

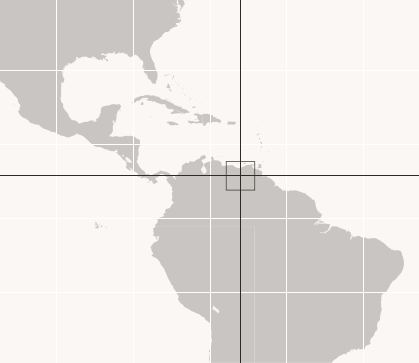
OCTOBER 2018

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
DECEMBER 3-30, 2018



COVER IMAGE:

VENEZUELA

A mother and her children enjoying some refreshment while sharing together in the ministry in Telares de Palo Grande, Caracas

PUBLISHERS

149,355

BIBLE STUDIES

209,866

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE (2017)

478,266

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1918

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

The Watch Tower of January 1, 1918, opened with the words: “What will the year 1918 bring forth?” The Great War still raged in Europe, but events early in the year seemed to suggest good things for the Bible Students and for the world in general.

THE WORLD TALKS PEACE

On January 8, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson, in his speech to the U.S. Congress, outlined 14 ideas that he felt were essential to a “just and stable peace.” He proposed open diplomacy between nations, a reduction of armaments, and the establishment of a “general association of nations” that would benefit “great and small states alike.” His “Fourteen Points” would later be used in forming the League of Nations and in negotiating the Treaty of Versailles, thus ending the Great War.

OPPOSERS DEFEATED

Despite the turmoil of the preceding year,* peace also seemed to be on the horizon for the Bible Students, as evidenced by the events at the annual business meeting of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.

At this meeting, held on January 5, 1918, several prominent men who had been dismissed from Bethel attempted to gain control of the organization. Richard H. Barber, a faithful traveling overseer, opened the meeting with prayer. Af-

ter a report on the preceding year’s work, the annual election of directors was held. Brother Barber nominated Joseph Rutherford and six other brothers. Then an attorney who sided with the opposers nominated seven other men, including the ones who had been dismissed from Bethel. They were defeated. By an overwhelming majority, the shareholders elected Brother Rutherford and six other faithful brothers to be directors.

Many brothers who were present called this meeting “the most blessed convention they had ever attended.” But their joy was short-lived.

REACTION TO *THE FINISHED MYSTERY*

For several months, the Bible Students had been distributing the book *The Finished Mystery*. Honesthearted readers reacted positively to the Bible truths it contained.

E. F. Crist, a traveling overseer in Canada, told of a couple who had read *The Finished Mystery* and accepted the truth in only five weeks! He said: “Both husband and wife are fully consecrated and are showing wonderful progress.”

One man who received the book shared it with his friends immediately. He was “struck” by its message. He recounts: “I was walking down Third Avenue [and] I was struck on the shoulder by what I thought was a brick, but, alas, it was ‘The Finished Mystery.’ I brought it home and read it all. . . . I have since learned that it was a preacher . . . who threw the book from his window in a rage . . . By that one act of his I firmly believe that

* See “One Hundred Years Ago—1917” in the 2017 *Yearbook of Jehovah’s Witnesses*, pp. 172-176.



he converted more people to a living hope than by any other act of his life. . . . Through this preacher's wrath we now praise God."

That preacher's reaction was not unique. Canadian officials banned the book on February 12, 1918, alleging that it contained seditious and antiwar statements. Shortly thereafter, officials in the United States followed suit. Government agents searched the Bethel Home and the offices in New York, Pennsylvania, and California, seeking evidence against the leading members of the organization. On March 14, 1918, the U.S. Department of Justice banned *The Finished Mystery*, claiming that its publication and distribution hindered the war effort, a violation of the Espionage Act.

IMPRISONED!

On May 7, 1918, the Department of Justice obtained arrest warrants for Giovanni DeCecca, George Fisher, Alexander Macmillan, Robert Martin, Frederick Robison, Joseph Rutherford, William Van Amburgh, and Clayton Woodworth. They were accused of "unlawfully, feloniously and wilfully causing insubordination, disloyalty and refusal of duty in the military and naval forces of the United States." Their trial began on June 5, 1918, but there was little doubt that they would be convicted. Why?

The attorney general of the United States called the law they were accused of violating, the Espionage Act, an "effective weapon against propaganda." On May 16, 1918, Congress rejected an amendment to the Act that would have protected those who published "what is true, with good motives, and for justifiable ends." *The Finished Mystery* figured prominently in their debate. Regarding it, the official record of the U.S. Congress states: "One of the most dangerous examples of this sort of propaganda is the book called 'The Finished Mystery' . . . The only effect of it is to lead soldiers to discredit our cause and to inspire . . . resistance to the draft."

On June 20, 1918, a jury found the eight brothers guilty on all charges. The next day, the judge handed down his sentence. He said: "The religious propaganda which these defendants have vigorously advocated and spread . . . is a greater danger than a division of the German Army. . . . The punishment should be severe." Two weeks later, these eight brothers entered the Federal Penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia, with sentences ranging from 10 to 20 years.

THE PREACHING WORK CONTINUES

During this period, the Bible Students faced intense opposition. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) thoroughly investigated their activ-



ity, producing thousands of documents. These records show that our brothers were determined to keep preaching.

In a letter to the FBI, the postmaster of Orlando, Florida, wrote: “[The Bible Students] are making a house to house canvas of the town and are doing most of it [at] night. . . . They, at least, seem to want to keep the pot boiling by their continued stirring.”

A colonel with the War Department wrote to the bureau to report the activity of Frederick W. Franz, who later served on the Governing Body. The colonel wrote: “F. W. Franz . . . has been actively engaged in the sale of some thousand of volumes of the ‘Finished Mystery’.”

Charles Fekel, who also later served on the Governing Body, faced intense persecution. The authorities arrested him for distributing *The Finished Mystery* and monitored his personal correspondence. He was imprisoned in Baltimore, Maryland, for one month, labeled an “Austrian alien enemy.” As he courageously bore witness to his interrogators, he recalled Paul’s words at 1 Corinthians 9:16, which say: “Woe to me if I do not declare the good news!”*

In addition to their zealous preaching, the Bible Students fervently circulated a petition to

* See Charles Fekel’s life story, “Joys Through Perseverance in Good Work,” in the March 1, 1969, issue of *The Watchtower*.

free the brothers imprisoned in Atlanta. Anna K. Gardner recounted: “We were always doing something. When the brothers were in prison, our next job was to get signers. We went from door to door. We got thousands of signatures! We told the people we spoke to that these were true Christian men and that they had been unjustly imprisoned.”

CONVENTIONS

During this difficult time, frequent conventions were held to strengthen the brotherhood spiritually. *The Watch Tower* stated: “Over forty conventions . . . have been held during the year . . . Glowing reports have been received from all these conventions. Formerly all conventions were held during the late summer or the early fall; but now every month in the year has its conventions.”

Honesthearted ones were still responding to the good news. At one convention in Cleveland, Ohio, some 1,200 attended and 42 were baptized, including a young boy who had “an appreciation of God and of consecration which would put to shame many of mature years.”

WHAT NEXT?

As 1918 drew to a close, the Bible Students faced an uncertain future. Some of the property in Brooklyn was sold and headquarters was moved to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. While those who were taking the lead remained in prison, another annual meeting of shareholders was scheduled for January 4, 1919. What would happen?

Our brothers persisted in their work. They were so confident of the outcome that they selected as their yeartext for 1919: “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper.” (Isa. 54:17, *King James Version*) The stage was set for a dramatic reversal of circumstances, which would bolster their faith and strengthen them for the great work that lay ahead.





Speaking the Truth

“Speak the truth with one another.”—ZECH. 8:16.

SONGS: 56, 124

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

How is Satan misleading people today?

Why do people commonly lie?

How can we show that we are truthful with one another?

THE telephone, the electric light bulb, the automobile, and the refrigerator are just some of the inventions that have improved everyday life. Other innovations, though, have made life more dangerous—gunpowder, land mines, cigarettes, and the atomic bomb, to name a few. However, there is a device that predates all of them and that has had the worst possible effect on humankind. What is it? The lie! That is, saying something that one knows is not true in order to deceive someone else. And who devised the first lie? Jesus Christ identified “the Devil” as “the father of the lie.” **(Read John 8:44.)** When did he utter the first lie?

² It happened thousands of years ago in the garden of Eden. The first human couple, Adam and Eve, were enjoying life in the Paradise that their Creator had provided for them. Then, the Devil entered the scene. He knew that God had commanded the couple not to eat from “the tree of the knowledge of good and bad,” lest they die for their disobedience. Even so, through a serpent, Satan told Eve: “You certainly will not die [the first lie ever told]. For God knows that in the very day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and bad.”—Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-5.

1, 2. What device has had the worst possible effect on humankind, and who was responsible for it?

³ Satan's lie was malicious because he knew full well that if Eve believed him and ate the fruit, she would die. Eve and Adam both disobeyed Jehovah's command and eventually died. (Gen. 3:6; 5:5) More than that, through such sin, "death spread to all men." In fact, "death ruled as king . . . , even over those who had not sinned in the same way that Adam transgressed." (Rom. 5:12, 14) Now, instead of being able to enjoy perfect, endless life as God had originally intended, humans are doing well if they live "70 years, or 80 if one is especially strong." Even then, life is often "filled with trouble and sorrow." (Ps. 90:10) How tragic—all resulting from Satan's lie!

⁴ In explaining the Devil's actions, Jesus stated: "He did not stand fast in the truth, because truth is not in him." Truth is still not in Satan, for he continues "misleading the entire inhabited earth" with his lies. (Rev. 12:9) We do not want to be misled by the Devil. Let us, then, consider three questions: How is Satan misleading humans? Why do people commonly lie? And so that we never forfeit our friendship with Jehovah, as did Adam and Eve, how can we show that we are "speaking the truth" at all times?—**Read Psalm 15:1, 2.**

HOW SATAN IS MISLEADING HUMANS

⁵ The apostle Paul knew that we can avoid being "outwitted by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his intentions."

3. Why can it be said that Satan's lie was malicious, and what has resulted from it?

4. (a) What questions do we need to be able to answer? (b) According to Psalm 15:1, 2, who only can be Jehovah's friend?

5. How is Satan misleading mankind today?

(2 Cor. 2:11; ftn.) We know that the whole world—including false religion, corrupt politics, and greedy commercialism—is under the Devil's control. (1 John 5:19) We are not surprised, then, that Satan and his demons would influence men in powerful positions to "speak lies." (1 Tim. 4:1, 2) That certainly is true of people in big business who promote harmful products and fraudulent schemes through false advertising.

⁶ Religious leaders who lie are especially guilty because they endanger the future life prospects of those who believe their lies. If an individual accepts a false teaching and practices something that is actually condemned by God, it can cost that person his eternal life. (Hos. 4:9) Jesus knew that the religious leaders in his day were guilty of such deception. He told them to their face: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you travel over sea and dry land to make one convert, and when he becomes one, you make him a subject for Gehenna [everlasting destruction] twice as much so as yourselves." (Matt. 23:15; ftn.) Jesus condemned those false religious leaders in the strongest terms. They truly were 'from their father the Devil, a murderer.'—John 8:44.

⁷ Whether called pastors, priests, rabbis, swamis, or by some other title, religious leaders abound in the world today. Like their first-century counterparts, they are "suppressing the truth" from God's Word and have "exchanged the truth of God for the lie." (Rom. 1:18, 25) They promote such false teachings as

6, 7. (a) Why are religious leaders who lie especially guilty? (b) What lies have you heard religious leaders tell?

“once saved, always saved,” the immortality of the human soul, reincarnation, and the foolish idea that God would condone homosexual lifestyles and same-sex marriages.

⁸ Politicians have used lies to mislead mankind. One of the biggest lies is yet to be heard when men proclaim that they have achieved “peace and security!” But “then sudden destruction is to be instantly on them.” May we not be taken in by their attempt to minimize how precarious this system of things really is! In truth, we “know very well that Jehovah’s day is coming exactly as a thief in the night.”—1 Thess. 5:1-4.

WHY PEOPLE COMMONLY LIE

⁹ When a new invention or innovation becomes popular, it is eventually mass-produced. The same has happened with the lie. Spreading lies has become commonplace in today’s society, and influential people are not the only ones who deceive others. As stated in the article “Why We Lie” by Y. Bhattacharjee, “lying has come to be recognized as a deeply ingrained human trait.” People often resort to lying either to protect themselves or to promote themselves. They lie to cover up their mistakes and misdeeds or to gain economic and personal advantages. As the article states, there are people who “lie with ease, in ways big and small, to strangers, co-workers, friends, and loved ones.”

¹⁰ What is the result of all this lying? Trust is lost and relationships can be ru-

ined. Imagine how disheartening it is, for example, when a wife cheats on her faithful husband and lies to cover up the immoral affair. Or when an abusive man mistreats his wife and children in private but in public puts on the pretense of being a model family man. However, we should remember that such deceitful people cannot keep anything secret from Jehovah, for “all things are naked and openly exposed” to him.—Heb. 4:13.

¹¹ As an example, the Bible tells of how “Satan emboldened” a Christian couple in the first century to lie to God. Ananias and Sapphira schemed in their hearts to deceive the apostles. They sold some property but brought only part of the proceeds of the sale to the apostles. The couple wanted to make themselves look good in the congregation, appearing to be more generous with their donation than they really were. Yet, Jehovah could see what they had done, and he punished them accordingly.—Acts 5:1-10.

¹² How does Jehovah feel about lying? Satan as well as all unrepentant, malicious liars who imitate him are heading for “the lake of fire.” (Rev. 20:10; 21:8; Ps. 5:6) And why? Because Jehovah puts such liars in the same category as everyone else “whose practices are disgusting in God’s eyes.”—Rev. 22:15, fn.

¹³ We know that Jehovah “is not a mere man who tells lies.” In fact, “it is impossible for God to lie.” (Num. 23:19; Heb. 6:18) “Jehovah hates . . . a lying

8. What lie do we expect politicians to tell one day soon, but how should we react to it?

9, 10. (a) Why do people lie, and in what does that result? (b) What should we remember about Jehovah?

11. What does the bad example of Ananias and Sapphira teach us? (See opening picture.)

12. Where are unrepentant, malicious liars heading, and why?

13. What do we know about Jehovah, and what does that knowledge motivate us to do?

tongue.” (Prov. 6:16, 17) To have his approval, we must live by his standard of truthfulness. That is why we “do not lie to one another.”—Col. 3:9.

WE “SPEAK THE TRUTH”

¹⁴ What is one way that true Christians distinguish themselves from members of false religions? We “speak the truth.” (**Read Zechariah 8:16, 17.**) Paul explained: “We recommend ourselves as God’s ministers, . . . by truthful speech.” (2 Cor. 6:4, 7) Jesus said of man: “Out of the heart’s abundance his mouth speaks.” (Luke 6:45) So when a good man speaks truth in his heart, truthful speech will come out of his mouth. He will tell the truth in ways big and small—to strangers, coworkers, friends, and loved ones. Consider some examples of how we can show that we are thus trying to be honest in all things.

¹⁵ What if you are a young person who wants to fit in with your peers? Make

14. (a) How do we distinguish ourselves from members of false religions? (b) Explain the principle found at Luke 6:45.

15. (a) Why is it never wise to try to live a double life? (b) What can help youths to resist unwholesome peer pressure? (See footnote.)

sure that you never do what some have done by leading a double life. They appear to be chaste when around their family and the congregation but are entirely different when around worldly youths and on social media. They may use bad language, wear immodest clothes, listen to debased music, abuse alcohol or drugs, date secretly, and worse. They are living a lie, playing false to their parents, to fellow worshippers, and to God. (Ps. 26:4, 5) Jehovah knows when we are only ‘honoring him with our lips, but our heart is far removed from him.’ (Mark 7:6) How much better it is to do as the proverb says: “Let your heart not envy sinners, but be in the fear of Jehovah all day long.” —Prov. 23:17.*

¹⁶ Perhaps you wish to serve as a regular pioneer or in some feature of special full-time service, such as at Bethel. During the application process, it is important that you give honest and completely

* See chapter 15, “How Can I Resist Peer Pressure?,” and chapter 16, “A Double Life—Who Has to Know?,” in the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*, Volume 2.

16. What does truthfulness have to do with applying for a special privilege of service?

Do you see a problem in this young sister’s life?
(See paragraphs 15, 16)



truthful answers to all the questions asked regarding your health, choices of entertainment, and morals. (Heb. 13:18) What if you have been involved in some type of unclean or questionable conduct that has not been addressed by the elders? Seek their help so that you will be able to serve with a clean conscience.—Rom. 9:1; Gal. 6:1.

¹⁷ What should you do, for example, if the authorities restrict the Kingdom activity in your land and you are called in for questioning about your brothers? Must you tell them everything you know? What did Jesus do when he was interrogated by the Roman governor? In line with the Scriptural principle that there is “a time to be silent and a time to speak,” Jesus at times said nothing at all! (Eccl. 3:1, 7; Matt. 27:11-14) In such a setting, discretion is the better course, so that we do not put our brothers at risk.—Prov. 10:19; 11:12.

¹⁸ What if a serious sin has been committed by someone in the congregation

17. What should we do when speaking to persecutors about our brothers?

18. What responsibility do we have when speaking to the elders about our brothers?

and you have knowledge of what occurred? The elders, who are responsible for keeping the congregation morally clean, may need to ask you what you know about the matter. What will you do, especially if a close friend or relative is involved? “The one who testifies faithfully will tell the truth.” (Prov. 12:17; 21:28) So you have a responsibility to tell the elders the whole truth, not just half of it, and you must not distort it. They have a right to know the facts so that they can determine the best way to help the wrongdoer restore his or her relationship with Jehovah.—Jas. 5:14, 15.

¹⁹ The psalmist David prayed to Jehovah: “You find pleasure in truth in the inner person.” (Ps. 51:6) David knew that our being truthful comes from the inside, from our heart. In every aspect of life, true Christians “speak the truth with one another.” Another way that we can show that we are different as God’s ministers is to teach his truths to others in our ministry. How to do that is the focus of the next article.

19. What can we look forward to learning in the next article?

How would you decide when to remain silent and when to tell the whole truth?

(See paragraphs 17, 18)





Teaching the Truth

“O Jehovah, . . . the very essence of your word is truth.”—PS. 119:159, 160.

JESUS CHRIST was a carpenter and a minister. (Mark 6:3; Rom. 15:8) He perfectly mastered both trades. As a woodworker, he learned how to handle the tools of the trade, to turn lumber into useful products. As a teacher of the good news, he skillfully used his keen knowledge of the Scriptures to help the common people understand the truths of God’s Word. (Matt. 7:28; Luke 24:32, 45) At 30 years of age, Jesus laid aside his carpenter’s tools because he knew that being a minister was the more important occupation. He said that the work of declaring the good news of the Kingdom of God was one reason why God sent him to the earth. (Matt. 20:28; Luke 3:23; 4:43) Jesus made the ministry the primary focus of his life, and he wanted others to join him in that work.—Matt. 9:35-38.

² We may not be carpenters, but we certainly are ministers of the good news. That occupation is so important that God is involved; we are called “God’s fellow workers.” (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor. 6:4) We acknowledge that “the very essence of [Jehovah’s] word is truth.” (Ps. 119:159, 160) That is why we want to be sure that we are “handling the word of the truth aright”

1, 2. (a) What work did Jesus make the primary focus of his life, and why? (b) What must we do to succeed as “God’s fellow workers”?

SONGS: 29, 53

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

What should be the focus of our ministry?

Why have we been given a Teaching Toolbox?

With which tool do you need to become more familiar?

in our ministry. **(Read 2 Timothy 2:15.)** To that end, we keep honing our skills in using the Bible, the principal tool that we use to teach the truth about Jehovah, Jesus, and the Kingdom. To help us succeed in our ministry, Jehovah's organization has designated other basic tools that we need to be very familiar with. We refer to them as being in our Teaching Toolbox.

³ You may wonder why it is called a Teaching Toolbox and not a Preaching Toolbox. To "preach" means to declare a message; but to "teach" means to sound that message down into a person's mind and heart, so that he will act on what he learns. During the remaining time that we have to witness, our focus must be on starting Bible studies and teaching people the truth. That means earnestly looking for all those who are "rightly disposed for everlasting life" and helping them to become believers.—**Read Acts 13:44-48.**

⁴ How can we know who are "rightly disposed for everlasting life"? As in the first century, the only way to find those people is to give a witness. Thus, we need to do just as Jesus instructed: "Into whatever city or village you enter, search out who in it is deserving." (Matt. 10: 11) We do not expect insincere people, haughty individuals, or those with no spiritual inclination to respond favorably to the good news. We are looking for people who are honest, humble, and hungry for the truth. We can liken this search to what Jesus as a carpenter might have done in looking for just the

right wood for making furniture, doors, yokes, or other things. Once he found suitable material, he could get his toolbox, use his skill, and make the item. We must do likewise as we endeavor to make disciples of honesthearted people.—Matt. 28:19, 20.

⁵ As in any toolbox, each tool has a specific purpose. Take as an example the carpentry tools Jesus would have used.* He needed tools to measure and mark lumber; to cut, drill, and shape the wood; and to level, plumb, and fasten the pieces. Likewise, each tool in our Teaching Toolbox has a specific purpose. So let us look in our toolbox and see how to use these essential tools that we have been given.

TOOLS TO INTRODUCE US

⁶ **Contact Cards.** These are small but effective tools that we can use to introduce ourselves to people and direct them to our website, where they can learn more about us and even request a Bible study. Thus far, over 400,000 online Bible study requests have been received on jw.org, and hundreds more are requested every day! You can likely keep a few contact cards with you to take advantage of opportunities to witness as you go about your daily activities.

⁷ **Invitations.** What we commonly refer to as the congregation meeting invitation serves a dual purpose. It states:

* See the article "The Carpenter" and the box "The Carpenter's Toolbox" in the August 1, 2010, issue of *The Watchtower*.

5. What do we need to know about the tools in our Teaching Toolbox? Illustrate. (See opening pictures.)

6, 7. (a) How have you used the contact cards? (b) What dual purpose does the congregation meeting invitation serve?

3. On what should we focus during the remaining time that we have to witness, and how does Acts 13:48 help us to do that?

4. How can we know who are "rightly disposed for everlasting life," and how can we find them?

“You are invited to study the Bible with Jehovah’s Witnesses.” Then it gives the option of doing that “at our public meetings” “or with a personal instructor.” Thus, this tool not only identifies us but also invites others who are “conscious of their spiritual need” to study the Bible with us. (Matt. 5:3) Of course, people are welcome to attend our meetings whether they accept a Bible study or not. If they do attend, they will see and hear what we have to offer in the way of true Bible education.

⁸ It is important that we continue to invite people to attend our meetings at least once. Why? They will see a sharp contrast between the spiritually rich environment at our meetings and the spiritually devastated condition within Babylon the Great. (Isa. 65:13) Ray and Linda, a married couple in the United States, noted this some years ago. They decided that they needed to start going to church. They believed in God and felt a spiritual need, so they began going to all the churches in their city one by one. There were scores of churches and many denominations. From the start, the couple decided on two conditions that had to apply to any church they might join. First, they would have to learn something during the religious service, and second, the members of the church must look like people who claim to represent God. After several years, they had gone to every church in town, but they were sorely disappointed. They had not learned anything, and the churchgoers were far from dignified in their appearance. After walking out of the last church on their list, Linda

8. How important is it for people to come to at least one of our meetings? Give an example.

went to her job and Ray went home. On his way, he drove by a Kingdom Hall and thought, ‘Why not go in and see what they’re all about?’ Of course, that was the best experience of all! Everyone at the Kingdom Hall was warm and friendly and dressed very appropriately. Ray sat in the front row and loved what he learned! It was just as the apostle Paul said about the person who comes into a Christian meeting for the first time and declares: “God is really among you.” (1 Cor. 14:23-25) Ray attended every Sunday after that; then he came to every midweek meeting. Linda also began attending, and while in their 70’s, they accepted a Bible study and got baptized.

TOOLS TO START CONVERSATIONS

⁹ **Tracts.** We have eight easy-to-use tracts that work very well as tools for starting conversations. Since these tracts began to be released in 2013, some five billion of them have been printed! The beauty of these tools is that when you learn how to use one of them, you are able to use all of them because they follow the same format. How can you use a tract to draw a person into a conversation?

¹⁰ You might choose to use the tract *What Is the Kingdom of God?* Show the person the question on the front as you ask: “Have you ever wondered what the Kingdom of God is? Would you say it is . . . ?” Then ask which of the three answers he would select. Without saying whether his choice is right or wrong, open to “What the Bible Says” on the inside, and share the featured scriptures, Daniel 2:44 and Isaiah 9:6. If possible,

9, 10. (a) Why are the tracts easy-to-use? (b) Explain how to use the tract *What Is the Kingdom of God?*

continue the discussion. Last, point out the follow-up question on the back under the heading “To Think About”: “What will life be like under the rule of God’s Kingdom?” That will provide the basis for your next conversation with the person. When you meet again, you can refer to lesson 7 of the brochure *Good News From God!*, which is one of our tools for starting Bible studies.

TOOLS THAT STIMULATE INTEREST

¹¹ **Magazines.** *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* are the most widely published and translated journals in the world! Because they have broad international exposure, the cover subjects are designed to appeal to people everywhere. We should use them as tools to stimulate a person’s interest in what really matters in life today. So that we can put these magazines in the right hands, however, we need to know the intended audience for each journal.

¹² ***Awake!*** is designed for readers who may have little or no knowledge of the Bible. They may know nothing about Christian teachings, they may be somewhat distrustful of religion, or they may be unaware that the Bible has practical value. A primary objective of *Awake!* is to convince the reader that God exists. (Rom. 1:20; Heb. 11:6) It also aims to help the reader build faith that the Bible “truthfully is . . . the word of God.” (1 Thess. 2:13) The three cover topics for 2018 are: “The Way of Happiness,” “12 Secrets of Successful Families,” and “Help for Those Who Grieve.”

11. What are our magazines designed to do, but what should we know about them?

12. (a) For whom is *Awake!* designed, and what is its objective? (b) What success have you recently had with this tool?

¹³ ***The Watchtower***, public edition, focuses on spiritual matters for those who have a measure of respect for God and his Word. Although they may have some knowledge of the Bible, they do not accurately understand its teachings. (Rom. 10:2; 1 Tim. 2:3, 4) The three cover topics for 2018 answer the questions: “Is the Bible Still Relevant Today?,” “What Does the Future Hold?,” and “Does God Care About You?”

TOOLS THAT MOTIVATE

¹⁴ **Videos.** In Jesus’ day, a carpenter used only hand tools. These days, however, woodworkers also have power tools—saws, drills, sanders, nailers, and more. In addition to printed publications, we now have beautiful videos to show people—four of which are in our toolbox: ***Why Study the Bible?***, ***What Happens at a Bible Study?***, ***What Happens at a Kingdom Hall?***, and ***Jehovah’s Witnesses—Who Are We?*** The videos that are less than two minutes in length work well on the initial call. The longer ones can be used on return visits and with those who have more time. These wonderful tools can motivate people to study the Bible and attend our meetings.

¹⁵ To illustrate, when a sister met a woman who had moved from Micronesia and whose first language is Yapese, our sister showed her *Why Study the Bible?* in her language. When the video began

13. (a) For whom is the public edition of *The Watchtower* designed? (b) What success have you recently had with this tool?

14. (a) What purpose do the four videos in our Teaching Toolbox serve? (b) What success have you had in showing these videos?

15. Illustrate the impact that watching one of our videos in their own language can have on people.

playing, the woman said: “This is my language. I can’t believe it! I can tell from his accent that he is from my island. He speaks my language!” After that, she said that she was going to read and watch everything in her language on jw.org. (Compare Acts 2:8, 11.) Consider another experience. A sister in the United States sent to her nephew overseas a link to the same video in his language. He watched it and e-mailed her: “The part about an evil power controlling the world particularly caught my attention. I signed up for a Bible study.” He lives in a country where our work is restricted!

TOOLS TO TEACH THE TRUTH

16 Brochures. How can you teach the truth to someone who has limited reading ability or who has no literature in his language? We have just the tool for that—the brochure *Listen to God and Live Forever*.^{*} An excellent tool for starting studies is the brochure *Good News From God!* You can show a person the 14 topics that are listed on the back cover and let him tell you which one interests him the most. Then start the study in that lesson. Have you tried this approach on your return visits? *Who Are Doing Jehovah’s Will Today?* is the third brochure in the toolbox. It is designed to direct students to the organization. To learn how to use it on each Bible study, see the March 2017 issue of *Our Christian Life and Ministry—Meeting Workbook*.

^{*} If the person cannot read, you can have him follow along in the brochure *Listen to God*, which contains mostly pictures.

16. Explain the specific purpose of each brochure: (a) *Listen to God and Live Forever*. (b) *Good News From God!* (c) *Who Are Doing Jehovah’s Will Today?*

17 Books. After a study has been started in a brochure, you can at any point switch to the book *What Can the Bible Teach Us?* This tool will broaden the person’s knowledge of basic Bible teachings. After completing that book and if the student is making spiritual progress, continue the study in the book *How to Remain in God’s Love*. This tool will teach the student how to apply Bible principles in everyday life. Remember, even after their baptism, new ones need to continue their study until completing both of these books. This will help them to have a solid foundation in the truth.—**Read Colossians 2:6, 7.**

18 As Jehovah’s Witnesses, we have been entrusted with “the message of truth of the good news” that can lead people to everlasting life. (Col. 1:5; **read 1 Timothy 4:16.**) To that end, we have been given a Teaching Toolbox that is filled with just what we need. (See “Teaching Toolbox.”) May we use these tools as skillfully as possible. Each publisher can decide which literature in the toolbox to introduce to an interested person and when. But our objective is not just to distribute literature; nor should we leave literature with people who show no interest in our message. Our goal is to make disciples of people who are honest, humble, and spiritually hungry—people who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life.”—Acts 13:48; Matt. 28:19, 20.

17. (a) What is the specific purpose of each study book? (b) What is required of all those who advance to baptism, and why?

18. (a) What does 1 Timothy 4:16 encourage us to do as teachers of the truth, and with what result? (b) As we make use of our Teaching Toolbox, what should be our goal?



TEACHING TOOLBOX

CONTACT CARDS AND INVITATIONS



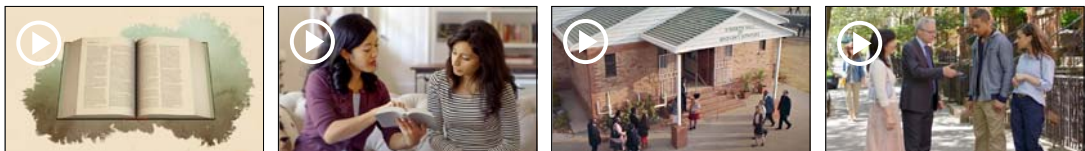
MAGAZINES



TRACTS

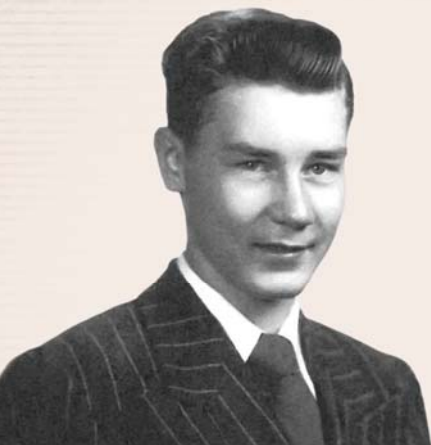


VIDEOS



BROCHURES AND BOOKS





Jehovah Richly Blessed My Decision

AS TOLD BY CHARLES MOLOHAN

Dawn was breaking as we finished sliding tracts under the doors of the last few houses in our assigned territory. The year was 1939, and we had left our beds in the middle of the night to drive over an hour to the small city of Joplin in southwestern Missouri, U.S.A. As soon as we quietly completed our mission, we piled into the car and drove to the designated meeting spot, where we waited for the other car groups to arrive. You may wonder, though, why we went out in the ministry that morning before sunrise and then left the territory so quickly. I will tell you later.

I AM grateful to have been raised by Christian parents, Fred and Edna Molohan, who instilled in me godly devotion. They had been active Bible Students (Jehovah's Witnesses) for 20 years by the time I was born in 1934. Our family lived in Parsons, a small town in southeastern Kansas. We were members of the congregation there that was made up of nearly all anointed Christians. Our family enjoyed a good routine of attending congregation meetings and preaching the truth of God's Word to others. Saturday afternoons were usually set aside for street work, as we called public witnessing in those days. Sometimes it was a bit tiring, but Dad always refreshed us by taking us out for ice cream when we finished.

Our little congregation had a large territory that included several small towns as well as many

farms in nearby counties. When visiting the farmers, we would often trade our literature for homegrown vegetables, fresh eggs (right out of the nest), or even live chickens. Since Dad had contributed for the literature ahead of time, this food helped to supplement our meals.

WITNESSING CAMPAIGNS

My parents obtained a phonograph, which they used in the preaching work. I was too small to operate it, but I did enjoy helping Dad and Mom as they played recordings of Brother Rutherford's lectures on return visits and Bible studies.

Dad converted our 1936 Ford into what we called a sound car, a vehicle with a large speaker attached to the roof. This car was very effective in spreading the Kingdom message. Usually, a



With my father and mother
in front of our sound car



Preparing to broadcast
from the WBBR studio



We would distribute WBBR handbills
in the ministry to promote interest

music recording would be played first to get the people's attention, and then a recorded Bible lecture would be played. When the record finished, we would offer literature to interested people.

In the little town of Cherryvale, Kansas, the police told Dad that they would not allow the sound car in the town park, where many people were relaxing on Sundays, but outside the park it was permitted. So without objecting, Dad moved the car to the adjacent street facing the park so that the people there could still easily hear the message, and then he continued with the program. It was always exciting to be with Dad and my older brother, Jerry, on those occasions.

In the late 1930's, we engaged in special "blitz" campaigns to cover territories quickly where there was much opposition. We would get up before dawn (as we did for Joplin, Missouri) and quietly put tracts or booklets under the doors of people's homes. Afterward, we would meet up outside the city to check if anyone had been caught and arrested by the police.

During those years, another exciting feature of our ministry was what we called an information march. To advertise the Kingdom, we donned placards and marched in line through a city. I remember one such march in our town when our friends wore the placard that read "Religion Is a Snare and a Racket." They walked through town for about a mile (1.6 km) and then returned to our home. Fortunately, they did not face any op-

position on the march, but they did meet many interested observers.

EARLY CONVENTIONS

Our family would often travel from Kansas to Texas to attend conventions. Dad worked for the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad (also known as the M-K-T, or Katy, Railroad), so we could ride the rails using his employee's pass, enabling us to visit relatives and attend conventions together. Mom's older brother, Fred Wismar, and his wife, Eulalie, lived in Temple, Texas. Uncle Fred learned the truth as a youth in the early 1900's, got baptized, and shared what he learned with his siblings, including my mother. He was well-known by the brothers throughout central Texas, where he once served as a zone servant (now known as a circuit overseer). He was a kind, happy man and always a joy to be with. He was zealous for the truth, and he was certainly a good influence on me during my youth.

In 1941 our family traveled by train to St. Louis, Missouri, for a large convention. All the youths were invited to sit together in a special section of the arena to hear Brother Rutherford's talk "Children of the King." At the conclusion of his talk, each one in our group was surprised with a personal gift of the new book *Children*, handed out by Brother Rutherford and his assistants. There were over 15,000 young ones who enjoyed this spiritual blessing.

In April 1943 we enjoyed the small yet noteworthy “Call to Action” Assembly in Coffeyville, Kansas. The new Theocratic Ministry School, which would be held in all congregations, was inaugurated, and a booklet containing 52 lessons to be used in the school was released. Later that year, I gave my first student talk. That assembly was also special for me because, along with a few others, I got baptized in a chilly farm pond nearby.

MY CAREER WISH—BETHEL SERVICE

I finished my formal schooling in 1951 and had to make some decisions about my future. My earnest desire was to take up service at Bethel, where Jerry had served previously, so my application was soon sent to the Brooklyn office. This decision turned out to be very beneficial spiritually. In a short time, my application was approved, and I was invited to begin Bethel service on March 10, 1952.

My hope was to work in the printery in order to have a share in the production of magazines and literature. However, I was assigned to work as a waiter and later in the kitchen, which was an enjoyable learning experience for me. So I never had the privilege of working in the printery. However, the adjusted work schedule for the kitchen crew was of benefit to me because it allowed me some quiet time during the day to do personal study using the extensive Bethel library. This helped me to grow spiritually and strengthened my faith. It also fortified my determination to serve Jehovah at Bethel for as long as I could. Jerry had left Bethel in 1949 and married Patricia, but they lived nearby in Brooklyn. They were always most helpful and encouraging to me during my early years in Bethel service.

Shortly after my arrival at Bethel, there were tryouts arranged to add more brothers to the list of Bethel speakers. Brothers on this list were assigned during the year to visit congregations in a 200-mile (322-km) radius of Brooklyn to give a public talk and to work with the congregation in

field service. I was privileged to be put on this list. Nervously, I began giving my first public talk, then an hour in length. I usually traveled to the congregations by train. I well remember one wintry Sunday afternoon in 1954. I boarded a train bound for New York that should have had me arriving back at Bethel by early evening. However, a storm blew in with freezing high winds and snow. The electric engines on the train shorted out and lost power. Finally, the train made it to the station in New York City at about five o'clock Monday morning. From there, I hopped on a subway for Brooklyn and went straight to work in the kitchen, a bit late and very tired after sitting up all night on the disabled train. But such inconveniences were overshadowed by the pleasures of serving the brothers and meeting so many new friends on these special weekends of service.

During my early years at Bethel, I was invited to share in the radio broadcasts on station WBBR. The studios were then located on the second floor of 124 Columbia Heights. It was my assignment to portray one of the individuals in a Bible study program that was broadcast weekly. Brother A. H. Macmillan, a longtime member of the Bethel family, regularly participated in these radio programs. Affectionately known as Brother Mac, he was an excellent example of endurance in Jehovah's service for us younger members of the Bethel family.

An invitation came in 1958 to work closely with Gilead School. My job was to assist the graduates in obtaining visas and to make travel arrangements for these zealous men and women. Air travel was extremely costly in those years, so only a few of the graduates would travel by air. Most who traveled to Africa and the Far East went by cargo ships. When commercial jet service began, airfares became much lower and soon most of the missionaries were sent to their assignments by air.



With Patricia and Jerry Molohan on our way to the 1969 “Peace on Earth” Convention



Assembling Gilead diplomas before the graduation program

CONVENTION TRAVEL

My work expanded in 1960 with the arranging of charter flights from the United States to Europe for the 1961 international conventions. I joined the charter flight from New York to Hamburg, Germany, for that convention. After the convention, three other Bethel brothers and I rented a car and drove through Germany to Italy, visiting the branch office in Rome. From there, our journey took us to France, over the Pyrenees Mountains, and into Spain, where the witnessing work was under ban. We were able to deliver some literature, disguised as wrapped gifts, to our brothers in Barcelona. It was a thrill to meet them! Driving on to Amsterdam, we caught our return flight to New York.

About a year later, my Bethel assignment included arranging for selected delegates to travel to a special series of international conventions that straddled the globe. This was the “Everlasting Good News” Assembly of 1963. Arrangements were made for 583 delegates to travel around the globe to attend conventions in Europe, Asia, and the South Pacific, finishing the tour in Honolulu, Hawaii, and Pasadena, California. Included in the itinerary were stops in Lebanon and Jordan for special educational tours related to the lands of the Bible. Besides scheduling flights and hotel stays, our Bethel department obtained all the visas needed for stops in several countries.

NEW TRAVEL PARTNER

The year 1963 was a landmark for me for another excellent reason. On June 29, I married Lila Rogers from Missouri, who had become a member of the Bethel family three years earlier. A week after our wedding, Lila and I joined the around-the-world tour and visited Greece, Egypt, and Lebanon. We took a short flight from Beirut to a tiny airport in Jordan. Because the work in Jordan was restricted and we had been told that Jehovah’s Witnesses were not granted visas to enter the country, we wondered what would happen when we arrived there. What a happy surprise when, on our arrival, we saw a crowd standing on top of the airport terminal with a banner that read “Welcome Jehovah’s Witnesses”! And what a thrill it was to see firsthand the lands of the Bible! We visited places where ancient patriarchs lived, where Jesus and the apostles preached, and where Christianity began to spread to the ends of the earth.—Acts 13:47.

For 55 years, Lila has been my loyal companion in all of our service assignments. We were able to visit Spain and Portugal several times when the work was under ban in those lands. We could encourage the friends and bring them literature and other things they needed. We were even able to visit some of our brothers imprisoned in an old military fort in Cádiz, Spain. My heart was filled with joy to be able to build them up with a Scriptural talk.

In the years since 1963, it has been a privilege to assist in arranging international convention tours to Africa, Australia, Central and South America, Europe, the Far East, Hawaii, New Zealand, and Puerto Rico. Lila and I have enjoyed many unforgettable conventions together, including one in Warsaw, Poland, in 1989. Many brothers from Russia were able to attend that large convention—their first! Several brothers and sisters we met had spent years in Soviet prisons because of their faith.

Visiting branch offices around the world to build up and encourage the Bethel families and the missionaries has been a very enjoyable privilege for me. On our last branch visit to South Korea, we were able to meet with 50 of our brothers at a prison in Suwon. Those brothers all showed a positive attitude and looked forward to getting involved in their ministry again. Meeting them was most encouraging to us!—Rom. 1:11, 12.

INCREASE BRINGS JOY

I have observed how Jehovah has blessed his people with increase over the years, from some 100,000 publishers at the time of my baptism in 1943 to more than 8,000,000 now serving Jehovah in 240 lands. This is due in large part to the preaching work spearheaded by Gilead graduates. What a joy it has been to work closely with many of these missionaries over the years and to help them get to their foreign assignments!

I am grateful that I made the decision as a youth to expand my ministry by applying for Bethel service. Jehovah has richly blessed me every step of the way. In addition to the joys of Bethel service, for decades Lila and I enjoyed the privilege of working in the ministry with congregations in Brooklyn, where we made many life-long friends.

My Bethel service continues with the support of Lila each day. Even though I am now over 84 years of age, I can still enjoy meaningful work,

helping in the handling of branch correspondence.

What a joy it is to be a part of Jehovah's marvelous organization and to observe the vast difference between those serving Jehovah and those not serving him. We can more clearly understand the words of Malachi 3:18: "You will again see the distinction between a righteous person and a wicked person, between one serving God and one not serving him." With each passing day, we observe Satan's system of things disintegrating, filled with people who have no hope and very little joy in life. But those who love and serve Jehovah have a happy life—even in these critical times—and a sure hope for the future. What a privilege we have to spread the Kingdom good news! (Matt. 24:14) We long for the day, soon to come, when God's Kingdom will bring this old world down and usher in the new world with all its promised blessings, including radiant health and endless life. Then, faithful servants of Jehovah here on earth will enjoy life forever.



With Lila today



Put Trust in Our Active Leader The Christ

“Your Leader is one, the Christ.”—MATT. 23:10.

SONGS: 16, 14

DO YOU RECALL?

What trustworthy leadership was given to God’s people in Joshua’s day?

What do we learn from the way Christ led the first-century congregation?

What reasons do we have for trusting in Christ’s leadership today?

JEHOVAH’S words were still ringing in Joshua’s ears: “Moses my servant is dead. Now get up, cross the Jordan, you and all this people, and go into the land that I am giving to them.” (Josh. 1:1, 2) What a sudden change for Joshua, who had been Moses’ attendant for almost 40 years!

² Because Moses had been Israel’s leader for so long, Joshua may have wondered how God’s people would respond to his leadership. (Deut. 34:8, 10-12) One Bible reference work, referring to Joshua 1:1, 2, notes: “In both ancient and modern times a transition of leadership is one of the most precarious times in the security of a state.”

³ Joshua must have had legitimate fears, but within a few days, he took decisive action. (Josh. 1:9-11) His trust in God was not misplaced. As the Bible record shows, Jehovah actually guided Joshua and His people, Israel, by means of an

1, 2. What challenges did Joshua face after the death of Moses?

3, 4. How do we know that Joshua’s trust in God was not misplaced, and what question might we ask ourselves?

angelic representative. It is reasonable to think that this angel was the Word, God's firstborn Son.—Ex. 23:20-23; John 1:1.

⁴ With Jehovah's help, Israel successfully navigated the transition from Moses' leadership to that of Joshua. We too are living in times of historic change, and we may wonder, 'As God's organization is rapidly moving forward, do we have good reasons to trust in Jesus as our appointed Leader?' (**Read Matthew 23:10.**) Well, consider how Jehovah provided trustworthy leadership in the past during times of change.

LEADING GOD'S PEOPLE INTO CANAAN

⁵ Soon after Israel crossed the Jordan, Joshua had an unexpected encounter. As he was nearing Jericho, he met a man carrying a drawn sword. Not knowing who the stranger was, Joshua asked: "Are you on our side or on the side of our adversaries?" To Joshua's surprise, the warrior revealed his identity. He was none other than the "chief of Jehovah's army," who was ready to defend God's people. (**Read Joshua 5:13-15 and footnote.**) Although the account in other places refers to Jehovah as speaking directly to Joshua, no doubt God was speaking through his angelic representative, as he often did in the past.—Ex. 3:2-4; Josh. 4:1, 15; 5:2, 9; Acts 7:38; Gal. 3:19.

⁶ Joshua received clear instructions from the angelic Leader on how to take

5. What encounter did Joshua have as he was nearing Jericho? (See opening picture.)

6-8. (a) Why might some of Jehovah's instructions have appeared unusual from a human standpoint? (b) How did the instructions prove to be both wise and timely? (See also footnote.)

the city of Jericho. At first, some of the instructions may not have appeared to be a good strategy. For instance, Jehovah commanded that all the men be circumcised, which would leave them indisposed for several days. Was it really the right time to circumcise those able-bodied men?—Gen. 34:24, 25; Josh. 5:2, 8.

⁷ Likely, those defenseless Israelite soldiers wondered how they would protect their family if enemy warriors raided their camp. But suddenly, the news broke that Jericho was "tightly shut up because of the Israelites." (Josh. 6:1) Would their trust in God's direction not have been strengthened by such an unexpected turn of events?

⁸ In addition, the Israelites were commanded not to attack Jericho but to march around the city once a day for six days and seven times on the seventh day. Some soldiers may have thought, 'What a waste of time and energy!' But Israel's invisible Leader knew exactly what he was doing. Not only did his strategy strengthen the faith of the Israelites but it also spared them direct confrontation with Jericho's mighty warriors.—Josh. 6:2-5; Heb. 11:30.*

⁹ What can we learn from this account? We may not at times fully comprehend the reasons for new initiatives

* Archaeologists found great reserves of grain in Jericho's rubble, which indicates that the city had not undergone a long siege; nor were its food supplies exhausted. Since the Israelites were not allowed to plunder Jericho, the time was right for them to invade the land, for it was harvest season and abundant food was available in the fields.—Josh. 5:10-12.

9. Why should we follow the instructions we receive from God's organization? Give an example.

put forth by the organization. For example, we may at first have questioned the use of electronic devices for personal study, in the ministry, and at the meetings. Now we likely realize the benefits of using them if possible. When we see the positive results of such advancements despite any doubts we might have had, we grow in faith and unity.

CHRIST'S LEADERSHIP IN THE FIRST CENTURY

¹⁰ About 13 years after Cornelius' conversion, some Jewish believers were still promoting circumcision. (Acts 15:1, 2) When dissension broke out in Antioch, it was arranged for Paul to take the matter to the governing body in Jerusalem. But who was behind that direction? Paul stated: "I went up as a result of a revelation." Obviously, Christ directed matters so that the governing body would settle the dispute.—Gal. 2:1-3.

10. Who was behind the important meeting of the governing body held in Jerusalem?

¹¹ Under Christ's direction, the governing body made it clear that non-Jewish Christians did not need to be circumcised. (Acts 15:19, 20) But years after this decision, many Jewish believers continued to circumcise their children. When the elders in Jerusalem heard that a rumor was circulating about Paul, that he was not observing the Mosaic Law, they gave him some unexpected instructions.* (Acts 21:20-26) They told him to take four men to the temple so that people would conclude that Paul was "keeping the Law." Paul could have questioned the wisdom of what they told him to do, objecting that the real problem lay with Jewish Christians who lacked clear understanding of the circumcision issue. However, showing

* See the box "Paul Humbly Meets a Test" in *The Watchtower*, March 15, 2003, p. 24.

11. (a) What situation regarding circumcision persisted among Jewish believers? (b) How was Paul's willingness to support the elders in Jerusalem tested? (See also footnote.)

Christ's active leadership was evident in the first century
(See paragraphs 10, 11)



his support for the elders' desire to promote unity among believers, Paul humbly complied with the orders that he was given. We may wonder, though, 'Why did Jesus allow this issue to remain unsettled for such a long time when his death had abolished the Mosaic Law?'—Col. 2:13, 14.

¹² For some, it takes time to adjust to a clarification in understanding. Jewish Christians needed sufficient time to adjust their viewpoint. (John 16:12) Some found it hard to accept that circumcision was no longer a sign of a special relationship with God. (Gen. 17:9-12) Others, out of fear of persecution, were reluctant to stand out in Jewish communities. (Gal. 6:12) In time, though, Christ provided further guidance through inspired letters written by Paul.—Rom. 2:28, 29; Gal. 3:23-25.

CHRIST IS STILL LEADING HIS CONGREGATION

¹³ When we do not fully understand the reasons for some organizational changes, we do well to reflect on how Christ exercised his leadership in the past. Whether in Joshua's day or in the first century, Christ has always provided wise direction to protect God's people as a whole, to strengthen their faith, and to maintain unity among God's servants.—Heb. 13:8.

¹⁴ Jesus' loving concern for our spiritual welfare is clearly reflected in the

12. What might explain why Christ allowed time to pass before resolving the issue of circumcision?

13. What can help us to appreciate Christ's leadership today?

14-16. How is Christ's concern for our spiritual welfare clearly reflected in the direction given by "the faithful and discreet slave"?

timely direction given by "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matt. 24:45) Marc, a father of four, says: "Satan is trying to weaken congregations by attacking families. Now with the encouragement to conduct family worship each week, the message is clear for family heads—safeguard your family!"

¹⁵ When we discern Christ's direction, we sense his keen interest in our spiritual advancement. Patrick, who serves as an elder, notes: "At first, some found it discouraging to meet in small groups for field service on weekends. But one of Jesus' main qualities—his interest in the lowly ones—is clearly seen in this arrangement. Modest or less active brothers and sisters have come to feel more appreciated and useful and, as a result, have grown spiritually."

¹⁶ In addition to caring for our spiritual needs, Christ helps us to keep our focus on the most important work being done on earth today. **(Read Mark 13:10.)** André, a newly appointed elder, has always been attentive to changes in direction within God's organization. He says: "The reductions in branch office personnel remind us of the urgency of the times and the need to focus our energy on the preaching activity."

LOYALLY UPHOLDING CHRIST'S DIRECTION

¹⁷ As shown by his active direction, our enthroned King, Jesus Christ, is definitely looking to the future. Therefore, let us rejoice over the benefits we derive from adjusting to recent changes. You might find it encouraging during your

17, 18. Why is it profitable to reflect on the benefits we have reaped from adjusting to recent changes?

family worship to discuss how you have benefited from changes in the weekly meetings or in the ministry.

¹⁸ If we perceive the spirit behind the instructions we receive from Jehovah's organization and their beneficial effect on us, we will likely follow that guidance with joy. We certainly appreciate that reducing the amount of literature being printed saves money; using new technologies allows us to further the Kingdom work throughout the earth. Having this in mind, we may be able to use electronic publications and media more extensively if possible. In this way, we will reflect Christ's concern to use the organization's resources wisely.

¹⁹ When we earnestly uphold Christ's direction, we strengthen the faith of others and contribute to unity. Reflecting on the reduction of the size of the global Bethel family, André remarks: "The fine spirit shown by former Bethelites who adapted to such changes inspires me with trust and respect. They keep

19. Why should we uphold Christ's direction?

pace with Jehovah's chariot by finding joy in any assignment they are given."

WITH EYES OF FAITH, PUT TRUST IN OUR LEADER

²⁰ Our appointed Leader, Jesus Christ, will soon "complete his conquest" and "accomplish awe-inspiring things." (Rev. 6:2; Ps. 45:4) In the meantime, he is preparing God's people for the time beyond this system of things when each one of us will share in the vast teaching and building work that will take place during the resurrection.

²¹ Our anointed King will succeed in leading us into the new world, provided we maintain implicit trust in him despite changing circumstances. **(Read Psalm 46:1-3.)** We may, at times, struggle with change, especially when our life takes an unexpected turn. How, then, can we maintain inner peace and full faith in Jehovah? That question will be the subject of the next article.

20, 21. (a) Why can we trust in Christ, our Leader? (b) What question will we consider in the next article?

Are you helping your family and others to keep pace with Jehovah's organization?
(See paragraphs 17, 18)





Maintain Inner Peace Despite Changing Circumstances

“I have calmed and quieted my soul.”—PS. 131:2.

WHEN Lloyd and Alexandra learned that they had been re-assigned to the field, they at first felt sad. After all, they had been serving at Bethel for over 25 years. Lloyd says: “I felt as if Bethel and my work assignment had become my identity. I mentally appreciated the reasons for the change, but in the weeks and months that followed, I often experienced feelings of rejection. It was an emotional roller coaster. One minute I felt positive; the next I felt dejected.”

² When our life takes an unexpected turn, the changes that we have to face may cause us apprehension and emotional stress. (Prov. 12:25) We may even find it hard to accept those changes. In such circumstances, how can we ‘calm and quiet’ our soul? (**Read Psalm 131:1-3.**) Let us consider how some Bible characters and some modern-day servants of Jehovah

1, 2. (a) How might a Christian be affected by unexpected changes in his life? (See opening picture.) (b) According to Psalm 131, what attitude can help us to maintain our inner peace?

SONGS: 128, 129

DO YOU RECALL?

How can “the peace of God” help us in times of change?

How can we imitate Joseph’s example when our circumstances unexpectedly change?

What important lesson can we learn from Philip the evangelizer?

managed to maintain their inner peace despite changing circumstances.

EXPERIENCING “THE PEACE OF GOD”

³ Joseph was about 17 years old when his own brothers out of jealousy sold him as a slave. Prior to this, Joseph had been his father’s favorite. (Gen. 37:2-4, 23-28) For about 13 years, Joseph had to endure slavery and imprisonment in Egypt, far away from his beloved father, Jacob. What helped Joseph not to give in to despair and bitterness?

⁴ While suffering in prison, Joseph must have focused his mind on evidence of Jehovah’s blessing. (Gen. 39:21; Ps. 105:17-19) The prophetic dreams that Joseph had when he was younger would also have given him confidence that he had Jehovah’s favor. (Gen. 37:5-11) He likely poured out his anguish to Jehovah on more than one occasion. (Ps. 145:18) In response to Joseph’s heartfelt prayers, Jehovah gave him the inner conviction that He would be “with him” in all his trials.—Acts 7:9, 10.*

⁵ Despite adverse circumstances, we today can experience firsthand the soothing effect of “the peace of God” that guards our mental powers. **(Read Philippians 4:6, 7.)** Thus, if we turn to Jehovah when we feel overwhelmed by anxiety, God’s peace can strengthen our

* Sometime after his release from prison, Joseph acknowledged that Jehovah had soothed his painful memories by giving him a son. He named his first-born Manasseh because, he said: “God has made me forget all my trouble.”—Gen. 41:51, ftn.

3. In what situation did Joseph find himself?

4. (a) While in prison, on what did Joseph focus his mind? (b) How did Jehovah respond to Joseph’s prayers?

5. What effect can “the peace of God” have on our desire to pursue spiritual goals?

determination to reach spiritual goals and guard us against any tendency to give up. Let us consider some modern-day examples that illustrate this.

TURN TO JEHOVAH TO REGAIN INNER PEACE

⁶ When Ryan and Juliette were informed that their assignment as temporary special pioneers had come to an end, they felt dejected. “We took this straight to Jehovah in prayer,” Ryan says. “We knew that we had a special opportunity here to display trust in him. Many in our congregation were new in the truth, so we prayed that Jehovah would help us to set an excellent example of faith.”

⁷ How did Jehovah respond to their prayer? Ryan recalls: “Immediately after the prayer, the negative feelings and worries that we initially experienced disappeared. The peace of God was guarding our hearts and mental powers. We realized that we could continue to be useful to Jehovah if we maintained the right attitude.”

⁸ In addition to calming us down, God’s spirit can draw our attention to key scriptures that will help us to keep our spiritual priorities. **(Read John 14:26, 27.)** Consider a married couple, Philip and Mary, who had served at Bethel for nearly 25 years. Within four months, both lost their mothers and another relative in death and began caring for Mary’s father, who has dementia.

6, 7. How can being specific in our prayers help us to regain inner peace? Give an example.

8-10. (a) How can God’s spirit help us to cope with anxiety? (b) In what ways may Jehovah respond to our efforts to maintain a spiritual outlook?

⁹ Philip recalls: “I thought I was coping well to a certain point, but something was missing. I came across Colossians 1: 11 in a *Watchtower* study article. I was enduring, true, but not in the fullest sense. I needed to ‘endure fully *with patience and joy*.’ This verse reminded me that my joy in life is dependent, not on my circumstances, but on the effect that God’s spirit has in my life.”

¹⁰ In response to their efforts to maintain a spiritual outlook on their situation, Jehovah blessed Philip and Mary in many ways. Soon after leaving Bethel, they both found progressive Bible students who wanted to study more than once a week. Looking back, Mary says, “They were our joy and Jehovah’s way of telling us that everything was going to be fine.”

GIVE JEHOVAH SOMETHING TO BLESS

¹¹ When we are faced with sudden changes, we might easily let worries about the future paralyze our life. This could have happened to Joseph. Instead, he evidently decided to make the best of his situation, thus giving Jehovah something to bless. Although in prison, Joseph worked hard to fulfill any task given him by the chief officer, just as he had done when working for Potiphar.—Gen. 39:21-23.

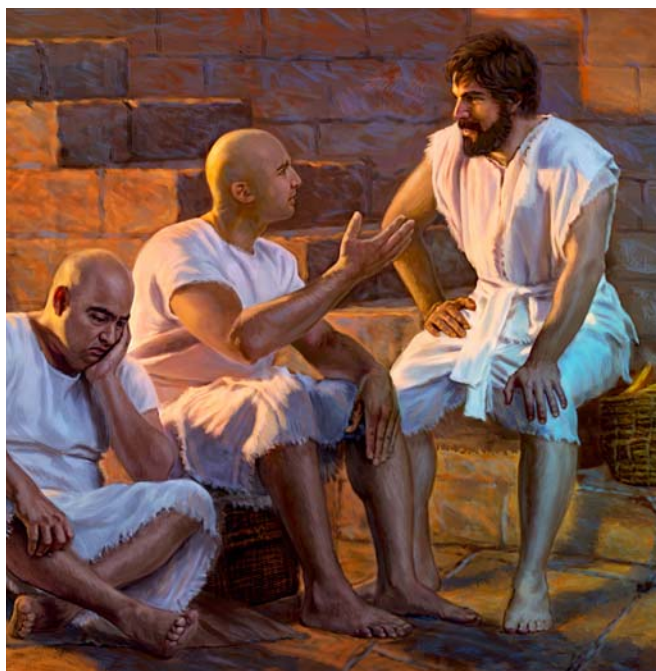
¹² One day, Joseph was entrusted with the care of two men who had formerly served in prominent positions in Pharaoh’s court. Reassured by Joseph’s kind manner, both men disclosed their troubles and the puzzling dreams they had the night before. (Gen. 40:5-8) Joseph

did not realize it, but that conversation would lead to a happy outcome for him. Although he had to endure two more years in jail, he was eventually released and, the same day, appointed as ruler second only to Pharaoh.—Gen. 41:1, 14-16, 39-41.

¹³ Like Joseph, we may find ourselves in a situation over which we have little or no control. However, if we remain patient and work hard at making the best of our circumstances, we will give Jehovah something to bless. (Ps. 37:5) True, we may at times feel “perplexed,” but we will never, as the apostle Paul put it, be “left in despair.” (2 Cor. 4:8; ftn.) These words of Paul will come true in our case, especially if we stay focused on our ministry.

13. How can we give Jehovah something to bless regardless of our circumstances?

How can we imitate Joseph’s example regardless of our circumstances?
(See paragraphs 11-13)



11, 12. (a) How did Joseph give Jehovah something to bless? (b) How was Joseph rewarded for his endurance?

STAY FOCUSED ON YOUR MINISTRY

¹⁴ Philip the evangelizer provides a fine example of one who stayed focused on his ministry despite changing circumstances. In Jerusalem, a wave of persecution arose following the martyrdom of Stephen.* At the time, Philip was enjoying a new privilege of service. (Acts 6: 1-6) But when Christ's followers were scattered, Philip could not just watch and do nothing. He went to preach in Samaria, a city that was largely untouched by the good news at that time.—Matt. 10: 5; Acts 8:1, 5.

¹⁵ Philip was willing to go wherever God's spirit would lead him, so Jehovah used him to open up new territories. His impartial approach was likely refreshing to the Samaritans, who were used to being treated with disdain by the Jews. Little wonder that crowds listened to him “with one accord”!—Acts 8:6-8.

¹⁶ Philip was then led by God's spirit to Ashdod and Caesarea, two cities that

had large Gentile populations. (Acts 8: 39, 40) Some 20 years after his initial preaching in Samaria, Philip's circumstances had evidently changed again. Now a family man, he was settled in his preaching territory. Despite his changing circumstances, Philip stayed focused on his ministry, and as a result, he and his family were richly blessed by Jehovah.—Acts 21:8, 9.

¹⁷ Many full-time servants can testify that focusing on the ministry helped them to maintain their balance despite changing circumstances. When Osborne and Polite, a South African couple, left Bethel, they thought they would soon have part-time work and a place to live. “Unfortunately,” recounts Osborne, “secular work did not come as soon as we had hoped.” His wife, Polite, recalls: “We did not find work for three months, and we had no savings. It was a real challenge.”

¹⁸ What helped them to cope with their stressful situation? Osborne sums it up this way: “Preaching along with the con-

* See the article “Did You Know?” in this issue.

14-16. How did Philip the evangelizer stay focused on his ministry despite changing circumstances?

17, 18. How can being focused on the ministry help us to maintain our balance in times of change?



gregation helped us a lot to keep our minds focused and positive. We decided to be absorbed in the preaching work rather than to sit and worry, and that brought us great joy. We searched all over for jobs, and eventually we found work.”

WAIT PATIENTLY ON JEHOVAH

¹⁹ As these examples show, if we make the best of our circumstances and wait confidently on Jehovah, we will maintain our inner peace. **(Read Micah 7:7.)** We may even realize that we have derived much spiritual benefit from adjusting to a new set of circumstances. Drawing on her experience, Polite, quoted earlier, says: “Being reassigned has taught me what it really means to depend on Jehovah even when the odds seem to be against me. My relationship with him has deepened.”

²⁰ Mary, quoted earlier, is still looking after her aging father while pioneering. She admits: “I have learned that when I

feel anxious, I need to stop, pray, and then relax. To leave things in Jehovah’s hands has probably been the biggest lesson that I have learned, and it will be ever so needed in the future.”

²¹ Lloyd and Alexandra, mentioned at the outset, admit that their change of circumstances tested their faith in ways they had not anticipated. But they say: “Tests of faith reveal whether our faith is genuine and has the strength to support and comfort us in times of difficulty. We come out better people.”

²² If life takes an unexpected turn—whether as a result of a change in our theocratic assignments, health problems, or new family responsibilities—be assured that Jehovah cares for you and will help you at the right time. (Heb. 4: 16; 1 Pet. 5:6, 7) In the meantime, try to make the best of your situation. Draw close to your heavenly Father through prayer, and learn to leave yourself in his caring hands. In this way, you too will maintain inner peace despite changing circumstances.

22. If we seek to make the best of our current circumstances, of what can we be assured?

19-21. (a) What will help us to maintain inner peace? (b) What personal benefits may we derive from adjusting to a new set of circumstances?



Unexpected changes
can lead to unexpected
blessings!
(See paragraphs 19-21)

How could the disciple Stephen remain so calm when being persecuted?

STEPHEN faced a group of hostile men. As members of the highest court in Israel, the Sanhedrin, those 71 judges were among the most powerful men in the nation. They had been assembled by High Priest Caiaphas, who presided over the court a few months earlier when Jesus was condemned to death. (Matt. 26:57, 59; Acts 6:8-12) As they brought forward false accusers one after another, they noticed something rather surprising about Stephen—his face looked “like an angel’s face.”—Acts 6:13-15.

How could Stephen remain calm and serene in such an intimidating situation? Before he was dragged before the Sanhedrin, Stephen had been fully immersed in his ministerial work under the powerful influence of God’s spirit. (Acts 6:3-7) When he was on trial, that same spirit was operating on him, both as a comforter and as a remembrancer. (John 14:16, ftn.) As Stephen made his bold defense, recorded in Acts chapter 7, holy spirit brought back to his mind some 20 or more passages from the Hebrew Scriptures. (John 14:26) But Stephen’s faith was further strengthened when he received a vision of Jesus standing at God’s right hand.—Acts 7:54-56, 59, 60.

We may one day find ourselves facing threats and persecution. (John 15:20) By feeding regularly on God’s Word and by being active in the ministry, we allow Jehovah’s spirit to be at work in us. We will also find the strength to withstand opposition while maintaining our inner peace.—1 Pet. 4:12-14.

