

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

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We Can Do Greater Works

¹ Outstanding works characterized the ministry of Jesus Christ. He miraculously fed thousands, cured many, and resurrected some from the dead. (Matt. 8:1-17; 14:14-21; John 11:38-44) His activity captured the attention of an entire nation. Yet, the last evening before his death, he told his faithful followers: "He that exercises faith in me, that one also will do the works that I do; and he will do works greater than these." (John 14:12) How can we do "greater" works?

² **By Covering More Territory:** Jesus' sphere of activity was limited to Palestine, whereas his early disciples were told to witness "to the most distant part of

the earth," far beyond where Jesus himself preached. (Acts 1:8) The preaching work that he began is now global, covering 232 lands. (Matt. 24:14) Are you having a full share in working the territory assigned to your congregation?

³ **By Reaching More People:** Jesus left behind relatively few disciples to continue the preaching work. However, as a result of their zealous witnessing at Pentecost 33 C.E., those who embraced the truth and were baptized that day amounted to some three thousand souls. (Acts 2:1-11, 37-41) The ingathering of those "rightly disposed for everlasting life" has continued to our time, when we

are baptizing an average of over 1,000 a day. (Acts 13:48) Are you doing all you can to reach honesthearted people wherever they may be found and to follow up on the interest as soon as possible?

⁴ **By Preaching Far Longer:** Jesus' earthly ministry was limited to three and a half years. Most of us have been preaching longer than that. Regardless of how long we will be allowed to continue this work, we are grateful to help each new disciple get started on the road leading to life. (Matt. 7:14) Are you having plenty to do every month in the work of the Lord?—1 Cor. 15:58.

⁵ We can remain confident that with Jesus backing us, we will do still greater works as his true disciples.—Matt. 28:19, 20.

Get to Know Your Brothers

¹ The Bible describes a true friend as a person who sticks closer than a brother, who is constant in his love and loyalty, and who comes to the aid of his companion during distress. (Prov. 17:17; 18:24) We will have no shortage of such friends in the congregation if we put forth the effort to get to *know* and to *love* one another.—John 13:35.

² Fine opportunities to get acquainted with our brothers are afforded before and after the meetings. Why not arrive early and linger afterward so that you can enjoy warm and lively fellowship? Seek out a variety of brothers to converse with, including older experienced ones and younger or timid ones.

³ **Initiate Conversations:** Go beyond saying just a passing greeting to your brothers. You can initiate a conversation by sharing an experience in the field ministry, a point of interest in a recent magazine, or a comment about the meeting just concluded. You can learn much about your brothers by being a good listener, encouraging them to talk about their experiences and things they are learning. Just asking how one came to know Jehovah may reveal much. Some have been through faith-strengthening experiences in their lives, while others are enduring situations right now that may be hard for many to imagine. Realizing this will help us, as true friends, to be sensitive and responsive to the needs of others.

⁴ **Befriend One Another:** After the death of her child, a sister found it hard to sing Kingdom songs that mention the resurrection. She recalls: "One time, a sister who was sitting across the aisle saw me crying. She came over, put her arm around me, and sang the rest of the song with me. I felt so full of love for the brothers and sisters and so happy that we had got to the meetings, realizing that's where our help is, there at the Kingdom Hall." We should befriend our brothers by offering them solace when it is needed and encouragement at all times.—Heb. 10:24, 25.

⁵ As this old world becomes ever more oppressive, let us resolve to get to *know* our brothers better. This interchange of genuine encouragement will prove to be a blessing to all.—Rom. 1:11, 12.

SERVICE MEETINGS FOR SEPTEMBER

Week Starting September 7

Song 28

10 min: Local announcements. Selected Announcements from *Our Kingdom Ministry*. Review the box "A Suggestion."

15 min: "We Can Do Greater Works." Questions and answers. Encourage all to set reasonable goals for the new service year and to work hard to achieve them.—See *Our Ministry*, pages 116-18.

20 min: "Pioneers Assist Others." An elder explains that in addition to the training provided in the Theocratic Ministry School, arrangements have been made for pioneers to help others personally in the ministry. He raises questions based on the article and invites comments from the audience, especially from pioneers and publishers who have been involved in the program. Consider how to get the best results from it. Pioneers may relate how they have enjoyed and benefited from sharing in assisting others. Publishers who have been helped may tell how they appreciate this loving provision and mention points that helped them achieve greater success and joy in the ministry.

Song 172 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting September 14

Song 160

10 min: Local announcements. Accounts report.

15 min: *What Does God Require of Us?* A talk. We begin studying this brochure next week at the book study. Encourage all to prepare in advance and attend every session in order to get familiar with the brochure and learn how to study it with others. Read the paragraph under "How to Use This Brochure." Use material in the January 15, 1997, *Watchtower*, pages 16-17, to emphasize the importance of teaching with the questions, scriptures, and illustrations in the brochure. Book study conductors should set a good example for those who conduct home Bible studies, by not talking too much and not bringing in extra details.—See *Our Kingdom Ministry*, June 1996, page 3, paragraph 5.

20 min: How Did We Do Last Year?

The secretary and service overseer review the congregation service report and meeting attendance figures for the past year. They point out positive aspects of the report and focus on areas where improvement can be made. Was there 100-percent participation in service during August? Outline what goals the elders will concentrate on in coming months, including helping all to become regular publishers. Share appropriate points from the last report by the circuit overseer.

Song 144 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting September 21

Song 122

10 min: Local announcements. Theocratic News.

15 min: Local needs.

20 min: "Get to Know Your Brothers." Questions and answers. Include comments on October 1, 1988, *Watchtower*, pages 10-11. Encourage all to take the initiative to get better acquainted with one another.

Song 34 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting September 28

Song 17

12 min: Local announcements. Remind publishers to turn in service reports for September. Encourage all to make plans to do more house-to-house work in October to increase magazine distribution. Refer to October 1996 *Our Kingdom Ministry*, page 8, for suggestions on how to prepare presentations. Demonstrate an offer with the current magazines, and show how to mention the donation arrangement to the household. Pick up a supply of magazines for weekend activity.

20 min: "Overseers Taking the Lead—The Service Overseer." A talk by the service overseer. After reviewing his duties, he explains specific ways the congregation can cooperate to increase the scope and effectiveness of the ministry locally.

13 min: What Makes a Good Congregation Publisher? Talk, with some audience participation. It is not necessary to have superior abilities

or talents; instead, it is most desired that all of us have a willing attitude that reflects love, humility, zeal, and appreciation. Invite audience to give reasons why the following are desirable: (1) a cheerful spirit, (2) regular attendance and participation at meetings, (3) willingness to accept and fulfill assignments, (4) cooperation with elders and the arrangements made for the congregation, (5) sincere interest in rendering assistance to others, and (6) regular participation in field service and reporting promptly every month. Song 25 and concluding prayer.

THEOCRATIC NEWS

Ghana: A new peak of 55,539 publishers reported in April—a 9-percent increase over last year's average. Over 200,000 attended the Memorial.

Malawi: Congregations now number more than 600. This is a 50-percent increase over the number of congregations at the time of the ban in October 1967.

CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY

Schedule for congregation studies in the book *The Bible—God's Word or Man's?*

September 7: Pages 170*-180*

September 14: Pages 180*-189

* To or from subheading.

Schedule for congregation studies in the brochure *What Does God Require of Us?*

September 21: Lessons 1-3

September 28: Lessons 4-6

JUNE SERVICE REPORT

Number of:	Av. Hrs.	Av. Mags.	Av. R.V.	Av. Bt.St.
Sp'l Pios.	146	120.3	92.3	52.4 4.3
Pios.	67,617	72.7	46.8	22.7 1.7
Aux. Pios.	24,094	57.5	40.4	13.4 0.9
Pubs.	817,676	9.2	7.6	3.4 0.3
TOTAL	909,533			Baptized: 5,329

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Literature offer for **September:** *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. **October:** Individual copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* Where interest is found on return visits, subscriptions may be offered. **November:** *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. **December:** *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life* with the *New World Translation*.

■ The presiding overseer or someone designated by him should audit the congregation's accounts on September 1 or as soon as possible thereafter. Make announcement to the congregation when this has been done.

■ U.S. Selective Service regulations require that all men register at the post office when reaching 18 years of age. All those required to do so should take care of the matter promptly, viewing it as a Christian's obligation to the superior authorities. Elders will want to have this in mind and give appropriate reminders to young brothers nearing the age of 18. Questions as to the young Christian's responsibilities in this regard may be answered by the elders.

■ The elders are reminded to follow through on instructions given on pages 21-3 of the April 15, 1991, *Watch-*

tower, regarding any disfellowshipped or disassociated ones who may be inclined toward becoming reinstated.

■ Those associated with a congregation should send all new and renewal subscriptions for *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, including their personal subscriptions, through the congregation.

■ The Society does not fill individual publisher's requests for literature. The presiding overseer should arrange for an announcement to be made each month before the congregation monthly request for literature is sent to the Society so that all interested in obtaining personal literature items may advise the brother handling literature. Please keep in mind which publications are special-request items.

■ The Society has a supply of ENGLISH bound volumes of *The Watchtower* for the years 1951 to 1959. Any publishers or new congregations that desire these publications may now request them through the congregation literature servant. (See *Our Kingdom Ministry*, April 1997, Question Box; *The Watchtower*, November 1, 1994, pages 28-31.)

■ New Publications Available:
Is There a Creator Who Cares About You?
—English, French, Greek, Italian, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese

What Happens to Us When We Die?

—English, French, Greek, Italian, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese

A Suggestion

September marks the seventh time that the *Knowledge* book is the featured offer for the month. While we have good reason to focus attention on this effective Bible study aid, please keep in mind that other Society publications provide detailed information on many subjects only briefly discussed in the *Knowledge* book. You can enhance your ministry by becoming familiar with all the publications your congregation has on hand and being alert to recommend them to Bible students and others who show interest in a particular subject.

Overseers Taking the Lead —The Service Overseer

¹ The service overseer is keenly interested in everything related to the progress of the evangelizing work in the congregation's assigned territory. He thus plays a vital role in helping us fulfill our responsibility to preach the good news. As a zealous evangelizer, he takes the lead in organizing all service-related matters. As a capable teacher, he helps individual publishers improve their effectiveness in the ministry.—Eph. 4:11, 12.

² This elder directly oversees the work of the ministerial servants assigned to handle literature, magazines, and territories. He is responsible

for making sure that an ample supply of literature, magazines, and service forms are available each month for our use. Once a year he reviews the territory file for all addresses of homes where we have been advised not to call, and he assigns qualified brothers to visit these homes.

³ The service overseer is responsible for supervising various avenues of preaching, including business, street, and telephone witnessing. He is alert to organize practical arrangements to meet for service throughout the week, including holidays. He shows genuine interest in the Bible study activity. He seeks ways to give spiri-

tual assistance to those who become irregular or inactive in the ministry. He is actively concerned about the work of the pioneers, and he oversees the Pioneers Assist Others program.

⁴ As a member of the Congregation Service Committee, the service overseer proposes any needed adjustments in the Congregation Book Study groups. When he visits your group, be sure to be in attendance and to share with him in field service.

⁵ All in the congregation should willingly cooperate with the direction given by the service overseer. This will help us increase our effectiveness in the disciple-making work and find greater joy in our ministry.

¹ Jesus said: "The harvest, indeed, is great, but the workers are few. Therefore beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest." Since the first-century harvesters were few in number and they had much territory to cover, Jesus could have directed them to reach as many as possible with the good news by sending them out singly. Instead, he "sent them forth by twos." (Luke 10:1, 2) Why by twos?

² Those disciples were new and inexperienced. By working together they could learn from and encourage one another. As Solomon put it, "two are better than one." (Eccl. 4:9, 10) Even after holy spirit was poured out at Pentecost 33 C.E., Paul, Barnabas, and others accompanied fellow believers in the ministry. (Acts 15:35) What a privilege it must have been for some to be trained personally by such capable men!

³ **A Fine Training Program:** Like its first-century counterpart, the modern Christian congregation is a preaching organization. It also provides us with training. As individuals, our heartfelt desire should be to present the good news as effectively as possible. So that more publishers can improve in their effectiveness, assistance is available.

⁴ At the Kingdom Ministry School held recently, the Society announced a program for pioneers to assist others in the field ministry. Is there a need for this? Yes, there is. Over one million publishers have been baptized in the past three years, and many of these need training to become more effective in

the preaching work. Who can be used to fill that need?

⁵ Full-time pioneers can help. Jehovah's organization provides them with much counsel and training. Pioneers receive instruction tailored to their needs in the two-week Pioneer Service School. They also benefit from meetings with the circuit and district overseers, as well as from guidance by the elders. Although not all pioneers are as experienced as Paul and Barnabas were, they have received valuable training, which they are happy to share.

⁶ **Who Will Benefit?** Is participation in this program restricted to new publishers or to newly baptized ones? By no means! There are younger ones and older ones who have known the truth for years but would appreciate help in certain features of the ministry. Some do excellent work in placing literature but have difficulty in making return visits or in starting Bible studies. Others may start Bible studies with ease but observe that their students do not progress. What is holding them back? Experienced pioneers may be requested to offer help in these areas. Certain pioneers are effective in cultivating interest, starting Bible studies, and directing new students to the organization. Their experience will be helpful in this new program.

⁷ Do you find that your schedule does not allow you to support the congregation's regular meetings for field service as much as you would like? A pioneer may be able to work with you at times when other publishers are not available.

⁸ **Good Cooperation Is Needed:** Twice a year, the elders will make arrangements for publishers who are desirous of personal assistance to participate in the Pioneers Assist Others program. If you agree to receive such assistance, get together with the pioneer publisher assigned to help you, work out a practical schedule for service, and stick to it. Keep each appointment. As you work together, observe effective ways of presenting the good news. Analyze why certain approaches are effective. Consider suggestions the pioneer publisher may offer for improving your presentation. As you apply the things learned, your progress in the ministry will become evident, both to you and to others. (See 1 Timothy 4:15.) Work together as often as possible, sharing in all features of the ministry, including informal witnessing but focusing on any particular area in which you need personal assistance.

⁹ The service overseer is interested in the progress that will be made. Periodically, he will check with the Congregation Book Study conductor to see how you are benefiting from the program. The circuit overseer will likewise help you when he visits the congregation.

¹⁰ Jehovah wants his people to be trained and "equipped for every good work." (2 Tim. 3:17) View the Pioneers Assist Others arrangement as a fine provision to help those who desire to improve their ability to preach the word. If it is your privilege to share in it, do so with gratitude, humility, and joy.