals from our youngsters, often commenting favorably about the sincerity and good conduct of these youths. With a little help, this service is something children can do very well, making a valuable contribution in spreading the Kingdom message. Of course, as children grow older, their parents will want to help them continue to make progress in developing their witnessing skills.

<sup>3</sup> Manuel began preaching from door to door when he

was three years old. His parents taught him to memorize a brief presentation. He zealously preaches alongside them, placing many magazines, brochures, and tracts. He also witnesses informally. On one occasion when his parents took him to a park for recreation, he took the initiative to place some tracts with other people who were there. Although he is still very young, Manuel's enthusiasm for the ministry is a source of real encouragement to his parents and to the entire congregation.—Prov. 22:6.

<sup>4</sup> Every Saturday is designated as "Magazine Day" on the 2000 *Calendar of Jehovah's Witnesses*. Parents, we recommend that you take a renewed interest in this work, helping your children to share as regularly as possible in this privilege of service.

## SERVICE MEETING SCHEDULE

**NOTE:** Our Kingdom Ministry will schedule a Service Meeting for each week during the summer months. Congregations may make adjustments as needed to allow for attending the "Doers of God's Word" District Convention. Where appropriate, use 15 minutes on the last Service Meeting before attending the convention to review pointed counsel from this month's insert. Encourage everyone to take a few minutes to look at the printed program before each morning and afternoon session begins and anticipate what might be discussed. This will make it easier to focus attention on the program and take brief but meaningful notes. Two to four weeks following the convention, a 30-minute review of program highlights is to be scheduled on the Service Meeting. At that time, each one will be prepared to volunteer a brief comment when invited to do so by three qualified brothers assigned to handle this part. Such comments may express how what was learned at the convention applies to one's own life and in one's field ministry. One or two selected, brief experiences may be related. Good preparation by all is the key to making this Service Meeting part both interesting and instructive.

### Week Starting May 8

Song 125

**15 min:** Local announcements and selected Announcements from *Our Kingdom Ministry*. An elder will carefully review the above note regarding Service Meeting adjustments.

**15 min:** "Do You Appreciate Sacred Things?" Talk by an elder. Emphasize the importance of attending all three days of the district convention.

**15 min:** "Let All Your Affairs Take Place With Love." Question-and-answer discussion. Relate some of the difficulties that result when individuals fail to abide by directions provided to obtain rooming accommodations.

Song 201 and concluding prayer.

### Week Starting May 15

Song 134

**13 min:** Local announcements. Accounts report.

**16 min:** "Be Attentive to Sacred Pronouncements." Questions and answers. Stress the reasons why all of us should be in our seats when each session begins.

**16 min:** "Maintain Fine Conduct That Glorifies God." An elder discusses article with a family group. They review what they need to do to maintain orderliness, good manners, cleanliness, and exemplary appearance and conduct in public places.

Song 203 and concluding prayer.

### Week Starting May 22

Song 36

**12 min:** Local announcements. Review Question Box.

**20 min:** "Keep Awake." Question-and-answer discussion. Explain why it is urgent that we stay awake spiritually even though we do not know the day and hour.—See the November 1, 1995, *Watchtower*, page 20.

**13 min:** What Are Your Plans for the Summer? A family group discusses what they will do during the summer months. They talk about attending all three days of the district convention and auxiliary pioneering one or more months. There also may be an opportunity to visit a scenic park or engage in some wholesome recreation. They all agree not to neglect their routine of theocratic activity.

Song 83 and concluding prayer.

### Week Starting May 29

Song 135

**12 min:** Local announcements. Remind all to turn in field service reports for May. Demonstrate a brief presentation of the literature offer for June. Show how to offer a Bible study, using lesson 13 in the *Require* brochure.

**15 min:** "Finding Joy in Your Sacred Service." A talk. Discuss reasons why we have cause for joy in our ministry.—See *Insight*, Volume 2, page 120.

**18 min:** Bible Reading That Is Rewarding. Talk and demonstration based on *School Guidebook*, pages 34-5, paragraphs 6-7. A standard Bible reading program, on which Bible highlights are based, is part of the Theocratic Ministry School curriculum. (December 1999 *Our Kingdom Ministry*, page 7) Have a family group demonstrate how a family could have considered a portion of this week's reading for the school. They pick out one or two interesting points and do some additional research in the *Watch Tower Publications Index* or *Insight on the Scriptures*. Show how reading the Bible can become more meaningful, better equipping us to 'handle the word of the truth aright.'—2 Tim. 2:15.

Song 95 and concluding prayer.

### Week Starting June 5

Song 37

**5 min:** Local announcements.

**10 min:** Local needs.

**15 min:** "A Privilege Available to Younger Ones." Talk and audience discussion. Relate experiences found in the December 1, 1996, *Watchtower*, page 13, paragraph 15. Invite young ones to recall how they have enjoyed distributing magazines. Have one or two youths demonstrate a simple door-to-door magazine presentation. Encourage parents to take their children with them in magazine work every week.

**15 min:** "'Tested as to Fitness'—How?" Talk by an elder. Review Scriptural arrangement for having ministerial servants in the congregation. (See *Insight*, Volume 2, page 409.) Show what qualifications they must meet for appointment. (See *Our Ministry* book, pages 55-7.) Point out ways ministerial servants can serve, and encourage more brothers to reach out for this privilege.

Song 82 and concluding prayer.

## Do You Appreciate Sacred Things?

<sup>1</sup> When asked whether we appreciate sacred things, likely we would quickly answer yes! What are some of God's sacred provisions that we appreciate?

<sup>2</sup> How dearly we cherish the personal relationship we are allowed to have with our heavenly Father! He assures us that if we 'draw close to him, he will draw close to us.' (Jas. 4:8) Without the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ, no man could receive everlasting life. (John 3:16) Out of sincere gratefulness, we daily express in prayer our deep appreciation for this precious gift of God.

<sup>3</sup> God's inspired Word, the Holy Bible, is also sacred to us, as is Jehovah's earthly organization. We show due appreciation for these provisions from Jehovah when we live by Bible principles, strengthen the bonds of brotherly love, carefully observe theocratic order, and cooperate with those taking the lead.—1 Pet. 1:22.

<sup>4</sup> Through the faithful and discreet slave, we receive an abundance of spiritual food. That will be true this year at the "Doers of God's Word" District Convention. There we will receive vital instruction and enjoy warm fellowship that we urgently need. How can we show heartfelt appreciation for this sacred provision?

**<sup>5</sup> Do Not Neglect Jehovah's House:** Nehemiah admonished those who had worked hard to rebuild Jerusalem's walls 'not to neglect the house of their God.' (Neh. 10:39) Today, Jehovah's "house" is his arrangement for worship. Our district conventions are part of that arrangement. Not to neglect this arrangement, we must be there in attendance and pay keen attention, showing Jehovah that we highly value his provisions. (Heb. 10:24, 25) What plans should we make now to show that we fully appreciate this sacred event?

**<sup>6</sup> Attend All Three Days:** Every one of us should arrange to be in attendance for all three days of the convention. Are you planning to arrive early each day and to stay through the final prayer on Sunday? If so, rich blessings will be yours. Attending a convention may not always be easy. Adjusting your secular employment may require that you take a firm stand. Transportation may not always be con-

venient. But do not let these factors discourage you from attending the convention.

**<sup>7</sup> Consider This Excellent Example:** On their way to a district convention last year, a group of brothers in an African country where there is civil unrest met up with a military group. The brothers were asked: "Who are you, and where are you going?" They answered: "We are Jehovah's Witnesses, and we are on our way to attend the district convention." One of the soldiers commented: "You Jehovah's Witnesses do not fear anything. Just go, and you will be able to hold your convention without any problem. However, be aware that you will meet many soldiers. Always walk in the middle of the road! If you see many people gathered, continue walking in the middle of the road!" They did so and arrived safely at the convention. These brothers were rewarded because they demonstrated their appreciation for sacred things.

<sup>8</sup> Like our brothers in Africa, we also face challenges. But undoubtedly we can imitate their faith and be resolved to attend all sessions of our district convention. If adjustments are needed, look to Jehovah for guidance, knowing that he will bless our efforts to attend the entire program.

**<sup>9</sup> Reap the Blessings:** We long for the Word of God, knowing that through it we may grow to salvation. (1 Pet. 2:2) Our attending the district convention and listening to the program will help each of us build stronger faith in that Word and thus be better able to withstand Satan's onslaughts. In doing so, we will show Jehovah and all onlookers that we fully appreciate sacred things and "are not the sort that shrink back . . . but the sort that have faith to the preserving alive of the soul."—Heb. 10:39; 12:16; Prov. 27:11.

<sup>10</sup> We can look forward to Jehovah God's opening the floodgates of heaven and pouring out upon us copious showers of spiritual blessings. (Mal. 3:10) Make it your goal to be at the "Doers of God's Word" District Convention from the very opening of the program Friday morning to the closing prayer and "Amen!" Sunday afternoon. You will be glad you did!

## "Let All Your Affairs Take Place With Love"

<sup>1</sup> "Your members are a true delight; conducting themselves with the utmost courtesy and respect." That observation came from a convention and visitors bureau in a United States city that hosted one of our district conventions. It does our hearts good to receive such commendation for how we conduct ourselves in public. This shows that as a whole we are 'letting all our affairs take place with love.' (1 Cor. 16:14) At the same time, there are some matters of concern that if not addressed will detract from the good reputation of God's people.

**2 Problems With Rooming Reservations:** In each convention city, a Rooming Department is established to negotiate with hotels for reasonable rates so that everyone can afford to attend the convention. Our brothers expend considerable time and effort in our behalf. The managers of some hotels have at first hesitated to agree to a lower rate because of their negative experiences with other religious groups. When our Rooming Department has assured them that our delegates will cooperate with the hotel, many establishments have been happy to list rooms for us.

<sup>3</sup> Last year several hotels complained that they had an unusually large number of last-minute cancellations. Why was this? Some delegates had booked rooms at two hotels but failed to send in a deposit to the first one or to notify them that they were canceling their reservation in favor of another hotel. In other cases, some brothers had reserved more than one room at a hotel, thinking that they were doing a favor for others who were traveling with them. But upon arrival they accepted only one room and canceled the rest. The hotels that were involved said that this had never happened before with Watchtower delegates.

<sup>4</sup> This causes serious problems for the hotels and for our convention organization. Hotels reserve a certain number of rooms for our delegates and are led to believe that they have all been filled, only to find at convention time that they have empty rooms. If the problem persists, it may become a point of contention with these hotels when negotiating for future conventions. To avoid this, reservations are to be made only for hotel rooms that will definitely be used. Additionally, one night's deposit must

be made to guarantee each room reserved. Doing so will also hold the room for late arrival. With this in mind, have you already sent your deposit to the hotel where you are booked to stay?

<sup>5</sup> Some of the hotels offering a complimentary breakfast have complained that our brothers are abusing the arrangement by taking large amounts of food items with them even after they have eaten at the hotel. When a hotel provides food in the morning for its guests, it is to be regarded as what it is—a complimentary breakfast for those who are staying there. It is not intended that we take these food items with us to eat later or to share with friends at the convention. If we abuse this provision, it could result in the hotel's canceling this service, wanting higher room rates, or refusing to negotiate with us in the future.

**6 Working What Is Good Toward All:** Good manners and exemplary conduct are motivated by love for Jehovah and for our neighbors. (Matt. 22:37-39; Jas. 3:13) The Bible urges us to be loving and considerate toward all people. (Gal. 6:10) That principle certainly applies when we stay at hotels. An unwillingness to cooperate taints our reputation, endangers our arrangement to get reduced rates, and creates hard feelings among brothers. If a hotel decides no longer to offer good rates, others attending the convention in that city may be seriously affected, especially if they are unable to afford a higher room rate.

<sup>7</sup> When a choice room is reserved in advance and canceled at the last minute, it means that another brother was deprived of having it when he attempted to make a reservation. This may require that he travel farther or accept less desirable accommodations. Is that loving or considerate? How much better to show love and work what is good toward others by having their best interests in mind rather than our own!—Matt. 7:12; John 13:34, 35.

<sup>8</sup> We eagerly anticipate attending the "Doers of God's Word" District Convention. Have you made all your preparations, including hotel reservations and travel arrangements? May our conduct at the hotels and in the convention city always reflect the truth that is in our hearts and our love for our Creator.

## Be Attentive to Sacred Pronouncements

<sup>1</sup> Not everything spoken by man deserves special attention. But when God speaks, there is vital reason to listen. (Deut. 28:1, 2) Thankfully, inspired penmen recorded "the sacred pronouncements of God" for our benefit. (Rom. 3:2) The upcoming district convention will provide precious opportunities to hear these pronouncements as they are read and discussed. How can you be especially attentive?

**<sup>2</sup> Arrive Early Each Morning:** Imagine the excitement of the Israelites when they were told to meet Jehovah at Mount Sinai to hear his Law! (Ex. 19:10, 11, 16-19) If you have a similar attitude about receiving Jehovah's instruction at the district convention, you will make arrangements to arrive early each day. We cannot listen to the entire program if we walk in late and disturb others by our efforts to find seats. Doors will open at the convention site at 8:00 a.m., and the program begins at 9:30 a.m. each day.

<sup>3</sup> Even some who arrive early are not in their seats for the start of the session. Why is this? They wait until the chairman introduces the opening song before they stop conversing with friends and start making their way to their seats. We should take note that several minutes before the opening song of each session, the chairman will be seated on the platform while introductory Kingdom music is played. This is our signal that it is time to be seated! Then, when the opening song is called for, we will be ready to join in singing praises to Jehovah.

**<sup>4</sup> Listen as a United Family:** When sacred pronouncements were read to the congregated Israelites, families, including "little ones," were to listen and learn. (Deut. 31:12) At our conventions, children should not be "let on the loose." (Prov. 29:15) Parents, arrange for your entire family to sit together—teenagers included. Some parents wait until the opening song to take their young ones to the rest room. However, this would hardly teach children the great importance of songs and prayers in our worship. How much better it is to care for restroom needs *before* the start of each session if at all possible!

<sup>5</sup> It will help us to listen if we get plenty of rest each night and avoid heavy meals during

the day. Concentrate on what the speaker is saying. Refuse to allow your mind to wander. Follow along in the Bible when scriptures are read. Take brief notes. As each talk is being given, review in your mind what the speaker has said, and consider how you will apply the material. At the end of the day, discuss the program as a family. What points did each one enjoy? How can your family put this information to good use?

**<sup>6</sup> Show Respect for God's Word:** Conventions give us a fine opportunity to talk to friends and enjoy upbuilding association. By arriving early, we will have time to converse before the program starts. Some, though, engage in conversation during the program, mistakenly thinking that this causes little distraction in a large auditorium. Even when meetings are held in a large setting, it is a time to listen, just as when attending a meeting in the Kingdom Hall. The use of cellular phones, pagers, camcorders, and cameras should not be allowed to cause distractions during the program.

<sup>7</sup> While Moses was receiving the Law from Jehovah, "he ate no bread and he drank no water." (Ex. 34:28) Similarly, it would be inappropriate to eat or drink while convention sessions are in progress. Unless serious health factors are involved, wait until the "appointed time" for this.—Eccl. 3:1.

<sup>8</sup> At some conventions, there continues to be a problem with many brothers and sisters and even young children milling about in the corridors during the sessions. Attendants will be instructed to ask such ones to return to the auditorium. Volunteers who are working in various departments should be seated in the audience as soon as their work has been completed. Unless volunteers are assigned to do essential work during the sessions, they should be in their seats, listening to the program. They should not linger in the departments, visiting with one another while the program is in session.

<sup>9</sup> We would never want to become 'dull in our hearing' when listening to God's Word. (Heb. 5:11) Let us therefore be resolved to show due respect by listening attentively as the sacred pronouncements from Jehovah are discussed at our upcoming district convention.

## Maintain Fine Conduct That Glorifies God

<sup>1</sup> Wherever we are, our conduct, dress, and grooming bear witness about us and the God we worship. This becomes especially noticeable at large gatherings of God's people, where many people observe us. When we are exemplary, Jehovah's name is glorified. (1 Pet. 2:12) However, poor behavior or thoughtless actions on the part of just a few can bring reproach on God's name and on his people. (Eccl. 9:18b) Keeping in mind that by our conduct outsiders judge our organization and the God we worship should make us conscientious about 'doing all things for God's glory.'—1 Cor. 10:31.

<sup>2</sup> **Exemplary Conduct at Hotels:** In most cases, hotel personnel are very impressed with the orderliness, good manners, and cleanliness of Jehovah's Witnesses. One manager, when speaking about Witness families who stayed at his hotel, said: "The children of Jehovah's Witnesses are the best children I've ever seen! They are dressed like ladies and gentlemen; they are polite, courteous, and well-mannered; and they have not caused any problem whatever. You are really to be complimented on your youngsters. We have enjoyed having your children here." Comments like these are readily forthcoming because those dealing with us can see the love and respect that exist among Jehovah's people.

<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, remarks by other hotel personnel indicate that there is still a problem with some who are careless in their conduct or who abuse hotel facilities. This causes problems and creates criticism that should not exist. Some managers complain that children and teenagers are noisy and unruly, being unsupervised by their parents while using the swimming pool or other recreational facilities.

<sup>4</sup> Most hotels have rules that guests are expected to follow. Some brothers have broken these rules in regard to noise levels or cooking in their rooms. Hotel managers tell us that cooking, where not allowed, is a common abuse of their property. Not only have rooms been physically damaged but lingering odors have also made it impossible to rent the rooms for days or weeks afterward. Unless the cooking of food is specifically permitted in the room, it must not be done.

<sup>5</sup> A real effort should be made to cooperate fully with the management. Certainly, we do not want to leave an unfavorable impression of Jehovah's people. As Christians we must conduct ourselves honestly at all times. We should not take linen or other "souvenirs" from hotels, as that is stealing; nor should we be untruthful in reporting how many people we plan to have in a room when making reservations or when checking in.

<sup>6</sup> **Proper Decorum at the Convention:** Regardless of the type of facility used, it is to be viewed as a large Kingdom Hall during the convention. Appropriate dress and grooming should be just as evident as when we attend the meetings of our local congregation. Both during and following convention sessions, brothers and sisters should avoid wearing immodest or faddish outfits, which reflect the spirit of the world and make us hard to recognize as being wholesomely different. Sisters should be careful that the style and length of their skirts and dresses are suitably modest. (1 Tim. 2:9, 10) Whether attending the convention, staying at a hotel, eating in a restaurant, or shopping in a store, we should at all times reflect that we are God's ministers, giving no cause for stumbling.—2 Cor. 6:3.

<sup>7</sup> The baptism will be held on Saturday morning at the convention. The April 1, 1995, *Watchtower*, page 30, describes the attitude we should display on that occasion. It states that we "ought to treat baptism with appropriate seriousness. It is not a time for outbursts, for partying, or for hilarity. But neither is it a somber or grim time." It would be most inappropriate for those getting baptized to wear very skimpy or revealing bathing apparel, whether men or women. Hence, all should reflect both the seriousness and the joy of Christian baptism.

<sup>8</sup> Peter reminds us of 'what sort of persons we ought to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion.' (2 Pet. 3:11) May our words and actions at the "Doers of God's Word" District Convention help honesthearted observers to know and worship our great God, who is worthy of all honor and glory.—1 Cor. 14:24, 25.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Literature offer for **May**: Individual copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* Have *Require* brochure available for those showing interest, and endeavor to start home Bible studies. **June**: *What Does God Require of Us?* Concentrate on starting home Bible studies. **July and August**: Any of the following 32-page brochures may be used: *Does God Really Care About Us?*, *Enjoy Life on Earth Forever!*, *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, *The Divine Name That Will Endure Forever*, *The Government That Will Bring Paradise*, *What Happens to Us When We Die?*, *What Is the Purpose of Life—How Can You Find It?*, and *When Someone You Love Dies*. The brochures *A Book for All People*, *Our*

*Problems—Who Will Help Us Solve Them?*, *Spirits of the Dead—Can They Help You or Harm You? Do They Really Exist?*, and *Will There Ever Be a World Without War?* may be offered where appropriate.

■ The presiding overseer should telephone the Magazine Department at Wallkill if he does not receive the congregation's supply of *Our Kingdom Ministry* by the 25th of the month preceding the issue date.

■ We find it necessary to remind all publishers that the Society's return address should never be used on any personal correspondence. This includes all letters and items of literature that are mailed to give a witness to interested people, to not-at-homes, or to those who live in inaccessible places. When witnessing by mail, use either your personal return

address or the local Kingdom Hall address. Please do not use the Society's address.

■ The presiding overseer or someone designated by him should audit the congregation's accounts on June 1 or as soon as possible thereafter. When this has been done, make an announcement to the congregation after the next accounts report is read.

## FEBRUARY SERVICE REPORT

Number of:	Av. Hrs.	Av. Mags.	Av. R.V.	Av. Bi.St.
Sp'l Pios.	149	122.3	99.4	54.8 4.7
Pios.	93,775	63.2	43.2	20.8 1.7
Aux. Pios.	15,750	49.3	35.6	14.1 1.0
Publs.	831,144	8.9	7.7	3.4 0.3
TOTAL	940,818			Baptized: 1,387

## QUESTION BOX

■ How can attendants assist parents in helping their children maintain proper decorum at meetings?

Children are naturally energetic, unaccustomed to sitting for long periods of time. After a meeting, children have pent-up energy that may incline them to run and chase other children in the Kingdom Hall or at other meeting places, in the parking lot, or on the sidewalk. However, true is the proverb: 'A child let on the loose will cause his parent shame.'—Prov. 29:15.

Sad to say, some of our older brothers and sisters have been seriously injured because children ran into them and knocked them down. This has caused undue suffering as well as unnecessary expense for the parents and the congregation. For their own security and the safety of others, children should not be allowed to run

and play inside or outside the Kingdom Hall.

Parents have the Scriptural responsibility to train their children to treat our places of worship with proper respect. (Eccl. 5:1a) At our Christian meetings, assemblies, and conventions, attendants are assigned to see that "all things take place decently" and that there is "good order." (1 Cor. 14:40; Col. 2:5) They must remain alert before, during, and after the program, both indoors and outdoors. If a child is running or becoming unruly, the attendant can gently stop the child, and he can explain to the child why such actions are not acceptable. The child's parent also should kindly be told of the problem and of the need to supervise the child. The parent should respond appropriately.

It is understood that at times infants and small children may cry or become disruptive during meetings. Attendants, arriving at least

20 minutes before the start of the program, can reserve the last couple of rows in the auditorium for parents who would like to sit there with their young children. The rest of us should cooperate by leaving those seats available to them.

If a child is causing a disruption, the parent should take some action. If the parent does not and the disturbance becomes distracting, an attendant should kindly ask if the parent would like to take the child out of the auditorium. When we invite new ones with young children to the meetings, we should sit with them and offer to help with the children if they cry or disrupt in other ways.

It brings us joy to see children of all ages at the Kingdom Hall and to observe their good conduct within God's household. (1 Tim. 3:15) By their respecting Jehovah's arrangement for worship, they bring him honor and are appreciated by all in the congregation.

## Finding Joy in Your Sacred Service

<sup>1</sup> They returned "with joy." The Bible account expresses how the 70 disciples felt when they reported back to Jesus, following an extended preaching tour. They experienced an inner sense of delight from doing God's will. (Luke 10:17) What can help you to find similar joy in sacred service?

**2 A Positive Attitude:** You have the God-given privilege of acquainting people with Jehovah's grand purpose. By your preaching, you may help free an individual from this world's degrading practices and the shackles of false religion. You can offer people the hope of life in a world free of the discord that surrounds us today. Think of the joy that Jehovah has when you successfully

plant the seeds of truth in a receptive heart. Be positive in praying for God's spirit to produce in you the fruit of joy as you pursue the ministry with all your heart.

**3 Practical Training:** The instruction session that Jesus conducted with the 70 disciples has been likened to a modern-day Service Meeting. He provided training so that they could effectively accomplish their ministry. (Luke 10:1-16) Today the Service Meeting trains you in ways to approach people, how to start conversations, and how to start and conduct home Bible studies. By applying yourself and improving your preaching skills, you will find that any feelings of uneasiness or inadequacy that

you may have had will diminish and be overshadowed by confidence and joy.

**4 Focus on the Future:** Jesus found joy in his sacred service despite the sufferings he endured. Why? Because he kept his eye sharply focused on the blessings and privileges that lay ahead of him. (Heb. 12:2) You can do the same by keeping your mind and heart focused on Jehovah's name and on the blessings to come in God's new world. This will add joy and meaning to your ministry.

**5 Rendering sacred service to Jehovah** is the greatest privilege you can have today. Therefore, may you say: "To do your will, O my God, I have delighted."—Ps. 40:8.

## "Tested as to Fitness"—How?

<sup>1</sup> With the continued growth in Jehovah's organization, there is an ongoing need for qualified brothers to serve as ministerial servants. Most brothers not yet appointed, including teenagers, have a desire to serve in the congregation. When they are assigned extra work, they feel useful and have a sense of accomplishment. Their further advancement depends on their being "tested as to fitness." (1 Tim. 3:10) How is this accomplished?

**2 The Role of the Elders:** As part of measuring a brother by the Scriptural qualifications for ministerial servants found at 1 Timothy 3:8-13, the elders will test a brother's fitness to shoulder responsibility. They may assign him to perform helpful services connected with dispensing magazines

and literature, handling microphones, maintaining the Kingdom Hall, and so forth. The elders will observe how he responds to and cares for his assignments. They will look for the qualities of dependability, punctuality, diligence, modesty, a willing spirit, and an ability to get along well with others. (Phil. 2:20) Is he exemplary in his dress and grooming? Does he have a sense of responsibility? They want to see in "his fine conduct his works with a mildness that belongs to wisdom." (Jas. 3:13) Is he truly reaching out to be of assistance in the congregation? Is he carrying out Jesus' command to "make disciples of people" by zealously sharing in the field ministry?—Matt. 28:19; see the September 1, 1990, *Watchtower*, pages 18-28.

<sup>3</sup> While the Bible sets no minimum age for one to be appointed a ministerial servant, it refers to such brothers as "men who minister." We would hardly expect them to be in their early or middle teens, especially since the possibility of having a wife and children is mentioned. (1 Tim. 3:12, 13) Such men should not be yielding to "the desires incidental to youth" but should be conducting themselves in a serious manner, having a fine standing and a clean conscience before God and men.—2 Tim. 2:22.

<sup>4</sup> While natural ability is useful, one's attitude and spirit are what really count. Does a brother humbly desire to praise God and to be of service to his brothers? If so, Jehovah will bless his efforts to make progress in the congregation.