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THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
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SONG 37

Serving Jehovah
Whole-Souled

PREVIEW

Some who love Jehovah are unsure if they are ready to get baptized as one of his Witnesses. If you feel that way, this article will help you to review some of the practical things you can do that will lead you to baptism.

Love and Appreciation for Jehovah Lead to Baptism

“What prevents me from getting baptized?”—ACTS 8:36.

DO YOU want to get baptized as a disciple of Christ? Love and appreciation have motivated many to make that choice. Consider the example of an official who served the queen of Ethiopia.

² The Ethiopian acted immediately on what he had learned from the Scriptures. **(Read Acts 8:27-31, 35-38.)** What motivated him? He obviously appreciated God’s Word; he was reading a passage from the book of Isaiah as he rode in a chariot. And when Philip spoke with him, the man developed an appreciation for what Jesus had done for him. But why had the official traveled to Jerusalem? Because he had already developed a love for Jehovah. How do we know? He had just been worshipping Jehovah in Jerusalem. This man had apparently left the religion of his birth and had joined the only nation that was dedicated to the true God. It was this same **love for Jehovah** that motivated him to take yet another vital step, that of getting baptized and becoming a disciple of Christ.—Matt. 28:19.

³ Love for Jehovah can motivate you to get baptized. But love might also **prevent** you from doing so. How? Note just some examples. You may love your unbelieving family and friends deeply, and you may worry that if you get baptized, they will hate you. (Matt. 10:37) Or

1-2. As indicated at Acts 8:27-31, 35-38, what motivated the Ethiopian eunuch to get baptized?

3. What might prevent a person from getting baptized? (See the box “What Is in Your Heart?”)

What Is in Your Heart?

Jesus likened the message found in the Bible to seed and human hearts to different types of soil. (Luke 8:4-8) Perhaps you have been studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses for some time. Why not read Luke 8:11-15 and ask yourself, 'My heart matches which kind of soil?'



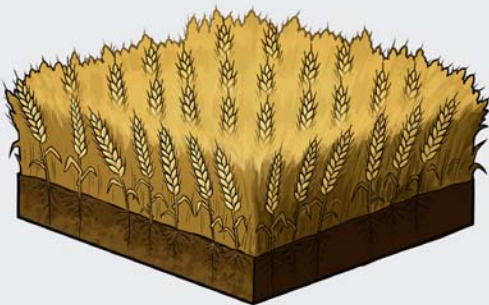
Trampled soil: This person finds little time to prepare for his Bible study session. He often cancels his Bible study or misses meetings because he is busy doing other things.



Rocky soil: This person allows pressure or opposition from his peers or family to prevent him from obeying Jehovah and living by His standards.



Soil with thorns: This person likes what he learns about Jehovah, but he feels that having money and possessions will make him feel happy and secure. He often misses his personal Bible study sessions because he is working or is engaging in some kind of recreation.



Fine soil: This person regularly studies the Bible and tries to apply what he learns. His priority in life is that of pleasing Jehovah. Despite trials and opposition, he persists in telling others what he knows about Jehovah.

You control what is in your heart. Like the different types of soil in Jesus' illustration, your symbolic heart can be softened, weeded, and improved. Remember, you choose the type of soil that you are.

you may love habits that you know God hates, and you may find it difficult to break free from their grip. (Ps. 97:10) Or you may have grown up celebrating customs that are associated with false religion. You may love the good memories associated with those celebrations. As a result, you may find it difficult to stop observing customs that displease Jehovah. (1 Cor. 10:20, 21) The question you face is, “What or whom do I love the most?”

THE MOST IMPORTANT LOVE

⁴ You have many worthwhile things to love and appreciate. For instance, even before studying with Jehovah’s Witnesses, you may have formed a deep appreciation for the Bible. And you may have developed a love for Jesus. Now that you have come to know Jehovah’s Witnesses, you might love to associate with them. But loving those good things will not necessarily make you want to dedicate yourself to Jehovah and get baptized. The primary motivation that will lead you to baptism is love for Jehovah God himself. When you love Jehovah more than all else, you will not let anything or anyone prevent you from serving him. You could view love for Jehovah as both the gateway to baptism and the guardrail that helps you stay on the path of serving God.

⁵ Jesus said that we must love Jehovah with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. (Mark 12:30) How can you learn to love and respect Jehovah that

deeply? Reflecting on Jehovah’s love for us moves us to love him in return. (1 John 4:19) What other feelings and actions will naturally follow once you develop that most important love?*

⁶ ***Learn about Jehovah through his creation.*** (Read Romans 1:20; Rev. 4:11) Meditate on the wisdom evident in the designs of plants and animals. Learn a little about the wonderful way your body is made. (Ps. 139:14) And think about the power that Jehovah packed into our sun, realizing that it is just one of billions of stars.[#] (Isa. 40:26) As you do, your respect for Jehovah will deepen. However, knowing that Jehovah is wise and powerful is only part of the foundation of your relationship with him. To build a strong love for Jehovah, you need to know more about him.

⁷ You need to be convinced that Jehovah cares for you personally. Do you find it difficult to believe that the Creator of heaven and earth knows that you exist and that he cares for you? If so, remember that Jehovah is “not far off from each one of us.” (Acts 17:26-28) He “searches through all hearts,” and he promises you that, as David told Solomon, “if you search for him, he will let himself be found by you.” (1 Chron. 28:9) In fact, the reason you are now

* Each person is different, so some may apply the suggestions mentioned in this article in an order different from what is outlined here.

[#] For more examples, see the brochures *Was Life Created?* and *The Origin of Life—Five Questions Worth Asking*.

6. According to Romans 1:20, what is one way that you can learn about Jehovah?

7. To love Jehovah deeply, of what do you need to be convinced?

4. What is the primary motivation that will lead you to baptism?

5. What questions will we consider?



The best way to be close to God and know what he wants from us is by studying the Bible (See paragraph 9)

studying the Bible is that, as Jehovah says, “I have drawn you to me.” (Jer. 31:3) The more you appreciate all that Jehovah has done for you, the deeper your love for him will be.

⁸ One way to respond to Jehovah’s love is by talking to him in prayer. Your love for God will grow as you tell him about your concerns and thank him for all that he does for you. And the bond between you and Jehovah will be strengthened as you see how he answers your prayers. (Ps. 116:1) You will become convinced that he understands you. But to grow close to Jehovah, you need to understand his way of thinking. And you need to know what he wants from you. The only way you will gain that knowledge is by studying his Word, the Bible.

⁹ ***Learn to appreciate God’s Word, the***

Bible. Only the Bible contains the truth about Jehovah and his purpose for you. You show that you appreciate the Bible by reading it each day, by preparing for your personal Bible study session, and by applying what you learn. (Ps. 119:97, 99; John 17:17) Do you have a personal Bible reading schedule? Do you follow that schedule, making sure that you read the Bible each day?

¹⁰ One of the unique features of the Bible is that it contains eyewitness accounts about Jesus. It is the only accurate record that explains what Jesus has done for you. As you learn what Jesus said and did, you will likely be moved to form a friendship with him.

¹¹ ***Learn to love Jesus, and your love for Jehovah will grow.*** Why? Because Jesus reflects his Father’s qualities perfectly. (John 14:9) So the more you learn about

8. How can you respond to Jehovah’s love?

9. How can you show that you appreciate the Bible?

10. What is one of the unique features of the Bible?

11. How can you learn to love Jehovah?

Jesus, the better you will understand and appreciate Jehovah. Think of the compassion Jesus showed for those who were looked down on by others—the poor, the sick, and the vulnerable. Think, too, of the practical advice he gives you and how your life improves when you listen to him.—Matt. 5:1-11; 7:24-27.

¹² Your affection for Jesus is likely to become stronger as you think deeply about the sacrifice he made so that our sins can be forgiven. (Matt. 20:28) When you understand that Jesus was willing to die for you, you may feel moved to repent and seek Jehovah's forgiveness. (Acts 3:19, 20; 1 John 1:9) And as you come to love Jesus and Jehovah, you will naturally be drawn to others who feel the same way.

¹³ **Learn to love Jehovah's family.** Your unbelieving family and former friends may not understand why you want to dedicate yourself to Jehovah. They may even oppose you. Jehovah will help you by providing a spiritual family. If you stay close to that spiritual family, you will find the love and support you need. (Mark 10:29, 30; Heb. 10:24, 25) In time, your family members may join you in serving Jehovah and living by his standards.—1 Pet. 2:12.

¹⁴ **Learn to appreciate and apply Jehovah's standards.** Before coming to know Jehovah, you may have set your own standards, but now you see that Je-

hovah's standards are better. (Ps. 1:1-3; **read 1 John 5:3.**) Think about the Bible's counsel for husbands, wives, parents, and children. (Eph. 5:22-6:4) As you apply that counsel, have you seen your family life improve? As you obey Jehovah's directions about choosing your friends wisely, have your personal habits improved? Are you a happier person? (Prov. 13:20; 1 Cor. 15:33) Likely the answer to those questions is yes.

¹⁵ At times, you may find it difficult to know how to apply the Bible principles you are learning. That is why Jehovah uses his organization to provide you with Bible-based material that can help you to discern right from wrong. (Heb. 5:13, 14) When you read and study this material, you will see how practical and specific it is, and you will likely be drawn to Jehovah's organization.

¹⁶ **Learn to love and support Jehovah's organization.** Jehovah has organized his people into congregations; his Son, Jesus, is the head over them all. (Eph. 1:22; 5:23) Jesus has appointed a small group of anointed men to take the lead in organizing the work that he wants done today. Jesus referred to this group of men as "the faithful and discreet slave," and they take seriously their responsibility to feed and protect you spiritually. (Matt. 24:45-47) One of the ways the faithful slave helps to care for you is by ensuring that qualified elders are appointed to shepherd you. (Isa. 32:1, 2; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3) The elders are

12. As you learn about Jesus, what may you be moved to do?

13. What has Jehovah provided for you?

14. As stated at 1 John 5:3, what have you discovered about Jehovah's standards?

15. What can you do if you need help in applying Bible principles?

16. How has Jehovah organized his people?

willing to pour themselves out for you, to comfort you, and to help you grow ever closer to Jehovah. But one of the most important things they can do for you is help you teach others about Jehovah.—Eph. 4:11-13.

17 *Help others learn to love Jehovah.* Jesus told his followers to teach others about Jehovah. (Matt. 28:19, 20) It is possible to obey that command out of a sense of duty. But as your love for Jehovah grows, you will feel the same way as did the apostles Peter and John, who said: “We cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard.” (Acts 4:20) Few things bring as much happiness as helping someone come to love Jehovah. Imagine how much joy the evangelizer Philip felt when he helped the Ethiopian learn the truth contained in the Scriptures and get bap-

17. According to Romans 10:10, 13, 14, why do we talk to others about Jehovah?

tized! When you imitate Philip and obey Jesus’ command to preach, you prove that you want to be one of Jehovah’s Witnesses. **(Read Romans 10:10, 13, 14.)** At that point, you will likely ask the same question as the Ethiopian did: “What prevents me from getting baptized?”—Acts 8:36.

18 You will take the most important step of your life when you decide to get baptized. Because it is such a serious step, you need to consider carefully what is involved. What do you need to know about baptism? What do you need to do before and after baptism? Those questions will be answered in the next article.

18. What will we consider in the next article?

PICTURE DESCRIPTION Page 5: A sister gives a tract to a young woman whom she meets while shopping.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- What should be our primary motive for serving Jehovah, and why do you answer that way?
- How can we learn to love Jehovah?
- How can we benefit from meditating on the illustration found at Luke 8:11-15?

SONG 28

Gaining Jehovah's
Friendship

PREVIEW

Are you thinking about getting baptized? If so, this article has been prepared especially with you in mind. We will discuss some key questions on this important subject. Your answers will help you to decide if you are ready to get baptized.

Are You Ready to Get Baptized?

“Baptism . . . is also now saving you.”—1 PET. 3:21.

IMAGINE that a person decides to build a house. He knows what kind of house he wants to build. Should he immediately go out and buy some supplies and start building? No. Before he begins, there is something important that he ought to do—calculate how much the house will cost. Why? Because he needs to know whether he has enough money to finish the house. If he carefully calculates the cost in advance, he is more likely to be successful in completing his new house.

² Has your love and appreciation for Jehovah moved you to think about getting baptized? If so, you are facing a decision similar to that of the man who wants to build a house. Why can we say that? Consider Jesus' words found at **Luke 14:27-30. (Read.)** Jesus was discussing what it means to be his disciple. To be his follower, we must be willing to accept “the expense” involved—the challenges and the sacrifices. (Luke 9:23-26; 12:51-53) So before you get baptized, you need to think carefully about all that is involved. Then you will be better prepared to keep serving God faithfully as a baptized Christian.

³ Is becoming a baptized disciple of Christ worth the expense? Of course it is! Baptism opens the door to countless blessings—now and in the future. Let us discuss some important questions about baptism. Doing so will help you to answer the question, “Am I ready to get baptized?”

1. What should a person do before starting to build a house?
2. According to Luke 14:27-30, what should you think carefully about before getting baptized?
3. What will we discuss in this article?

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DEDICATION AND BAPTISM

4 *What is dedication?* Before you can get baptized, you must make a dedication. When you make a dedication, you approach Jehovah in earnest prayer and tell him that you will use your life to serve him forever. When you dedicate yourself to God, you “disown” yourself. **(Read Matthew 16:24.)** You now belong to Jehovah, which is a great privilege. (Rom. 14:8) You are telling him that from now on, you will be focused on serving him and not on pleasing yourself. Your dedication is a vow—a solemn promise made to God. Jehovah does not force us to make such a vow. But when we do, he expects us to fulfill it.—Ps. 116:12, 14.

5 *How is dedication related to baptism?* Your dedication is personal and private; it is between you and Jehovah. Baptism is public; it takes place in front of others, usually at an assembly or a convention. When you get baptized, you show others that you have already dedicated yourself to Jehovah.* So your baptism lets others know that you love Jehovah your God with your whole heart, soul, mind, and strength and that you are determined to serve him forever.—Mark 12:30.

6 *Is it really necessary to get baptized?* Consider the words found at **1 Peter 3:18-22. (Read.)** Just as the ark was visi-

* See the box “Two Questions to Be Answered on the Day of Your Baptism.”

4. (a) What is dedication? (b) What does it mean to “disown” oneself, as mentioned at Matthew 16:24?

5. How is dedication related to baptism?

6-7. According to 1 Peter 3:18-22, what are two reasons why baptism is necessary?

ble proof of Noah’s faith, your baptism is discernible evidence of your dedication to Jehovah. But is baptism really necessary? Yes it is. Peter commented on the reason why. First, it is “saving you.” Baptism can save us if we have taken the necessary steps to show that we have faith in Jesus and believe that he died for us, was raised to heaven, and is now “at God’s right hand.”

7 Second, baptism leads to “a good conscience.” When we dedicate ourselves to God and get baptized, we enter into a special relationship with him. Because of our sincere repentance and our faith in the ransom, God forgives our sins. We can thus have a good conscience before him.

8 *What should be the basis for your decision to get baptized?* As a result of your careful study of the Bible, you have learned much about Jehovah—his personality and his ways. What you have learned about him has warmed your heart and moved you to love him very much. Your love for Jehovah must be the primary basis for your decision to get baptized.

9 Your decision to get baptized is also based on the Bible truths you have accepted. Consider what Jesus said when he gave the commission to make disciples. **(Read Matthew 28:19, 20.)** According to Jesus, those who get baptized must do so “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit.”

8. What should be the basis for your decision to get baptized?

9. What does it mean to get baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, as stated at Matthew 28:19, 20?

What did this mean? You must believe with all your heart the Bible truths about Jehovah; his Son, Jesus; and the holy spirit. These truths are very powerful and can deeply touch your heart. (Heb. 4:12) Let us review some of them.

¹⁰ Think back to when you learned these truths about the Father: His “name is Jehovah,” he is “the Most High over all the earth,” and he alone is “the true God.” (Ps. 83:18; Isa. 37:16) He is our Creator, and “salvation belongs to Jehovah.” (Ps. 3:8; 36:9) He has made provision to save us from sin and death and has given us the prospect of everlasting life. (John 17:3) Your dedication and baptism will identify you as one of Jehovah’s Witnesses. (Isa. 43:10-12) You will be part of a worldwide family of worshippers who are proud to be called by God’s name and make it known to others.—Ps. 86:12.

¹¹ What a privilege it is to understand what the Bible teaches about the Father! When you accept these precious truths, your heart moves you to dedicate yourself to Jehovah and get baptized.

¹² What was your reaction when you learned the following truths about the Son? Jesus is the second most important person in the universe. He is our Ransomer. He willingly gave his life for us. When we show by our actions that we have faith in the ransom, we can have our sins forgiven, develop a friendship with God, and gain everlasting life. (John 3:16) Jesus is our High Priest. He wants to help us to benefit from the ransom and to

have a close relationship with God. (Heb. 4:15; 7:24, 25) As King of God’s Kingdom, he is the one through whom Jehovah will sanctify His name, end wickedness, and bring eternal blessings in the coming Paradise. (Matt. 6:9, 10; Rev. 11:15) Jesus is our model. (1 Pet. 2:21) He set an example for us in devoting his life to doing God’s will.—John 4:34.

¹³ When you accept what the Bible teaches about Jesus, you come to love God’s dear Son. That love moves you to use your life to do God’s will, as Jesus did. As a result, you feel impelled to dedicate yourself to Jehovah and get baptized.

¹⁴ What did you think when you learned the following truths about the holy spirit? It is, not a person, but God’s active force. Jehovah used the holy spirit to inspire the writing of the Bible, and the spirit helps us to understand and apply what we read in it. (John 14:26; 2 Pet. 1:21) By means of his spirit, Jehovah gives us “power beyond what is normal.” (2 Cor. 4:7) The spirit empowers us to preach the good news, fight temptation, deal with discouragement, and overcome trials. It helps us to display the beautiful qualities that make up “the fruitage of the spirit.” (Gal. 5:22) God freely gives his spirit to those who trust in him and sincerely ask him for it.—Luke 11:13.

¹⁵ How reassuring and comforting it is to know that Jehovah’s worshippers can rely on the holy spirit to help them in serving God! When you accept the truths you have learned about the holy spirit, you will feel moved to dedicate yourself to God and get baptized.

10-11. What truths about the Father have you learned and accepted?

12-13. What truths about the Son have you learned and accepted?

14-15. What truths about the holy spirit have you learned and accepted?



BEFORE YOUR BAPTISM:

- ☐ Come to know Jehovah and Jesus well
- ☐ Develop faith
- ☐ Repent of your sins and turn your life around
- ☐ Dedicate yourself to God

AFTER BAPTISM:

- ☐ Read God's Word and meditate on it every day
- ☐ Pray continually
- ☐ Keep seeking first the Kingdom in your life

Two Questions to Be Answered on the Day of Your Baptism

- 1 Have you repented of your sins, dedicated yourself to Jehovah, and accepted his way of salvation through Jesus Christ?
- 2 Do you understand that your baptism identifies you as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in association with Jehovah's organization?

¹⁶ You are taking an important step when you decide to dedicate yourself to God and get baptized. As we have learned, you must be willing to accept the expense involved—the challenges and the sacrifices. But the blessings far outweigh the expense. Baptism can save you, and it leads to a good conscience before God. Your decision to get baptized must be based primarily on your love for Jehovah God. You must also believe with all your heart the truths you have learned about the Father, the Son, and the holy spirit. After considering what we have discussed so far, how would you answer the question, “Am I ready to get baptized?”

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO BEFORE BAPTISM

¹⁷ If you feel that you are ready to get baptized, you no doubt have already tak-

16. What have we learned so far in our discussion?
17. What are some of the steps leading to baptism?

en a number of steps to build a good relationship with Jehovah.* As a result of your regular Bible study, you have come to know much about Jehovah and Jesus. You have developed faith. (Heb. 11:6) You completely trust in Jehovah's promises found in the Bible, and you are convinced that your faith in Jesus' sacrifice can save you from sin and death. You have repented of your sins; you feel deeply sorry for the wrongs you have committed, and you have asked Jehovah for his forgiveness. You have turned your life around; you have firmly rejected your former bad way of life and have begun living in a way that is pleasing to God. (Acts 3:19) You are eager to tell others about your faith. You qualified to become an unbaptized publisher and began preaching with the congregation. (Matt. 24:14) Jehovah is proud of you for taking these necessary steps. You have brought great joy to his heart. —Prov. 27:11.

¹⁸ Before you can get baptized, there are a few other things you need to do. As we learned earlier, you must dedicate yourself to God. Approach him in private, heartfelt prayer, and promise him that you will use your life to do his will. (1 Pet. 4:2) Then let the coordinator of the body of elders know that you want to get baptized. He will ask some elders to meet with you. Please do not be anxious about meeting with them. These dear brothers no doubt already

* See chapter 18 of the book *What Can the Bible Teach Us?*

18. What else do you need to do before you can get baptized?

know you and love you. They will review with you the basic Bible teachings that you have learned. They want to make sure that you understand those teachings and that you are aware of the importance of dedication and baptism. If they agree that you are ready, they will inform you that you can get baptized at the next assembly or convention.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO DO AFTER YOUR BAPTISM

¹⁹ Once you get baptized, what will you need to do?* Recall that dedication is a vow and that Jehovah expects you to keep it. So after your baptism, you have to live up to your dedication. How can you do that?

²⁰ Stay close to your congregation. As a baptized Christian, you are now part of an “association of brothers.” (1 Pet. 2:17) Your brothers and sisters in the congregation are your spiritual family. By regularly attending the meetings, you will

* If you have not yet completed your study of the books *What Can the Bible Teach Us?* and *How to Remain in God's Love*, you should continue studying with a Bible teacher until you finish both books.

19-20. What will you need to do after your baptism, and how can you do that?

strengthen your bond with them. Read God's Word and meditate on it every day. (Ps. 1:1, 2) After reading a portion of the Bible, take some time to think deeply about what you have read. Then the words will reach your heart. “Pray continually.” (Matt. 26:41) Your sincere prayers will draw you closer to Jehovah. “Keep on . . . seeking first the Kingdom.” (Matt. 6:33) You can do that by making the preaching work a priority in your life. By sharing regularly in the ministry, you will keep your faith strong, and you may help others to get on the road to everlasting life.—1 Tim. 4:16.

²¹ The decision to dedicate yourself to Jehovah and get baptized is the most important decision you will ever make. It is true that there is expense involved. Is it worth the expense? Absolutely! Any hardships you may face in this old world are “momentary and light.” (2 Cor. 4:17) In contrast, your baptism will open the way to a more satisfying life now and “the real life” to come. (1 Tim. 6:19) By all means, think carefully and pray about your answer to the question, “Am I ready to get baptized?”

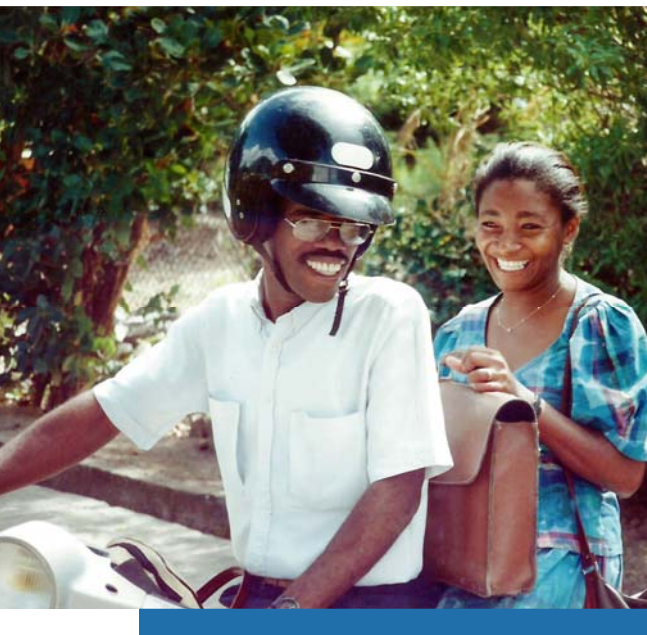
21. Your baptism will open the way to what?

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ■ What do you need to know about dedication and baptism? | ■ What do you need to do before you get baptized? | ■ What do you need to do after you get baptized? |
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“Here We Are! Send Us!”

AS TOLD BY JACK AND MARIE-LINE BERGAME



ARE you looking to expand your ministry by moving to where the need is greater, perhaps a foreign land? If so, you may benefit from the experience of Brother and Sister Bergame.

Jack and Marie-Line have been in full-time service together since 1988. Known for their remarkable adaptability, they have accepted many assignments in Guadeloupe and French Guiana. Both places are now under the supervision of the France branch. Let us ask Jack and Marie-Line a few questions.

What motivated you to take up full-time service?

Marie-Line: As a child growing up in Guadeloupe, I often preached all day with my mother, who was a zealous Witness. I love people, so as soon as I finished school, in 1985, I started pioneering.

Jack: As a youngster, I was surrounded by full-time servants who loved the ministry. I used to auxiliary pioneer during school vacations. On weekends, we would sometimes take a bus to join the pioneers in their territory. We preached all day—ending at the beach. Those days were such fun!

Shortly after marrying Marie-Line in 1988, I said to myself, ‘We are free, so why not do more in the ministry?’ I joined Marie-Line in the pioneer service. A year later, after attending pioneer school, we were appointed as special pioneers. We had several enjoyable assignments in Guadeloupe before being invited to move to French Guiana.

You have received many changes of assignment over the years. What has helped you to adapt to new circumstances?

Marie-Line: The brothers at the French Guiana Bethel knew that our favorite scripture is Isaiah 6:8. So when they called us, they would often start by playfully saying, “Do you remember your favorite scripture?” We knew it meant that an assignment change was coming, so we would say, “Here we are! Send us!”

We avoid making comparisons with past assignments because doing so could prevent us from appreciating what we have.

We also take the initiative to get to know our brothers and sisters.

Jack: In the past, some well-intentioned friends tried to discourage us from moving because they wanted us to stay near them. But when we left Guadeloupe, one brother reminded us of Jesus' words recorded at Matthew 13:38: "The field is the world." So when we change assignments, we remind ourselves that we are still serving in the same field no matter where we are. After all, the people and the territory count the most!

When we arrive in a new territory, we see that others are able to live there quite happily. Hence, we try to live as the locals do. The food may be different, but we eat what they eat and we drink what they drink, taking the appropriate health precautions. We make an effort to speak positively about every assignment.

Marie-Line: We also learn much from the local brothers. I remember when we first arrived in French Guiana. It was raining hard, so we thought we would have to wait for the

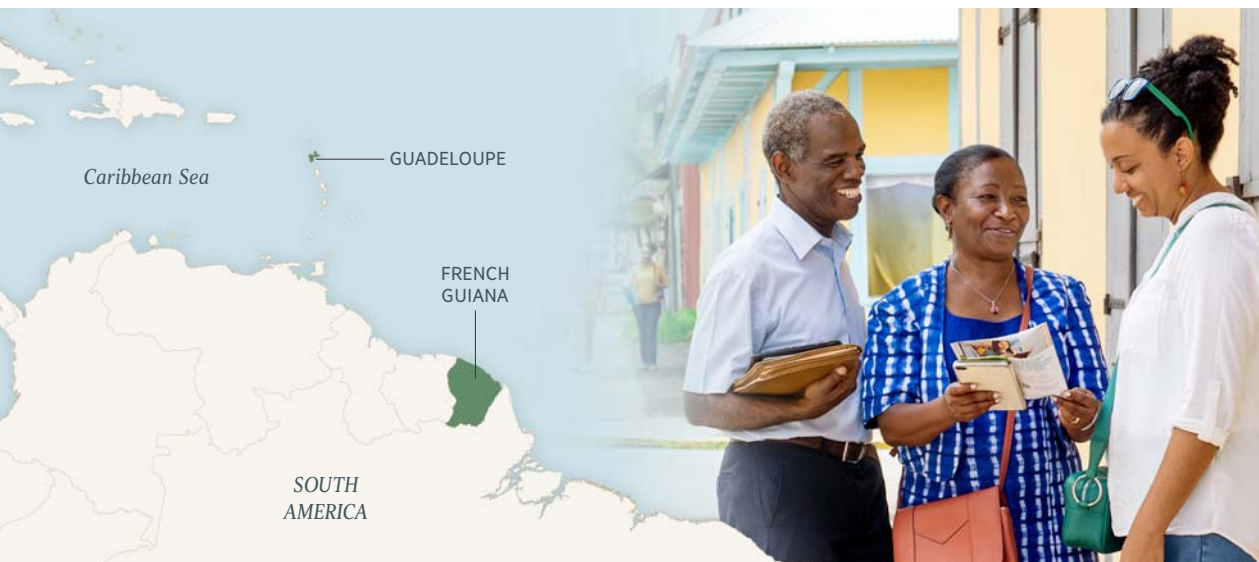
rain to stop before we could go out preaching. But then a sister asked me, "Shall we go?" Surprised, I responded, "How?" She answered, "Take your umbrella, and we will go on our bikes." Thus I learned how to hold an umbrella and ride a bike at the same time. Had I not learned, I would never have preached during the rainy season!

You have moved some 15 times. Do you have any tips for others about moving?

Marie-Line: Moving can be a challenge. Still, it is important to find a place where you will feel at home when you come back from the ministry.

Jack: I usually repaint the interior of our home. The brothers at the branch, realizing that we might not be staying long, would sometimes say, "Jack, don't bother painting this time!"

Marie-Line is an expert packer! She puts everything in boxes and labels them "bathroom," "bedroom," "kitchen," and the like. So when we arrive at our new home, we can more easily place the boxes into the



appropriate rooms. She makes a list of the contents in each box so that we can quickly find what we need.

Marie-Line: Because we have learned to be well-organized, we can get right into our routine.

How do you schedule your time so that you “fully accomplish your ministry”?
—2 Tim. 4:5.

Marie-Line: On Mondays, we rest and prepare for the meetings. From Tuesday on, we go out in the ministry.

Jack: Although we have an hour requirement, we don’t focus on that. The ministry is the center of our lives. From the time we leave home until the time we return, we strive to speak to all whom we meet.

Marie-Line: When we go on a picnic, for example, I always take tracts with me. Some people approach us and ask for publications, even though we haven’t told them that we are Jehovah’s Witnesses. Accordingly, we are careful about the way we dress and behave. People notice such things.

Jack: We also witness by being good neighbors. I pick up papers, take out the trash, and rake the garden around our home. Our neighbors take notice and sometimes ask, “Would you by any chance have a Bible for me?”

You have often preached in remote territories. Do any of these travels stand out in your mind?

Jack: In Guiana, some territories are difficult to reach. We often have to travel 370 miles (600 km) in a week on bad roads. Our visit to St. Élie, in the Amazon forest, was memorable. It took us several hours to get there using an off-road vehicle and a powerboat. Most people who lived there were gold prospectors. Out of gratitude for our publications, some gave us small nuggets of gold as a contribution! In the eve-

ning, we showed one of the organization’s videos. Many locals attended.

Marie-Line: Recently, Jack was asked to give the Memorial talk in Camopi. To get there, we traveled for four hours by motorboat on the Oyapock River. It was an exciting experience.

Jack: Where the water in the river was low, the rapids could be quite dangerous. I can assure you that it is impressive to see those rapids coming into view. A boatman has to know what he is doing. But it was a fine expedition. Although there were only 6 Witnesses present, about 50 people attended the Memorial, including some Amerindians!

Marie-Line: This kind of enriching experience awaits young ones who want to give more to Jehovah. You have to trust in Jehovah in these circumstances, and your faith is strengthened. We often see Jehovah’s hand at work.

You have learned several languages. Are you gifted in languages?

Jack: Not at all. I learned these languages because there was a need. I had to conduct the *Watchtower* Study in Sranantongo* before I had even given a Bible reading! I asked a brother how I did. He answered, “Sometimes we didn’t understand some words, but it was very good.” The children were a great help. When I made mistakes, they would say something, whereas the adults would not. I learned a lot from the young ones.

Marie-Line: In one territory, I had Bible studies in French, Portuguese, and Sranantongo. A sister suggested that I start with the hardest language and finish with the one most familiar to me. I soon understood the wisdom of that advice.

One day, I had a Bible study in Sranan-

* Sranantongo is a mix of English, Dutch, Portuguese, and African languages, originally developed by slaves.

tongo and a second one in Portuguese. When I started the second study, the sister with me said, “Marie-Line, I think there might be a problem!” I realized that I was speaking to a Brazilian woman in Sranantongo instead of Portuguese!

You are dearly loved by those with whom you have served. How have you been able to draw close to the brothers?

Jack: Proverbs 11:25 says: “The generous person will prosper.” We don’t hesitate to give of ourselves to others. Regarding the maintenance of the Kingdom Hall, some have said to me: “Let the publishers do that.” But I reply: “Well, I’m a publisher too. So if there is work to be done, I want to be there.” Though all of us need some privacy, we often remind ourselves that we don’t want our privacy to prevent us from doing good to others.

Marie-Line: We make an effort to show personal interest in our brothers and sisters. In that way, we come to know when they need someone to look after their children or pick them up from school. We can then reorganize our plans to be available to help. We thus develop a close bond with others, being ready to assist them when they need it.

What blessings have you received from serving where the need is greater?

Jack: Full-time service has enriched our lives. We have often been close to nature, enjoying Jehovah’s diverse creation. Although there have been challenges, we have peace of mind because we know that we have the support of God’s people wherever we are.

As a young man, I was imprisoned in French Guiana for my Christian neutrality. I never imagined that I would return there one day as a missionary and be authorized to visit prisons as a minister. Indeed, Jehovah is generous in his blessings!



Marie-Line: My greatest joy is that of giving of myself to others. We are happy to be in Jehovah’s service. It has also drawn us closer together as a couple. At times, Jack will ask if we can invite a discouraged couple over for a meal. Often I reply, “I was just thinking the same thing!” That is how it happens.

Jack: Recently, I was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Although Marie-Line does not like to hear it, I have said to her: “Darling, if I were to die tomorrow, I would not die ‘at a good old age.’ But I would die satisfied, knowing that I filled my life with spiritual things, with worthwhile things.”—Gen. 25:8.

Marie-Line: Jehovah has opened unexpected doors and allowed us to do things we could never have imagined. Our life has truly been filled with good things. With full confidence in God, wherever his organization asks us to go, there is where we will go!

SONG 124

Ever Loyal

PREVIEW

God's Word contains principles that can help us know when to speak and when to be silent. When we know and apply what the Bible says, our speech will please Jehovah.

When Is the Right Time to Speak?

“There is . . . a time to be silent and a time to speak.”

—ECCLES. 3:1, 7.

SOME of us like to talk a lot. Others like to be quiet. As the theme text of this article points out, there is both a time to speak and a time to be silent. **(Read Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7.)** Still, we may wish that some of our brothers and sisters would talk more. And we may want some to talk less.

² Speech is a gift from Jehovah. (Ex. 4:10, 11; Rev. 4:11) In his Word, he helps us to understand how to use that gift properly. In this article, we will consider Scriptural examples that will help us know when to speak and when to be silent. We will also see how Jehovah feels about what we say to others. First, let us consider when we should speak.

WHEN SHOULD WE SPEAK?

³ We should always be ready to speak about Jehovah and the Kingdom. (Matt. 24:14; **read Romans 10:14.**) In so doing, we imitate Jesus. One of the main reasons why Jesus came to earth was to tell others the truth about his Father. (John 18:37) But we must remember that *how* we speak is also important. So when talking to others about Jehovah, we must do so with “a mild temper and deep respect,” and we should show consideration for the other person's feelings and beliefs. (1 Pet. 3:15) Then we will do more than just talk; we will teach and possibly reach the person's heart.

1. What does Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7 teach us?
2. Who has the right to set the standards for when and how we should speak?
3. According to Romans 10:14, when should we speak?

Abigail set a good example in choosing the right time to speak

(See paragraphs 7-8)



⁴ Elders should not hesitate to speak up if they see that a brother or a sister needs counsel. Of course, they would choose the right time to speak so that they do not needlessly embarrass the person. They would want to wait until they are in a private setting. Elders always endeavor to speak in a way that preserves the dignity of the listener. Still, they do not hold back from sharing Bible principles that can help others to act wisely. **(Read Proverbs 9:9.)** Why is it so important that we have the courage to speak up when necessary? Consider two contrasting examples: In one case, a man needed to correct his sons, and in the other, a woman had to confront a future king.

⁵ High Priest Eli had two sons for whom he had deep affection. Those sons, however, had no respect for Jehovah. They held important positions as priests serving at the tabernacle. But they abused their authority, showed gross disrespect for the offerings given to Jehovah, and

brazenly committed sexual immorality. (1 Sam. 2:12-17, 22) According to the Mosaic Law, Eli's sons deserved to die, but permissive Eli merely reproved them mildly and allowed them to continue serving at the tabernacle. (Deut. 21:18-21) How did Jehovah view the way that Eli handled matters? He said to Eli: "Why do you keep honoring your sons more than me?" Jehovah then determined to put those two wicked men to death. —1 Sam. 2:29, 34.

⁶ We learn an important lesson from Eli. If we find out that a friend or a relative has broken God's law, we must speak up, reminding him of Jehovah's standards. Then we must make sure that he gets the help he needs from Jehovah's representatives. (Jas. 5:14) Never would we want to be like Eli, honoring a friend or a relative more than we honor Jehovah. It takes courage to confront someone who needs to be corrected, but it is worth the effort. Note the contrast between Eli's example and that of an Israelite woman named Abigail.

4. In line with Proverbs 9:9, how can our speech help others?

5. When did High Priest Eli fail to speak up?

6. What do we learn from Eli?



⁷ Abigail was the wife of a wealthy landowner named Nabal. When David and his men were running away from King Saul, they spent some time with Nabal's shepherds and protected Nabal's flocks from marauder bands. Was Nabal grateful for their help? No. When asked by David to provide his men with a little food and water, Nabal got angry and screamed abuses at them. (1 Sam. 25:5-8, 10-12, 14) As a result, David determined to kill every man in Nabal's household. (1 Sam. 25:13, 22) How could such a disaster be avoided? Abigail realized that it was time to speak, so she courageously went to meet the 400 hungry, angry armed men and spoke to David.

⁸ When Abigail met David, she spoke courageously, respectfully, and persuasively. Even though Abigail was not to blame for the bad situation, she apologized to David. She appealed to his good qualities and relied on Jehovah to help her. (1 Sam. 25:24, 26, 28, 33, 34) Like Abigail, we need to have the courage to speak up if we see someone heading down a dangerous path. (Ps. 141:5) We must be respectful, but we must also be bold. When we lovingly offer a person necessary counsel, we prove that we are a true friend.—Prov. 27:17.

⁹ Elders in particular must have the courage to speak to those in the congregation who take a false step. (Gal. 6:1) Elders humbly realize that they too are imperfect and may one day need counsel. But elders do not let that hold them back

7. Why did Abigail speak to David?

8. What do we learn from Abigail's example?

9-10. What should elders remember when counseling others?

WHEN TO SPEAK

- When talking to others about Jehovah, do so with "a mild temper and deep respect" for others' beliefs (paragraph 3)
- When we see someone heading down a wrong path (paragraph 8)
- Elders patiently and skillfully provide counsel when needed (paragraphs 4, 9)

from reproving those who need discipline. (2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:9) When counseling a person, they try to use their gift of speech to teach him skillfully and patiently. They love their brother, and that love moves them to action. (Prov. 13:24) But their primary concern is to honor Jehovah by upholding his standards and protecting the congregation from harm. —Acts 20:28.

¹⁰ Up to this point, we have considered when to speak up. However, there are times when it is best for us to say nothing at all. What challenges might we face in those situations?

WHEN SHOULD WE BE SILENT?

¹¹ It can be difficult to control our speech. The Bible writer James used an appropriate illustration to describe the challenge. He said: “If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able to bridle also his whole body.” (Jas. 3: 2, 3) A bridle is put on the head and a bit is put into the mouth of a horse. By pulling on the reins, a rider can guide the animal or bring it to a halt. If the rider loses control of the reins, the horse can run wild and cause harm to itself and the rider. Similarly, if we fail to control our speech, it can cause a lot of damage. Let us consider some occasions when we need to “pull on the reins” and hold back from speaking.

¹² How do you react when a brother or a sister has information that should be viewed as confidential? For example, if

11. What illustration did James use, and why is it appropriate?

12. When should we “pull on the reins” and hold back from speaking?



WHEN NOT TO SPEAK

- When tempted to disclose details about how our work is carried out in lands that are under ban (paragraph 12)
- When details about sensitive and confidential congregation matters are involved (paragraphs 13-14)

you meet someone who lives in a land where our work is banned, are you tempted to ask him to give details about how our work is carried out in that country? No doubt your motives are good. We love our brothers and are interested in what is happening to them. We also want to be specific when praying for them. However, this is a time when we should “pull on the reins” and hold back from speaking. If we put pressure on someone who has confidential information, we show a lack of love—both to that person and to the brothers and sisters who are relying on him to keep quiet about their activity. Certainly, none of us would want to add to the difficulties of our brothers and sisters who live in countries where our work is under ban. Similarly, no brother or sister serving in such a land would want to reveal details about how Witnesses living there conduct their ministry or Christian activities.

¹³ Elders in particular must apply the Bible principle recorded at **Proverbs 11:13** by keeping matters confidential. (**Read.**) This can be a challenge, especially if an elder is married. A married couple keep their relationship strong by talking often to each other and by sharing their intimate thoughts, feelings, and anxieties. But an elder realizes that he must not reveal the “confidential talk” of those in the congregation. If he did, he would lose their trust and ruin his reputation. Those who are appointed to a position of trust in the congregation cannot be “double-tongued,” or deceitful. (1 Tim. 3:8; ftn.) That is, they cannot be

13. As stated at Proverbs 11:13, what must elders do, and why?

devious or inclined to gossip. If an elder loves his wife, he will not burden her with information that she does not need to know.

¹⁴ A wife can help her husband maintain a good reputation by not pressuring him to talk about matters that should be kept confidential. When a wife applies this advice, she not only supports her husband but also shows honor to those who have confided in him. And most important, she makes Jehovah happy because she is contributing to the peace and unity of the congregation.—Rom. 14:19.

HOW DOES JEHOVAH FEEL ABOUT WHAT WE SAY?

¹⁵ We can learn much from the Bible book of Job about how and when to speak. After Job suffered a series of heart-breaking calamities, four men came to comfort him and to offer counsel. Those men spent a lot of time being silent. But from the statements made later by three of these men—Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar—it is obvious that they did not spend this time thinking about how they could help Job. Instead, they were thinking about how they could prove that Job had done something wrong. They made some accurate statements, but much of what they said about Job and about Jehovah was either unkind or untrue. They judged Job harshly. (Job 32:1-3) How did Jehovah respond? His anger burned hot against those three men. He called them foolish and made them ask Job to pray for them.—Job 42:7-9.

14. How can the wife of an elder help him to maintain a good reputation?

15. How did Jehovah feel about three of Job’s companions, and why?

¹⁶ We learn a number of lessons from the bad examples set by Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. First, we should not judge our brothers. (Matt. 7:1-5) Instead, we should listen carefully to them before we speak. Only then will we be able to understand their situation. (1 Pet. 3:8) Second, when we do speak, we must make sure that our words are kind and our statements accurate. (Eph. 4:25) And third, Jehovah takes a keen interest in what we say to one another.

¹⁷ The fourth man to visit Job was Elihu, a relative of Abraham. He listened as Job and the three other men spoke. He obviously paid close attention to what was said because he was able to give some compassionate but direct counsel that helped Job correct his thinking. (Job 33:1, 6, 17) Elihu's main concern was to exalt Jehovah, not himself or any other man. (Job 32:21, 22; 37:23, 24) From Elihu's example we learn that there is a time to keep silent and listen. (Jas. 1:19) We also learn that when we do give counsel, our primary interest should be

16. What can we learn from the bad examples set by Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar?

17. What can we learn from Elihu's example?

to bring honor to Jehovah, not to ourselves.

¹⁸ We can show that we value the gift of speech by following the Bible's advice about when and how to speak. Wise King Solomon was inspired to write: "Like apples of gold in silver carvings is a word spoken at the right time." (Prov. 25:11) When we listen carefully to what others say and we think before we speak, our words can be like those apples of gold—both valuable and beautiful. Then, whether we say a little or a lot, our speech will build others up, and we will make Jehovah proud of us. (Prov. 23:15; Eph. 4:29) What better way could we express our appreciation for this gift from God!

18. How can we show that we value the gift of speech?

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS **Page 19:** At an appropriate time, Abigail appealed to David, with a good outcome. **Page 20:** A sister sees the need to give some mature advice. A brother offers recommendations about cleanliness. **Page 21:** A couple refrain from revealing details about our work in a place where it is banned. An elder takes care that his words about a confidential congregation matter are not overheard.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- When should we speak?
- When should we be silent?
- What lesson did you learn from the Bible characters discussed in this article?

SONG 109

Love Intensely From
the Heart

PREVIEW

Jesus said that love is the identifying mark of true Christians. Love for our brothers and sisters moves us to be peacemakers, to be impartial, and to be hospitable. This may not always be easy. This article provides practical suggestions on how to continue loving one another intensely from the heart.

Love One Another Intensely

“Love one another intensely from the heart.”—1 PET. 1:22.

ON THE night before he died, Jesus gave his disciples a specific command. He told them: “Just as I have loved you, you also love one another.” Then he added: “By this all will know that you are my disciples—if you have love among yourselves.”—John 13:34, 35.

² Jesus said that his true disciples would be clearly identifiable *if* they showed the same sort of love that he displayed. That statement was true in the first century, and it is true today. How important it is that we overcome any challenges and show love for one another!

³ Human imperfection makes it difficult for us to show intense love for one another. Even so, we must try to imitate Christ. In this article, we will consider how love helps us to be peacemakers, to be impartial, and to be hospitable. As you study the material, ask yourself: ‘What can I learn from brothers and sisters who have continued to show love for one another despite challenges?’

BE A PEACEMAKER

⁴ Jesus taught us the importance of making peace with

1. What specific command did Jesus give his disciples? (See cover picture.)
2. Why is it important to show love for one another?
3. What will we consider in this article?
4. According to Matthew 5:23, 24, why should we make peace with a brother who has something against us?

a brother who has something against us. **(Read Matthew 5:23, 24.)** He emphasized that we need to maintain good relations with others if we are to please God. Jehovah is happy when we do our best to make peace with our brothers. He will not accept our worship if we hang on to resentment and refuse even to try to make peace.—1 John 4:20.

⁵ We may find it difficult to make peace. Why? Consider what happened to Mark.* He felt hurt when a brother criticized him and said bad things about him to others in the congregation. How did Mark react? “I lost control and got angry,” he recalls. Afterward, though, Mark regretted his behavior and tried to apologize to the brother and restore peace with him. But the brother rejected

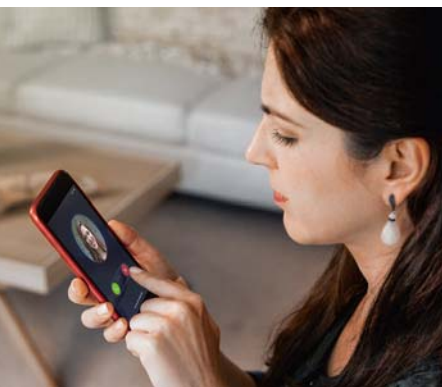
* Some names in this article have been changed.

5. What made it difficult for one brother to make peace?

Mark’s efforts. Initially, Mark thought, ‘Why should *I* keep trying if he does not want to make peace?’ However, the circuit overseer encouraged him not to give up. What did Mark do?

⁶ When Mark analyzed his thinking, he realized that he lacked humility and tended to be self-righteous. He recognized that he needed to change his attitude. (Col. 3:8, 9, 12) He humbly approached the brother again and apologized for his behavior. Mark also wrote letters to the brother, saying how sorry he was and how much he wanted to make a fresh start. Mark even gave the brother small gifts that he thought the brother would like. Sadly, the brother continued to hold a grudge. Nevertheless, Mark continued to obey Jesus’ command to love his brother and to be forgiving.

6. (a) How did Mark pursue peace? (b) How did Mark apply Colossians 3:13, 14?



More than one kind of approach may be needed to bury bad feelings
(See paragraphs 7-8)





If we have intense
“love for the whole
association of
brothers,” we will
avoid being partial
(See paragraphs 12-13)

(Read Colossians 3:13, 14.) Even when others do not respond to our efforts to make peace, true Christian love will help us to keep forgiving them and praying for a positive outcome.—Matt. 18:21, 22; Gal. 6:9.

⁷ Jesus urged us to keep treating others the way we want to be treated. He added that we should not limit our love only to those who show love in return. (Luke 6:31-33) Though it would be unusual, what if someone in the congregation avoids you and refuses to greet you? That is what Lara experienced. She explains: “A sister ignored me, and I did not know why. I felt tense and did not enjoy going to the meetings.” At first, Lara reasoned: ‘I am not at fault. After all, others in the congregation also feel that this sister behaves strangely.’

7. (a) What did Jesus urge us to do? (b) What difficult situation did one sister face?

⁸ Lara took steps to make peace. She prayed to Jehovah and decided to talk to the sister. They spoke about the problem, hugged each other, and made peace. Everything seemed fine. Lara relates: “But later, the sister showed the same attitude toward me as she did earlier. I was so discouraged.” Initially, Lara felt that she could be happy only if the other sister changed her attitude. Eventually, though, Lara realized that the best thing she could do was to continue treating the sister with love and “freely forgiving” her. (Eph. 4:32-5:2) Lara remembered that true Christian love “does not keep account of the injury. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” (1 Cor. 13:5, 7) Lara regained her peace of mind. In time, the sister was friendlier with her. When you pursue peace with your broth-

8. What did Lara do to make peace, and what can we learn from her experience?

ers and sisters and continue loving them, you can be sure that “the God of love and of peace will be with you.”—2 Cor. 13:11.

BE IMPARTIAL

⁹ Jehovah is not partial. (**Read Acts 10:34, 35.**) When we are impartial, we prove that we are his children. We obey the command to love our neighbor as ourselves, and we maintain the peace of our spiritual family.—Rom. 12:9, 10; Jas. 2:8, 9.

¹⁰ Remaining impartial may not be easy for some. Consider, for example, what happened to a sister named Ruth. When she was a teenager, she had a bad experience with someone who was from a different country. How did it affect her? Ruth admits: “I hated everything about that country. I thought that all people from that place were the same, even the brothers and sisters.” How did Ruth overcome her negative feelings?

¹¹ Ruth recognized that she had to fight her negative thinking. She read experiences and reports from the *Year-book* about that country. She says: “I made an effort to think positively about the people of that land. I started to notice that the brothers and sisters had zeal for Jehovah. It became clear to me that they too are part of our worldwide brotherhood.” Gradually, Ruth realized that she needed to do more. She explains: “Whenever I met brothers and sisters from that country, I made a spe-

cial effort to be friendly with them. I talked to them and got to know them better.” What was the result? Ruth says: “In time, my negative feelings disappeared.”

¹² Some may be partial without even realizing it. Sarah, for example, thought that she was impartial because she did not judge people based on their race, their financial standing, or their position of responsibility in the organization. But she admits: “I began to realize that I really was partial.” In what way? Sarah came from a well-educated family and preferred to associate with people who had the same background. Once she even told a friend: “I associate with fellow believers who are well-educated. I avoid those who are not.” Clearly, Sarah needed to change her attitude. How?

¹³ A circuit overseer helped Sarah to analyze her attitude. She relates: “He commended me for my faithful service, good comments, and knowledge of the Scriptures. Then he explained that as our knowledge grows, we also need to cultivate such Christian qualities as humility, modesty, and mercy.” Sarah took the circuit overseer’s words to heart. She says: “I realized that what really matters is that we are kind and loving.” As a result, she began to view her brothers and sisters differently. She explains: “I tried to understand what qualities make them precious to Jehovah.” What about us? Never would we want to

9. According to Acts 10:34, 35, why do we need to be impartial?

10-11. How did one sister overcome her negative feelings?

12. What problem did a sister named Sarah have?

13. What can we learn from how Sarah changed her attitude?

“In the past, I was not inclined to show hospitality, but I changed and have received much joy”
(See paragraph 16)



feel superior to others because of our education! If we have intense “love for the whole association of brothers,” we will avoid being partial.—1 Pet. 2:17.

BE HOSPITABLE

¹⁴ Jehovah highly values hospitality. **(Read Hebrews 13:16.)** He considers it part of our worship, especially when we help the needy. (Jas. 1:27; 2:14-17) Therefore, the Scriptures encourage us to “follow the course of hospitality.” (Rom. 12:13) We express genuine fondness, affection, and friendship when we are hospitable. Jehovah is pleased whether we share with others a snack, something to drink, a meal, or our time and loving attention. (1 Pet. 4: 8-10) However, there may be obstacles that can make it difficult for us to be hospitable.

14. According to Hebrews 13:16, how does Jehovah feel when we show hospitality to others?

¹⁵ We may hesitate to show hospitality because of our circumstances. Consider the example of a widow named Edit. Before she became a Witness, she preferred to have little contact with others. Edit felt that others were in a better position to be hospitable.

¹⁶ After she became a Witness, Edit changed her way of thinking. She took steps to be hospitable. She relates: “When our new Kingdom Hall was being built, an elder told me about a married couple who were coming to help with the project, and he asked me if I could offer them accommodations for two weeks. I remembered how Jehovah blessed the widow of Zarephath.” (1 Ki. 17:12-16) Edit agreed to host the couple. Was she blessed? She explains: “Two weeks turned into two months. During

15-16. (a) Why might some hesitate to show hospitality? (b) How did Edit overcome her hesitation to show hospitality?

that time, we developed a close friendship.” Edit has also been blessed with close friends in the congregation. She is now a pioneer and enjoys having those with whom she works in the ministry come to her home for refreshments. She says: “Giving makes me feel good! And the truth is that I receive so many blessings in return.”—Heb. 13:1, 2.

¹⁷ We may already be showing hospitality, but can we improve? For example, Luke and his wife are a hospitable couple. They were in the habit of inviting to their home their parents, relatives, close friends, and the circuit overseer and his wife. However, Luke says, “We realized that we were inviting only those who were close to us.” How did Luke and his wife improve in showing hospitality?

¹⁸ Luke and his wife changed their view after reflecting on Jesus’ words: “If you love those loving you, what reward do you have?” (Matt. 5:45-47) They real-

17. What realization did Luke and his wife come to?

18. How did Luke and his wife improve in showing hospitality?

ized that they needed to imitate Jehovah, who is generous toward all. So they made it a point to invite brothers and sisters whom they had not invited before. Luke says: “All of us now enjoy these occasions so much. Everyone feels encouraged and upbuilt.”

¹⁹ We have examined how having intense love for one another can help us to be peacemakers, to be impartial, and to be hospitable. We must overcome any negative feelings and love our brothers and sisters intensely from the heart. If we do, we will be happy and we will prove that we really are Jesus’ disciples.—John 13:17, 35.

19. How do we prove that we are Jesus’ disciples, and what are you determined to do?

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS **Page 25:** A sister’s first attempt to resolve a matter is not successful, but she does not give up. Her continued efforts to show love eventually succeed. **Page 26:** An older brother is feeling excluded by others in the congregation. **Page 28:** A sister who initially hesitated to show hospitality changes her thinking, and the change brings her added happiness.

HOW CAN WE SHOW INTENSE LOVE BY . . .

■ being peacemakers?

■ being impartial?

■ being hospitable?

What evidence exists outside the Bible that the Israelites were slaves in Egypt?

The Bible reports that after the Midianites took Joseph to Egypt, the patriarch Jacob and his family moved from Canaan to Egypt. They settled in the region of Egypt called Goshen, in the Nile Delta. (Gen. 47: 1, 6) The Israelites “kept on multiplying and growing mightier.” So the Egyptians grew fearful of the Israelites and forced them into slavery.—Ex. 1:7-14.

Some modern critics have mocked the above Bible account, calling it a myth. Still, evidence does exist that Semites* lived as slaves in ancient Egypt.

For instance, archaeologists have unearthed ancient settlements in northern Egypt. Dr. John Bimson reports that there is evidence of 20 or more Semitic settlements in that area of northern Egypt. Moreover, Egyptologist James K. Hoffmeier says: “For a period roughly from 1800 to 1540 B.C., Egypt was an attractive place for the Semitic-speaking people of western Asia to migrate.” He adds: “This span of time co-

incides with the traditional ‘Patriarchal Period’ and therefore fits the period and circumstances described in Genesis.”

There is additional evidence from southern Egypt. A papyrus dated to the Middle Kingdom (c. 2000–c. 1600 B.C.E.) contains names of slaves who worked in a household in southern Egypt. More than 40 of those names are Semitic. These slaves, or servants, worked as cooks, weavers, and laborers. Hoffmeier observes: “Since over forty Semites were attached to this single estate in the Thebaid [southern Egypt], the number across Egypt, especially in the Delta, was likely considerable.”

Archaeologist David Rohl writes that some of the names of the slaves on the list “leap straight out of the pages of the Bible.” For instance, the fragments contain names that are similar to such names as Issachar, Asher, and Shiphrah. (Ex. 1:3, 4, 15) “This is real evidence for the time when the Israelites were in Egypt as slaves,” concludes Rohl.

Dr. Bimson states: “The biblical traditions of the bondage in Egypt and of the Exodus have a firm historical basis.”

* The name Semite comes from Shem, one of Noah’s three sons. The descendants of Shem likely included the Elamites, the Assyrians, the early Chaldeans, the Hebrews, the Syrians, and various Arabian tribes.



Who were the Jewish temple police? What were their duties?

One of the many duties cared for by non-priestly members of the tribe of Levi was that of forming what may be likened to a police force. This was under the direction of the captain of the temple. Jewish writer Philo describes the duties of these officers: "Some of these [Levites] are stationed at the doors as gatekeepers at the very entrances, some within [the temple area] in front of the sanctuary to prevent any unlawful person from setting foot thereon, either intentionally or unintentionally. Some patrol around it turn by turn in relays by appointment night and day, keeping watch."

This police force was at the disposal of the Sanhedrin. It was the only Jewish armed corps that the Romans permitted.

According to scholar Joachim Jeremias, "Jesus' words of reproach uttered at his arrest, that day after day he was in the Temple teaching and was not taken (Matt. 26:55), become most clearly understood if it was the Temple police who came to arrest him." The same writer believed that those sent to arrest Jesus on a previous occasion were also temple policemen. (John 7:32, 45, 46) Officers with their captain were later dispatched to bring Jesus' disciples before the Sanhedrin and were likely involved when the apostle Paul was dragged out of the temple. —Acts 4:1-3; 5:17-27; 21:27-30.



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On his last night with his apostles, Jesus emphasized love (See study article 13, paragraphs 1-2)

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