

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

DECEMBER 2011

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 12

Song 43 and Prayer

❑ **Congregation Bible Study:**

bt chap. 14 ¶1-5, box on p. 112 (25 min.)

❑ **Theocratic Ministry School:**

Bible reading: Isaiah 6-10 (10 min.)

No. 1: Isaiah 6:1-13 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Why Does God Allow So Much Time to Pass Before Destroying the Wicked?—*rs* p. 241 ¶1-3 (5 min.)

No. 3: Why Love Never Fails—1 Cor. 13:8; 1 John 4:8 (5 min.)

❑ **Service Meeting:**

Song 36

5 min: Announcements.

15 min: The Theocratic Ministry School for 2012. Talk by the school overseer. Discuss points needing emphasis locally from the schedule for 2012. Review the role of the auxiliary counsellor. Encourage all to be diligent in fulfilling their assignments, in participating in Bible highlights, and in applying the suggestions given weekly from the *Ministry School* book.

15 min: “We Are Never Off Duty.” Questions and answers. When considering paragraph 2, briefly interview a publisher who is effective at informal witnessing. Invite him to explain how he prepares in advance, and have him relate a good experience.

Song 135 and Prayer

witness informally while shopping in the marketplace after finishing the field ministry. Like Jesus, they never considered themselves to be off duty.—Mark 6:31-34.

² **Always Ready:** Our name, Jehovah’s Witnesses, does not just describe *what we do*; it describes *who we are*. (Isa. 43:10-12) So we are always ready to make a defence of our hope, even when we are not going from house to house. (1 Pet. 3:15) Do you anticipate situations that may allow you to witness informally and then think about what you might say? Do you keep literature with you to share with those who show interest? (Prov. 21:5) Do you preach only from house to house, or do you also spread the good news to people in other settings if circumstances allow?

³ **Not “Alternative” Witnessing:** In the past we sometimes used the word “alternative” to refer to preaching on the street and in car parks, parks, places of business, and so forth. However, “alternative” could seem to suggest that such efforts are out of the ordinary, unconventional, or optional. The apostle Paul said that he preached “publicly” and from house to house. (Acts 20:20) So “public” witnessing would be a more appropriate term than “alternative” witnessing. It is true that the house-to-house ministry continues to be our primary and most effective way of reaching people with the Kingdom message. However, first-century evangelizers focused on people, not houses. They took advantage of every opportunity to talk about the truth—publicly, informally, and from house to house. May we have the same mindset in order to accomplish our ministry fully.—2 Tim. 4:5.

2. What is involved in living up to our name?

3. Why is “alternative” not the best word to describe preaching on the street and in car parks, parks, places of business, and so forth?

We Are Never Off Duty

¹ Zealous first-century evangelizers declared the good news “without letup” wherever people were found. (Acts 5:42) So we cannot imagine that when going from house to house they would walk past people on the road without preaching to them too. Neither would they forgo an opportunity to

1. How do we know that first-century evangelizers never considered themselves to be off duty?

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 19

Song 125 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

bt chap. 14 ¶¶6-10, box on p. 110 (25 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Isaiah 11-16 (10 min.)

No. 1: Isaiah 13:1-16 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Why We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight—2 Cor. 5:7 (5 min.)

No. 3: *If Someone Says: “Conditions Are No Worse Today; There Have Always Been Wars, Famines, Earthquakes, and Crime”—rs* p. 241 ¶¶5–p. 242 ¶¶2 (5 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 81

10 min: Announcements. Mention the literature offer for January, and have one presentation demonstrated.

15 min: Preach in Troublesome Season. (2 Tim. 4:2) Discussion based on the *2011 Yearbook*, page 121 to page 122, paragraph 4, and page 226. Invite audience to comment on the lessons learned.

10 min: Question Box. Discussion by the service overseer.

Song 92 and Prayer

QUESTION BOX

■ What determines whether we will leave literature with someone?

The primary factor is the person's interest. If he demonstrates genuine interest, we may leave him two magazines, a brochure, a book, or other literature that we are offering. This is true even if we discern that he has little or no money to donate toward the worldwide work. (Job 34:19; Rev. 22:17) On the other hand, we would not leave our precious literature with those who do not appreciate it.—Matt. 7:6.

How might a householder demonstrate interest? A willingness to converse with us is a good sign. Paying attention while we speak, responding to questions, and expressing an opinion indicate involvement in the discussion. Following along as we read from the Bible implies a respect for God's Word. Often, it is helpful to ask if he would read the literature being offered.

**Publishers
should use good
judgment
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the individual's
interest**

Publishers should use good judgment to determine the individual's interest. When doing street witnessing, for example, it would not be appropriate to hand out magazines, brochures, or books indiscriminately to everyone who walks past us. If we are unable to determine a person's interest, it would be better to give him a handbill or tract.

Similarly, the amount of literature a publisher obtains from the literature counter should be based on what the publisher needs in order to carry out his ministry, not on his ability to donate. Donations are not to pay for literature but to support *all* aspects of our worldwide preaching activity. Regardless of our financial means, appreciation will move us to give generously out of our want, not out of our surplus, to support Kingdom interests. (Mark 12:41-44; 2 Cor. 9:7) It will also prompt us to take only the literature that we need, thus not wasting theocratic resources.

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 26

Song 123 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

bt chap. 14 ¶11-20 (25 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Isaiah 17-23 (10 min.)

Theocratic Ministry School Review (20 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 69

5 min: Announcements. Discuss “A Good Way to Enjoy Kingdom Songs.”

15 min: How to Use Reasoning From the Scriptures. Talk based on the *Reasoning* book, pages 7-8. Explain how to use the various features of this publication. Include one or two demonstrations.

15 min: What Do We Learn? Discussion. Have Acts 10:1-35 read. Consider how this account can help us in our ministry.

Song 63 and Prayer

A Good Way to Enjoy Kingdom Songs

God’s servants consider music to be a beautiful gift from Jehovah. (Jas. 1:17) Many congregations enjoy playing Kingdom songs softly before and after their congregation meetings. Playing theocratic music is a soothing way to welcome us to meetings. It helps us to get mentally prepared for worship. Additionally, playing newer tunes from our songbook acquaints us with the melodies and helps us to sing the songs properly. Such music played after the meeting maintains an uplifting atmosphere in which to enjoy encouraging association. Therefore, bodies of elders should make appropriate arrangements to play music from *Sing to Jehovah—Piano Accompaniment* before and after the meeting. They should make sure that the volume level is reasonable and does not drown out conversation.

Theocratic Ministry School Review

The following questions will be considered at the Theocratic Ministry School during the week beginning December 26, 2011.

1. How can the counsel found at Proverbs 30:32 help us to refrain from further provoking someone we may have offended? [w87 5/15 p. 30 par. 11]
2. What kind of “rejoicing” leaves a person feeling unfulfilled? (Eccl. 2:1) [g 4/06 p. 6 pars. 1-2]
3. Although some people conclude that Solomon’s words recorded at Ecclesiastes 3:1-9 support belief in fate, how does what he wrote at Ecclesiastes 9:11 clarify matters, showing clearly that everything in life is not determined by fate? [w09 3/1 p. 4 par. 4]
4. What danger is there in being “righteous overmuch”? (Eccl. 7:16) [w10 10/15 p. 9 pars. 8-9]
5. How does Song of Solomon 2:7 indicate that those considering marriage are wise not to be hasty in choosing a mate? [w06 11/15 p. 19 par. 1; w80 4/15 p. 19 par. 7]
6. What is significant about the Shulamite’s ‘lips dripping with comb honey’ and ‘honey and milk being under her tongue’? (Song of Sol. 4:11) [w06 11/15 p. 19 par. 6]
7. How do the titles “Wonderful Counselor,” “Mighty God,” and “Eternal Father” give us insight into the qualities of Jesus and his rule in the new world? (Isa. 9:6) [w91 4/15 p. 5 par. 7]
8. Who today can be compared to the “apostate nation” of Israel, and who will serve as Jehovah’s “rod” to destroy it? (Isa. 10:5, 6) [ip-1 p. 145 pars. 4-5; p. 153 par. 20]
9. Why is Isaiah’s prediction that Babylon “will never be inhabited” so remarkable, and what confidence does its fulfilment give us today? (Isa. 13:19, 20) [g 11/07 p. 9 pars. 4-5]
10. When did Jesus receive “the key of the house of David,” and how has he been using that key? (Isa. 22:22) [w09 1/15 p. 31 par. 2]

WEEK STARTING JANUARY 2

Song 118 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

bt chap. 15 ¶1-7, box on p. 116 (25 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Isaiah 24-28 (10 min.)

No. 1: Isaiah 27:1-13 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Never Doubt Jehovah's Love for You —Isa. 57:15 (5 min.)

No. 3: What Is the Purpose of Human Life?—*rs* p. 243 ¶3—p. 244 ¶4 (5 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 65

10 min: Announcements. Using the sample presentation on this page, demonstrate how a study may be started on the first Saturday in January.

10 min: Local needs.

15 min: Ideas for Offering the Magazines in January. Discussion. Take one to two minutes to point out a few of the articles that may have appeal in your territory. Next, using the cover series of *The Watchtower*, invite the audience to give suggestions on an interest-arousing question to ask, and then invite suggestions on a scripture to read. Do the same for the cover series of *Awake!* and, if time allows, for one other article from either magazine. Encourage publishers to make a special effort to offer the *Awake!* in business territories. Invite the service overseer to comment on local arrangements for doing this. Demonstrate how each issue may be offered. In the demonstration for the *Awake!* magazine, show how it may be featured when working business territory.

Song 86 and Prayer

Announcements

■ Literature offer for **December:** *The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived*. If there are children in the household, offer *Learn From the Great Teacher* or *My Book of Bible Stories*. **January:** *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* Endeavour to start Bible studies on the initial call. If householders already have the book, or do not accept the offer of a Bible study, publishers may offer an older magazine, or any brochure that addresses the person's interest. **February:** Publishers may offer one of the following, if available: *Is There a Creator Who Cares About You?*, *The Secret of Family Happiness*, or *The Bible—God's Word or Man's?* **March:** *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* Endeavour to start Bible studies on the

initial call. If householders already have the book, and do not accept the offer of a home Bible study, publishers may offer an older magazine, or any brochure that addresses the person's interest.

■ The Memorial for the year 2013 will be on Tuesday, March 26.

Sample Presentations

To Start Bible Studies on the First Saturday in January

"Some people believe that the Bible is a reliable book of prophecy. Others feel that it contains vague predictions that could be interpreted in many different ways. What's your opinion?" Allow for response. Then hand the householder the January 1 *Watchtower*, and consider together the material under the first subheading on page 16 and at least one of the scriptures. Offer the magazines, and arrange to return to discuss the next question.

THE WATCHTOWER® January 1
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

"We can learn many lessons from the great men and women of history. Would you agree? [Allow for response.] This verse refers to one great man, the only one called 'God's friend' in the Bible. [Read James 2:23.] This magazine explains why God considered him his friend and discusses what we can learn from Abraham's example."

Awake!® January

"Bribes, kickbacks, and other forms of dishonesty have become quite common in the business world. Some feel that a certain amount of dishonesty in business is necessary in order to be successful. What do you think? [Allow for response.] Notice this thought-provoking proverb. [Read Proverbs 20:17.] This magazine explains why it is practical to be honest."

Field Service Highlights

The month of August closed the service year on a high note. A total of 135,698 reported field service, just 125 short of the all-time peak we reached in April 2011. During the year, 2,739 symbolized their dedication by water baptism. Overall, the annual report showed a 1 per cent increase over last year's average publishers. Ireland had a 2 per cent increase for the 2011 service year, with 140 baptized. There are now 1,537 congregations in Britain and 115 in Ireland. It is very encouraging to see the way in which Jehovah has blessed the zealous activity of Kingdom proclaimers in spite of the many problems brothers are facing.