

# OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

February 2000

For United States of America

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## "Preach the Word . . . Urgently"

<sup>1</sup> If you receive something marked "URGENT," how do you view it? The word "urgent" means "calling for immediate attention." With good reason, the apostle Paul instructed Christians to "preach the word . . . urgently." (2 Tim. 4:2) Do you respond by giving this work your immediate attention?

<sup>2</sup> It may have been reported to Paul that some of his brothers were displaying a tendency to 'loiter at their business' as Christians. (Rom. 12:11) This limited the results of their labors as well as the joy that they otherwise could have derived from helping others.

<sup>3</sup> **Jesus' View of the Ministry:** What delight Jesus found in car-

rying out his ministry! He said: "My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." Jesus' example motivated his disciples, whom he encouraged by telling them that 'the fields are white for harvesting.' (John 4:34, 35) The sense of urgency that he displayed throughout his ministry was evident when he told his disciples to "beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest." (Matt. 9:38) Jesus appreciated that his commission was to preach, and he was determined not to let anything prevent him from doing so.

**4 What About Us?** Today, there is greater urgency than ever before to move ahead with the preaching work. In many

parts of the world, the fields are ripe for harvesting. Even in lands where a thorough witness has seemingly been given, thousands are being baptized each year. With the end of this system of things rapidly approaching, there is "plenty to do in the work of the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58) More than at any other time, it is vital that we exert ourselves vigorously in sharing the Kingdom message with others.

**5 Let us be absorbed in reaching others with the good news, both from house to house and wherever else people can be found in the territory. By sharing as fully as possible in the preaching work, we clearly demonstrate that we have put the Kingdom first in our lives. (Matt. 6:33) Our faithfulness in preaching the word urgently will bring us much joy.**

## "Women Who Are Working Hard in the Lord"

<sup>1</sup> With the above words, Paul described Tryphaena and Tryphosa, two hardworking sisters in the Rome congregation. Of another, Persis, he said: "She performed many labors in the Lord." He likewise made favorable mention of Phoebe as "a defender of many." (Rom. 16:2, 12) In the Scriptures, Dorcas was singled out as one who "abounded in good deeds and gifts of mercy." (Acts 9:36) What a blessing spiritual women are to the congregation!

<sup>2</sup> Do we appreciate the sisters who work hard in our congregation? They do the bulk of the preaching work, conduct most of the Bible studies, and as-

sist many of the new ones. They also spend considerable time in helping children to make spiritual progress. Christian women do their part in building up the spirit of love, joy, peace, and zeal in the congregation. They are supportive in many ways so that their husbands and other family members can do more in Jehovah's service.

**3 Sisters in Full-Time Service:** Among those who labor very hard in the Lord are missionary sisters, many having shared in developing the work in foreign lands. In the congregations served by their husbands, the wives of traveling overseers are busy in the field

ministry, encouraging many sisters. Not to be overlooked are the Bethel sisters, who zealously perform sacred service in support of Jehovah's organization. And our regular pioneer sisters, by their faithful efforts in praising God, are helping thousands to learn the truth.

**4 These faithful women find great satisfaction in their self-sacrificing way of life. (1 Tim. 6:6, 8) They are worthy of commendation and whatever encouragement and support we can give them.**

**5 Christian women are a valuable asset to Jehovah's organization, performing faithful service that is a blessing to all. May we continue to appreciate such women and pray that Jehovah's blessing will be with them as they keep "working hard in the Lord."**

# SERVICE MEETING SCHEDULE

## Week Starting February 14

Song 113

**10 min:** Local announcements. Selected Announcements from *Our Kingdom Ministry*.

**15 min:** "Preach the Word . . . Urgently." Limit introductory comments to less than a minute, and follow with a question-and-answer discussion. Include comments on *Our Ministry* book, page 170. Offer some practical suggestions on how to increase preaching activity during the rest of the winter.

**20 min:** "How to Develop Reasoning Ability." Talk and demonstration. Explain *why* the ability to reason is so important in the ministry and *how* to acquire it. Have two capable publishers discuss how to prepare for the ministry by following the steps outlined in paragraph 3 of the article and then demonstrate their presentation.

Song 182 and concluding prayer.

## Week Starting February 21

Song 17

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

**15 min:** "Women Who Are Working Hard in the Lord." Limit introductory comments to less than a minute, and follow with a question-and-answer discussion. Include comments on September 15, 1996, *Watchtower*, pages 14-15, paragraphs 18-19. Warmly commend sisters for their willing support, the beneficial services they perform for others, and their zealous preaching activity.

**20 min:** "What Can Help Us to Stand Firm in the Faith?" Talk by an elder. We live in critical times, and all of us need assistance in some way. Review what elders and ministerial servants can do to strengthen those beset by discouraging problems. (See the subheading "Shepherding That Is Upbuilding" in the September 15, 1993, *Watchtower*, pages 21-3.) Explain

how we can encourage one another in ways that will stabilize us spiritually.—Rom. 1:11, 12.

Song 82 and concluding prayer.

## Week Starting February 28

Song 46

**10 min:** Local announcements. Remind all to turn in field service reports for February. Briefly review the "Four Easy Steps" for using tracts to start conversations that were outlined on page 4 of last month's *Our Kingdom Ministry*. Demonstrate how the *Peaceful New World* tract can be used to introduce the *Knowledge* book. After posing the questions from the opening paragraph of the tract, read the first paragraph on page 3, including Psalm 37:29. If interest is shown, open the *Knowledge* book to page 5, read the box, and offer a study. This month, all should make a special effort to start new home Bible studies.

**5 min:** Question Box. Talk by an elder.

**12 min:** Appreciating the Work of Regional Building Committees. Talk by an elder, based on the August 1995 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert. The 77 Regional Building Committees now operating in the United States branch territory have aided in constructing, renovating, and maintaining 2,289 Kingdom Halls, benefiting 3,484 congregations. There is still much work to be done. Consider the work of regional committees, and build enthusiasm for Kingdom Hall construction. Explain who can qualify as volunteer workers, and stimulate more to volunteer. (See November 1992 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert, paragraphs 18-20.) Interview some who have shared in a Kingdom Hall construction project, and include their comments on the joy they have experienced.—See June 1, 1999, *Watchtower*, pages 18-19, paragraphs 15-16.

**18 min:** "Preaching the Good News With Strong Conviction." Have a two- or three-minute heartfelt introduction based on material as well as cited and quoted scriptures in paragraphs 1 and 2. Then cover paragraphs 3-12 by question-and-answer discussion.

Song 61 and concluding prayer.

## Week Starting March 6

Song 116

**5 min:** Local announcements.  
**10 min:** Local needs.

**10 min:** "Pay Attention to How You Listen." A family head discusses with his wife and children what they can do to benefit more fully from congregation meetings, assemblies, and conventions. He feels that all in the family could concentrate better. They review the suggestions listed and consider how to apply each one, including the need to have more discussions about the things learned. They consider how to live up to their resolve not to miss any meetings or any session of a convention or assembly if at all possible.

**20 min:** "Preaching the Good News With Strong Conviction." After a brief review of last week's discussion of first 12 paragraphs of insert, conduct question-and-answer discussion of paragraphs 13-24. Make good use of quoted and cited scriptures.

Song 186 and concluding prayer.

## NOVEMBER SERVICE REPORT

Number of:	Avg. Hrs.	Avg. Mags.	Avg. R.V.	Avg. Bi.St.
Sp'l Pios.	151	122.4	105.7	51.8
Pios.	94,458	65.3	46.8	20.7
Aux. Pios.	22,868	49.7	38.2	13.6
Publs.	821,247	9.1	8.2	3.4
TOTAL	938,724			Baptized: 2,093

November brought a new peak in regular pioneers! The total of 94,458 regular pioneers reporting is an increase of 394 over the previous peak of 94,064 in October 1999.

# Preaching the Good News With Strong Conviction

<sup>1</sup> Early in the first century, Jesus Christ commissioned his followers to preach the good news of the Kingdom and “make disciples of people of all the nations.” (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20) Jehovah’s Witnesses have taken his instruction seriously, so that by the end of the 20th century, our Christian brotherhood has swelled to more than 5,900,000 disciples in 234 lands. What a grand shout of praise to our heavenly Father!

<sup>2</sup> We have now entered the 21st century. Our Adversary insidiously tries to interfere with our main work of Kingdom preaching and disciple making. He uses pressures from this system of things in an effort to divert our attention, consume our time, and drain our energies with a host of nonessential cares and interests. Rather than allowing this system to dictate what is important in life, we prove to ourselves from God’s Word what is paramount—doing Jehovah’s will. (Rom. 12:2) That means obeying the Scriptural exhortation to ‘preach the word in favorable and troublesome season and to fully accomplish our ministry.’—2 Tim. 4:2, 5.

<sup>3</sup> **Develop Firm Conviction:** Christians need to “stand complete and with firm conviction in all the will of God.” (Col. 4:12) The word “conviction” is defined as “a strong persuasion or belief; the state of being convinced.” As Christians we must be convinced that God’s prophetic word is certain and that we are now deep into the time of the end. We must have a belief as strong as that of the apostle Paul, who said that the good news “is, in fact, God’s power for salvation to everyone having faith.”—Rom. 1:16.

<sup>4</sup> The Devil uses wicked men and impostors, who are themselves misled, to influence and mislead others. (2 Tim. 3:13) Being forewarned of this, we take steps to strengthen our conviction that we have the truth. Rather than letting the anxieties of life dampen our zeal, we keep putting

Kingdom interests first. (Matt. 6:33, 34) Nor do we want to lose sight of the urgency of the times, perhaps feeling that the end of this system is far off. It is drawing ever closer. (1 Pet. 4:7) Though we may feel that spreading the good news has little effect in some lands in view of the witness already given, the warning work must continue.—Ezek. 33:7-9.

<sup>5</sup> The key questions at this late date are: ‘Do I take seriously Jesus’ commission to make disciples? When I preach the good news, do I manifest strong conviction that the Kingdom is real? Am I determined to have as great a share as possible in this lifesaving ministry?’ Realizing how far along we are in the time of the end, we must pay attention to ourselves and to our preaching and teaching commission. Doing this we will save both ourselves and those who listen to us. (1 Tim. 4:16) How can all of us strengthen our conviction as ministers?

**<sup>6</sup> Imitate the Thessalonians:** The apostle Paul, in recalling the hard work of the brothers in Thessalonica, said to them: “The good news we preach did not turn up among you with speech alone but also with power and with holy spirit and *strong conviction*, just as you know what sort of men we became to you for your sakes; and you became imitators of us and of the Lord, seeing that you accepted the word under much tribulation with joy of holy spirit.” (1 Thess. 1:5, 6) Yes, Paul commended the congregation of the Thessalonians because despite much tribulation they preached with zeal and strong conviction. What enabled them to do this? To a great extent, the zeal and conviction that they saw in the apostle Paul and his fellow workers had a positive effect on them. How so?

<sup>7</sup> The very lives of Paul and his traveling companions testified that they had God’s spirit upon them and that they wholeheartedly believed in what they were

preaching. Before coming to Thessalonica, Paul and Silas were insolently treated at Philippi. Without a trial, they were beaten, jailed, and confined in stocks. This trying experience, however, did not dampen their zeal for the good news. Divine intervention effected their release, led to the conversion of the jailer and his household, and made the way for these brothers to continue in their ministry.—Acts 16:19-34.

<sup>8</sup> In the strength of God's spirit, Paul came to Thessalonica. There he labored to procure his own necessities and then expended himself fully in teaching the truth to the Thessalonians. He did not hold back from declaring the good news at every opportunity. (1 Thess. 2:9) Paul's preaching with strong conviction had such a powerful effect on the local people that some of them forsook their former idolatrous worship and became servants of the true God, Jehovah.—1 Thess. 1:8-10.

<sup>9</sup> Persecution did not hinder the new believers from acting on the good news. Prompted by their newfound faith and fully convinced that everlasting blessings would be theirs, the Thessalonians were impelled to proclaim the truth that they had enthusiastically embraced. So active did that congregation become that news of their faith and zeal spread to other parts of Macedonia and even into Achaia. Hence, when Paul wrote his first letter to the Thessalonians, their good works were already well-known. (1 Thess. 1:7) What an outstanding example!

**<sup>10</sup> Motivated by Love for God and for People:** How can we, like the Thessalonians, maintain strong personal conviction when preaching the good news today? Of them, Paul wrote: "We bear incessantly in mind your faithful work and your hard effort *due to love.*" (1 Thess. 1:3, ftn.) It is obvious that they had a deep, heartfelt love for Jehovah God and for the people to whom they preached. It was this same love that motivated Paul and his companions to impart to the Thessalonians "not only the good news of God, but also [their] own souls."—1 Thess. 2:8.

<sup>11</sup> Similarly, our deep love for Jehovah and for our fellowman moves us to want to participate fully in the preaching work that God has given us to do. With such love, we recognize that it is our personal, God-given responsibility to spread the good news. By meditating positively and appreciatively on all that Jehovah has done for us in directing us toward "the real life," we are motivated to tell others the same wonderful truths that we believe with all our heart.—1 Tim. 6:19.

<sup>12</sup> As we keep busy in the preaching work, our love for Jehovah and for people must continue growing. If it does, we will be stimulated to intensify our share in the door-to-door ministry and to pursue all other forms of witnessing open to us. We will take advantage of opportunities to witness informally to relatives, neighbors, and acquaintances. Although most people may reject the good news that we offer and some will endeavor to interfere with the proclamation of the Kingdom, we experience an inner joy. Why? Because we know that we have done our best to witness about the Kingdom and help people gain salvation. And Jehovah will bless our efforts to find righthearted ones. Even when the pressures of life close in on us and Satan seeks to sap our joy, we are able to maintain our strong conviction and our zeal in witnessing to others. When all of us do our part, this results in strong, zealous congregations like the one in Thessalonica.

**<sup>13</sup> Never Give Up Under Trial:** Conviction is also needed when we meet with various trials. (1 Pet. 1:6, 7) Jesus made clear to his disciples that if they followed him, they would be "objects of hatred by all the nations." (Matt. 24:9) Paul and Silas experienced this when in Philippi. The account in Acts chapter 16 says that Paul and Silas were thrown into the inner prison and confined in stocks. Generally, the main prison was a kind of court or vestibule around the edge of which were cells that had the advantage of light and air. The inner prison, however, had no provision for light and had limited ventilation. Paul and Silas

had to deal with the darkness, heat, and stench of this miserable place of confinement. Can you imagine the pain they must have felt while being confined in stocks for hours with their backs raw and bleeding from the scourging?

<sup>14</sup> Despite these trials, Paul and Silas remained faithful. They manifested heartfelt conviction, strengthening them to serve Jehovah regardless of the test. Their conviction is highlighted in verse 25 of chapter 16, where it says that Paul and Silas were "praying and praising God with song." In fact, although they were in the inner prison, they were so sure of having God's approval that they sang loud enough to be heard by the other prisoners! We must have similar conviction today when facing tests of our faith.

<sup>15</sup> The trials that the Devil thrusts upon us are numerous. For some it may be persecution from family. Many of our brothers face legal challenges. Opposition from apostates may be encountered. There are financial burdens and the anxiety of how to make ends meet. Young ones face peer pressure at school. How can we face these trials successfully? What is needed to manifest conviction?

<sup>16</sup> First and foremost, we need to *maintain a close personal relationship with Jehovah*. When Paul and Silas were in the inner prison, they did not use that time to complain about their lot in life or to feel sorry for themselves. They immediately turned to God in prayer and praised him in song. Why? Because they had a close personal relationship with their heavenly Father. They realized that they were suffering for the sake of righteousness and that their salvation rested in the hands of Jehovah.—Ps. 3:8.

<sup>17</sup> When we face trials today, we too must look to Jehovah. Paul encourages us as Christians to 'let our petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard our hearts and our mental powers.' (Phil. 4:6, 7) How comforting it is to know that Jehovah will not let us go through trials alone! (Isa. 41:

10) He is always with us as long as we serve him with true conviction.—Ps. 46:7.

<sup>18</sup> Another vital aid in manifesting conviction is *staying busy in Jehovah's service*. (1 Cor. 15:58) Paul and Silas were thrown into prison because they had been busy preaching the good news. Did they cease preaching because of their trials? No, they continued preaching even while in prison, and after they were released, they traveled to Thessalonica and went to the synagogue of the Jews to 'reason with them from the Scriptures.' (Acts 17:1-3) When we have a strong persuasion or belief in Jehovah and are convinced that we have the truth, nothing "will be able to separate us from God's love that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. 8:35-39.

<sup>19</sup> **Modern Examples of Strong Conviction:** There are many outstanding examples of those in our day who, like Paul and Silas, have demonstrated strong conviction. One sister who survived the Auschwitz concentration camp tells of the unshakable faith and conviction demonstrated by the brothers and sisters there. She relates: "Once during an interrogation, an officer came toward me with clenched fists. 'What are we going to do with you people?' he exclaimed. 'If we arrest you, you don't care. If we send you to prison, you don't care one bit. If we send you to the concentration camp, it doesn't worry you. When we sentence you to death, you just stand there unconcerned. What are we going to do with you?'" How faith strengthening it is to see the faith our brothers had under such harsh circumstances! They constantly looked to Jehovah for help to endure.

<sup>20</sup> Surely we remember the conviction of many of our brothers in the face of the ethnic hatred that has manifested itself in recent years. Despite finding themselves in dangerous situations, responsible brothers are intent on seeing that their brothers and sisters are being fed spiritually. All continue faithful with strong conviction that 'any weapon formed against them will have no success.'—Isa. 54:17.

<sup>21</sup> Many of our brothers and sisters with unbelieving mates are also manifesting strong faith and endurance. One brother in Guadeloupe met with strong opposition from his unbelieving wife. To discourage him and interfere with his attending Christian meetings, she would not prepare his meals or wash, iron, and mend his clothes. For days on end, she would not talk to him. But by manifesting heartfelt conviction in serving Jehovah and turning to him in prayer for help, this brother was able to endure it all. For how long? For some 20 years—after which his wife gradually had a change of heart. Eventually, he could truly rejoice because she accepted the hope of God's Kingdom.

<sup>22</sup> Finally, we must not forget the strong conviction of our young brothers and sisters who attend school each day and deal with peer pressure and other challenges. Concerning the pressure to conform in school, one young Witness girl stated: "When you're in school, everyone's always encouraging you to be a little rebellious. The kids respect you more if you do something on the edge." What pressure our young people face! They must be firmly resolved in mind and heart to resist temptation.

<sup>23</sup> Many of our young ones are doing well in maintaining their integrity despite trials. One example is that of a young sister who lives in France. One day after lunch, some boys tried to force her to kiss them, but she prayed and resisted strongly, so the boys left her alone. Later, one of them came back and told her that he admired her for her courage. She was able to give him a good witness about the Kingdom, explaining the high standards that Jehovah sets for all who want to share in its blessings. During the school year, she also explained her beliefs to the entire class.

<sup>24</sup> What a precious privilege we have to be counted among those whom Jehovah is pleased to use to speak with firm conviction about his will! (Col. 4:12) Additionally, we have the wonderful opportunity of proving our integrity when under attack by our lionlike Adversary, Satan the Devil. (1 Pet. 5:8, 9) Never forget that Jehovah is using the Kingdom message to bring salvation both to us who preach it and to those who listen. May the decisions that we make and our daily way of life prove that we put the Kingdom first. Let us continue preaching the good news with strong conviction!

## NEW PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

- New Publications Available:  
*Sing Praises to Jehovah—Large Print*  
(Lyrics only) —German  
*The Secret of Family Happiness*  
—Hiligaynon  
*What Does God Require of Us?* —Chichewa, Ewe, Kikuyu, Shona, Slovak, Slovenian, Venda  
*What Happens to Us When We Die?*  
—Bulgarian  
*Who Really Rules the World?* (Tract No. 22) —Yapese  
The *Awake!* is now available in Lithuanian as a semimonthly edition.
- New Audiocassettes Available:  
*Appreciating Our Spiritual Heritage*  
(Drama, single cassette) —English

- Preserving Life in Time of Famine* (Drama, single cassette) —Twi  
*The Watchtower and Awake!* on audio-cassette are now available in Czech.
- New Braille Publications Available:  
*Examining the Scriptures Daily—2000* (four volumes) —Grade-two English  
*Is There a Creator Who Cares About You?* (two volumes) —Grade-two French, Grade-two German  
*Is There a Creator Who Cares About You?* (three volumes) —Grade-one French, Grade-one Italian  
*Pay Attention to Daniel's Prophecy!* (three volumes) —Grade-two English

- Pay Attention to Daniel's Prophecy!* (four volumes) —Grade-one Spanish  
*Theocratic Ministry School Schedule for 2000* (one volume) —Grade-two English  
*What Does God Require of Us?* (one volume) —Grade-one Russian, Grade-two Swahili  
*When Someone You Love Dies* (one volume) —Grade-one Italian  
Please mark requests for Braille publications ATTENTION: BRAILLE DESK. Include name and address of the person who will use the Braille material.
- New Videocassettes Available:  
*Noah—He Walked With God*  
—French, Italian  
*The Bible—Its Power in Your Life*  
—Romanian

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Literature offer for **February**: *The Secret of Family Happiness*. **March**: *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. A special effort will be made to start home Bible studies. **April and May**: Individual copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* Have *Require* brochure available for interested people, and endeavor to start home Bible studies.

■ The secretary and the service overseer should review the activity of all regular pioneers. If any are having difficulty meeting the hour requirement, the elders should arrange for assistance to be given. For suggestions, review Society's annual S-201 letters dated October 1. See also paragraphs 12-20 of the August 1986 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert.

■ On Saturday, May 13, 2000, the Society's facilities in Brooklyn, Patterson, and Wallkill, New York, will be closed for spring cleaning. There will be no arrangements for tours or for congregations to pick up literature on that day.

■ The secretary should see that the Regional Building Committee is kept up-to-date on the status of all baptized publishers who have submitted Kingdom Hall Volunteer Worker Questionnaire (S-82) forms. When there are adjustments in a volunteer's status, such as when one moves or is appointed as a ministerial servant or elder, new forms should be filled out promptly and submitted. If a volunteer's mailing address or telephone

number changes, or if he is no longer in good standing in the congregation, the elders should immediately inform the regional committee by letter.

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

■ On occasion the Society issues a check to an individual, and the payee decides not to cash it, thinking that it will be viewed as a donation to the worldwide work. Please be advised that after a period of time, such checks are viewed as unclaimed property, and the funds have to be turned over to the State. If a person wants to donate the amount of the check, he should return the check to the Society with a brief note stating that it is to be considered as a donation.

■ Beginning the week of April 17, 2000, we will study *Pay Attention to Daniel's Prophecy!* in the Congregation Book Study.

■ When working unassigned territory, publishers may offer the *Knowledge* book or the *Require* brochure. Any other publication may be offered if the householder already has these two publications. All should carry a variety of tracts for not-at-homes or

individuals who do not accept literature. Efforts should be made to follow up interest, especially where unassigned territories may be worked by special pioneers or are accessible to nearby congregations.

### Pay Attention to How You Listen

Paying close attention is vital when attending congregation meetings, assemblies, and conventions. (Luke 8:18) How can you improve your listening ability?

- Avoid eating a heavy meal before meetings.
- Refuse to allow your mind to wander.
- Take brief notes of the main points.
- Look up the scriptures that are read.
- Participate when there is opportunity.
- Reflect on the material being presented.
- Think of ways to use what you hear.
- Afterward, discuss what you learned.

See the *Theocratic Ministry School Guidebook*, study 5.

## QUESTION BOX

■ Is it appropriate to applaud when a reinstatement is announced?

In his loving-kindness, Jehovah God has provided a Scriptural way for repentant wrongdoers to regain his favor and achieve reinstatement in the Christian congregation. (Ps. 51:12, 17) When this takes place, we are encouraged to confirm our love for such sincerely repentant ones.—2 Cor. 2:6-8.

Even so, as joyful as we are when a relative or acquaintance is reinstated, a quiet dignity should prevail at the time that the person's reinstatement is announced in the congregation. The *Watchtower* of October 1, 1998, page 17, expressed matters this way: "We must remember, however, that most in the congregation are not aware of the particular circumstances that led to a person's expulsion or to his reinstatement. In addition, there may be some who have been per-

sonally affected or hurt—perhaps even on a long-term basis—by the wrongdoing of the repentant one. Being sensitive to such matters, therefore, when an announcement of reinstatement is made, we would understandably withhold expressions of welcome until such can be made on a personal basis."

Although we are very happy to see someone return to the truth, applause at the time of his or her reinstatement would not be appropriate.

# How to Develop Reasoning Ability

<sup>1</sup> One definition of the word "reason" is "to talk with another so as to influence his actions or opinions." In order to improve your effectiveness in the ministry, you need to cultivate the ability to reason with those you meet. (Acts 17:2-4) But how can you develop this skill?

<sup>2</sup> **It Starts With Meditation:** When studying Bible truths, you will find it helpful to reflect upon the material. If points seem a little more involved, take time to do some research and meditate on the answers. Seek to understand clearly not only the explanations provided but also the Scriptural reasons for those explanations.

<sup>3</sup> **Preparation for the Ministry Is Involved:** Think about how you would explain the truth to various types of people. Formulate a thought-provoking ques-

tion to stimulate interest. Determine how to tie in a Scriptural point and reason on it. Anticipate objections that might be raised, and think about how to discuss them. Isolate in the publication being offered a highlight that would best apply.

<sup>4</sup> **Follow the Example of Jesus:** Jesus set the finest pattern of effectively reasoning from the Scriptures. To analyze how he taught, consider the account found at Luke 10:25-37. Note this process: (1) Direct attention to the Scriptures when answering people's questions. (2) Invite them to express themselves, and commend them when they make discerning comments. (3) Make sure that the connection between the question and the Scriptures is kept in focus. (4) Use an illustration with heart appeal to be certain that

the real import of the answer is understood.—See March 1, 1986, *Watchtower*, pages 27-8, paragraphs 8-10.

<sup>5</sup> **Use the Tool We Were Given:** *Reasoning From the Scriptures* was published as a field ministry handbook. Its introductions, responses to potential conversation stoppers, and reasoning points help us to develop reasoning ability. The *Reasoning* book is a valuable tool that we should always carry with us in service and not hesitate to use when engaging in Bible discussions. Review pages 7-8 of the book to see how to use it to greatest advantage.

<sup>6</sup> Developing your reasoning ability will enhance your skill in the preaching and teaching work. This will result in rich blessings to you and to those whom you meet in the ministry.

## What Can Help Us to Stand Firm in the Faith?

<sup>1</sup> Ever since we began associating with Jehovah's organization, our spiritual progress has proved to be a source of joy for us! Yet, to remain 'rooted, built up, and stabilized in the faith,' continued spiritual growth is necessary. (Col. 2:6, 7) While most have prospered spiritually, some have drifted away because of failing to "stand firm in the faith." (1 Cor. 16:13) We can prevent this from happening to us. How?

<sup>2</sup> **Constant Spiritual Activity:** Establish a good spiritual routine within Jehovah's organization. Here our spiritual needs are cared for abundantly. Congregation meetings, assemblies, and conventions spur us on to greater spiritual growth and stability, provided we are in con-

stant attendance to reap the benefits. (Heb. 10:24, 25) A regular routine of reading the Bible, the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, and the books that discuss the meat of God's Word will cause our spiritual roots to grow deep and strong. (Heb. 5:14) Setting personal spiritual goals and diligently working toward them will also bring lasting benefits.—Phil. 3:16.

<sup>3</sup> **Assistance From Mature Ones:** Seek to widen out in association with spiritually mature ones in the congregation. Get to know the elders, as they are primarily the ones who can strengthen us. (1 Thess. 2:11, 12) Welcome any counsel or suggestions they might offer. (Eph. 4: 11-16) Ministerial servants are also interested in helping others

to be made firm in the faith, so look to these brothers for encouragement.

<sup>4</sup> Do you need assistance in the ministry? Speak to the elders, and request help. Perhaps you can be included in the Pioneers Assist Others program. Are you newly baptized? Studying the *Our Ministry* book and applying what it contains will stimulate progress toward spiritual maturity. Are you a parent? Continually strengthen the spirituality of your children.—Eph. 6:4.

<sup>5</sup> By being rooted and stabilized in the faith, we enjoy a close relationship with Jehovah and warm association with our brothers. This enables us to withstand Satan's attacks, and strengthens our hope of an everlasting future.—1 Pet. 5:9, 10.