

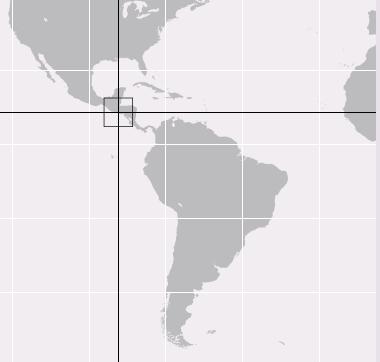
SEPTEMBER 2017

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
**OCTOBER 23–NOVEMBER 26, 2017**



COVER IMAGE:  
**EL SALVADOR**

Two couples share in public witnessing,  
using carts in front of one of the biggest  
malls in San Salvador

PUBLISHERS	41,084
BIBLE STUDIES	42,813
MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE (2016)	92,606

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THE WATCHTOWER®  
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

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## Cultivate Self-Control

*"The fruitage of the spirit is . . . self-control."*—GAL. 5:22, 23.

SELF-CONTROL is a godly quality. (Gal. 5:22, 23) Jehovah possesses self-control in perfect measure. Humans, however, are imperfect and therefore struggle to maintain self-control. Indeed, many of the problems that people face today stem from a lack of self-control. That lack may result in procrastination and underperformance in school or at work. It may also lead to verbal abuse, drunkenness, violence, divorce, needless debt, addiction, imprisonment, emotional trauma, sexually transmitted disease, and unwanted pregnancy, to name a few.—Ps. 34:11-14.

**2** Clearly, people who lack self-control are causing problems for themselves and for others. And the problem of lacking self-control is worsening. Self-discipline was studied in the 1940's, but recent studies have shown that people have become much worse at exercising self-discipline. This is no surprise to students of God's Word because the Bible foretold that one evidence that we are living in "the last days" is that men would be "without self-control."—2 Tim. 3:1-3.

**3** Why should you be interested in cultivating self-control? Consider two important reasons. First, it has been observed

- 1, 2. (a) What can result from a lack of self-control? (b) Why is the topic of self-control relevant today?
3. Why should Christians want to cultivate self-control?

SONGS: 121, 36

### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

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What should we learn from God's reaction to rebellion?

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What are some Bible examples of self-control and a lack of it?

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How can Bible study help us to cultivate the godly quality of self-control?

that people who are able to control their impulses generally have fewer major problems. They are more stable emotionally, they are better at forming wholesome relationships, and they are not as angry and prone to anxiety and depression as are impulsive people. Second, the ability to resist temptation and to control inappropriate impulses is fundamental to retaining God's favor. The failure of Adam and Eve illustrates this truth. (Gen. 3:6) And think of the sad results reaped by others who since then have failed to exercise this important quality.

<sup>4</sup> No imperfect human can exercise perfect self-control. Jehovah is aware of his servants' struggles in this regard, and he wants to help them dominate their sinful tendencies. (1 Ki. 8:46-50) As a loving Friend, he warmly encourages sincere individuals who want to serve him but who have a hard time exercising self-control in some area of life. Let us consider Jehovah's perfect example. Then we will learn from good examples and bad ones recounted in the Bible. And we can review practical suggestions that can help us to strengthen our self-control.

### JEHOVAH SETS THE EXAMPLE

<sup>5</sup> Jehovah exercises the quality of self-control perfectly, for he is perfect in all that he does. (Deut. 32:4) We, however, are imperfect. Even so, in order to understand the quality of self-control, we need to examine Jehovah's example so that we can better imitate him. What are

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4. What should be encouraging to any who are struggling to exercise self-control?

5, 6. What example does Jehovah provide regarding self-control?

some noteworthy instances when Jehovah displayed self-control?

<sup>6</sup> Think about how Jehovah exercised self-control in dealing with Satan's brazen rebellion. That challenge needed to be met. The Devil's challenge no doubt aroused indignation, anger, and contempt among heavenly creatures loyal to God. Perhaps you feel similar emotions when you consider all the suffering Satan has caused. Jehovah, however, did not react hastily. His response was measured and entirely fitting. He has been slow to anger and has been just in dealing with Satan's revolt. (Ex. 34:6; Job 2:2-6) Why? Jehovah has allowed time to pass because he does not want anyone to be destroyed but "desires all to attain to repentance."—2 Pet. 3:9.

<sup>7</sup> Jehovah's exercise of self-control teaches us that we too ought to weigh our words and consider our steps carefully; we should not rush into things. When you face an important issue, give yourself the time you need to act wisely. Pray for wisdom to say or do the right thing. (Ps. 141:3) In the heat of the moment, it is all too easy to react emotionally. Many of us have lived to regret hasty words or rash actions!—Prov. 14:29; 15:28; 19:2.

### EXAMPLES AMONG GOD'S SERVANTS —GOOD AND BAD

<sup>8</sup> What Bible examples underscore the value of controlling our reactions? You can no doubt recall several Bible characters who exercised appropriate restraint when tested. One is Jacob's son Joseph.

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7. What can we learn from Jehovah's example?

8. (a) Where can we look for examples of godly qualities? (b) What enabled Joseph to respond as he did when Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him? (See opening picture.)

He showed restraint when he was serving in the house of Potiphar, the chief of Pharaoh's guards. Potiphar's wife set her eyes on Joseph, who was "well-built and handsome," and she tried to seduce him. What prevented Joseph from succumbing to her repeated advances? No doubt, he took the time to consider what the consequences would be if he were to lower his guard. And when the situation became critical, he fled from her. He reasoned: "How could I commit this great badness and actually sin against God?"—Gen. 39:6, 9; **read Proverbs 1:10.**

**9** What does Joseph's example teach us? One thing is that we may need to flee from the temptation to break one of God's laws. In the past, some who are now Witnesses struggled with overeating, heavy drinking, smoking, drug abuse, sexual immorality, and the like. Even after baptism, they may at times be tempted to return to their former practices. Still, if you are ever tempted to break one of Jehovah's laws, strengthen yourself by taking time to ponder the disastrous spiritual consequences that you could face for failing to restrain sinful impulses. You can try to foresee situations in which temptations could likely present themselves and decide how you can avoid them. (Ps. 26:4, 5; Prov. 22:3) Should you ever face such a test, ask Jehovah to give you the wisdom and self-control to resist.

**10** Many young Christians face a trial like Joseph's. Consider Kim. Most of her

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9. How can you prepare yourself to resist temptations?

10, 11. (a) What reality do many adolescents have to face at school? (b) What can help young Christians to resist pressures to engage in wrong conduct?

classmates were sexually active, and after a typical weekend, they boasted of their latest sexual encounters. Kim had no such stories to tell. She admits that being different at times made her feel "abandoned and alone" and that her peers considered her stupid because she did not date. Yet, Kim was wise enough to know that among many youths the temptation to engage in sex is great. (2 Tim. 2:22) Schoolmates often asked whether she was still a virgin. That gave her the opportunity to explain why she would not engage in sex. We are proud of young Christians who are determined to resist pressure to share in sexual immorality, and Jehovah is proud of them too!

**11** The Bible gives warning examples of individuals who lacked self-control concerning sexual conduct. It also shows the sad consequences that can result from such uncontrolled behavior. Any-one facing a situation similar to that of Kim would do well to ponder the case of the naive young man described in Proverbs chapter 7. Think, too, of the course Amnon took and the terrible outcome of his behavior. (2 Sam. 13:1, 2, 10-15, 28-32) Parents might help their children to develop self-control and wisdom in regard to romantic relationships by discussing the topic during family worship, using the Bible passages just mentioned.

**12** On another occasion, Joseph again set a fine example of self-control. To understand what was in his brothers' hearts, Joseph concealed his identity when they appeared before him in Egypt to buy food. And when his feelings were

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12. (a) How did Joseph restrain his emotions in dealing with his brothers? (b) In what situations must we restrain our emotions?

particularly intense, he withdrew to a private place to hide his tears. (Gen. 43: 30, 31; 45:1) If a fellow Christian or a loved one displays poor judgment, your showing restraint similar to that of Joseph might help you to avoid an impulsive reaction. (Prov. 16:32; 17:27) If you have disfellowshipped relatives, you may need to control your feelings in order to avoid unnecessary contact with them. Self-restraint in such situations is not automatic, yet it is easier if we realize that our actions are in line with God's example and in harmony with his counsel.

<sup>13</sup> The Bible offers a notable example in King David. He wielded great power but refrained from using it out of anger when provoked by Saul and Shimei. (1 Sam. 26:9-11; 2 Sam. 16:5-10) That is not to say that David always controlled himself, as we know from his sin with Bath-sheba and his initial reaction to Nabal's greed. (1 Sam. 25:10-13; 2 Sam. 11:2-4) Nevertheless, we can learn valuable lessons from David. First, overseers among God's people need to be especially careful to exercise self-control so that they do not abuse their authority. Second, no one can be complacent, thinking that he is safe from temptation.

—1 Cor. 10:12.

#### PRACTICAL THINGS YOU CAN DO

<sup>14</sup> What can you do to work on your self-control? Consider this real-life situation. A vehicle rear-ended Luigi's car. Despite being in the wrong, the other

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13. What lessons can we learn from accounts concerning King David?

14. What experience did one brother have, and why are our reactions in similar situations important?

driver insulted Luigi and tried to start a fight. Luigi prayed, asked Jehovah to help him keep his composure, and tried to calm the other driver—but to no avail. Luigi made a note of the man's insurance details and left while the man was still shouting. A week later, Luigi was making a return visit on a woman and he learned that her husband was the other driver! The man was embarrassed and apologized for his tirade. He offered to contact Luigi's insurance company to speed up the claim. The man took part in the spiritual conversation and appreciated what was being said. In hindsight, Luigi could see how important it was that he had kept calm after the accident and how detrimental it could have been had he lost his temper.—**Read 2 Corinthians 6:3, 4.**

<sup>15</sup> Diligent and conscientious Bible study can help Christians to develop self-control. Recall that God told Joshua: "This book of the Law should not depart from your mouth, and you must read it in an undertone day and night, in order to observe carefully all that is written in it; for then your way will be successful and then you will act wisely." (Josh. 1:8) How is it that Bible study can help you to cultivate self-control?

<sup>16</sup> As we have just noted, the Scriptures contain accounts that vividly illustrate both the benefits and the consequences of our actions. Jehovah had these accounts recorded for a purpose. (Rom. 15:4) How wise it is to read them, meditate on them, and study them! Try to grasp how they apply to you and your family. Ask Jehovah to help you to ap-

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15, 16. How can Bible study help you and your family to cultivate self-control?

Keeping calm or losing our temper can directly or indirectly affect our Christian ministry  
*(See paragraph 14)*



ply his Word. If you discern that you are deficient in some aspect of self-control, admit it. Then pray about it, and strive to see how you can improve. (Jas. 1:5) No doubt, research in our Christian publications can help you to locate relevant material that will further help you.

17 How can you help your children to develop self-control? Parents know that this quality does not come naturally to young people. And as is the case with all qualities that their children need to learn, parents should set the example. (Eph. 6:4) So if you see that your children are struggling to control their impulses, ask yourself whether you are setting a fine example. Do not minimize the good effect of your being regular in the field service, in attending meetings, and in conducting family worship. Do not be afraid to say no to your children's requests if need be! Jehovah set limits for Adam and Eve—limits that could have

instilled in them a proper regard for his authority. Similarly, parental discipline and example have the goal of teaching children self-control. Love for God's authority and respect for his standards are among the most precious things that you can cultivate in your children.

**—Read Proverbs 1:5, 7, 8.**

18 Certainly, whether you are a parent or not, you should not overlook the need to choose your associations wisely. Seek the company of those who will encourage you to pursue worthwhile goals and avoid trouble. (Prov. 13:20) Spiritually-minded associates will have a positive influence on you, moving you to imitate their course of life marked by self-control. And no doubt your good conduct will encourage your friends. The self-control that results is fundamental to your enjoying everyday life in God's favor and to sharing good things with your loved ones.

17. In what ways can parents help their children to develop self-control?

18. Why can you be confident that good associations will prove to be a blessing?



## Imitate Jehovah's Compassion

*"Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and compassionate."*

—EX. 34:6.

SONGS: 57, 147

### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

Why can it sometimes  
be a challenge to show  
compassion?

How does Jehovah teach  
his people to manifest  
compassion?

In what circumstances can  
you exercise the godly quality  
of compassion?

ON ONE occasion, God revealed himself to Moses by declaring His own name and qualities. The first ones that he listed were mercy and compassion. (**Read Exodus 34:5-7.**) Jehovah could have stressed his power or his wisdom. Yet, to Moses, who was seeking reassurance of God's backing, Jehovah emphasized instead qualities that underscore his willingness to help his servants. (Ex. 33:13) Do you not find it heartwarming that God mentioned these endearing traits ahead of any others? This article will focus on the quality of compassion, a sympathetic awareness of another's suffering or adversity coupled with a desire to lessen it.

<sup>2</sup> Humans were made in God's image. Accordingly, because Jehovah is compassionate, interest in others' well-being is rooted in human nature. Even those who do not know the true God often show compassion. (Gen. 1:27) We find many

1. In what special way did Jehovah reveal himself to Moses, and why is this significant?
- 2, 3. (a) What shows that compassion is part of human nature?  
(b) Why should you be interested in what the Bible says about compassion?

accounts in the Bible where a sense of compassion shines through. Recall the account of the two prostitutes who argued before Solomon over which one of them was the actual mother of a child. When Solomon put them to the test by ordering that the baby be cut in half, the real mother's compassion was stirred. That moved her to act, even at the cost of giving the child up to the other woman. (1 Ki. 3:23-27) Or recall Pharaoh's daughter who saved baby Moses' life. Though she realized that the infant she had found was a child of the Hebrews and should not be kept alive, "she felt compassion for him" and decided to raise the child as her own.—Ex. 2:5, 6.

**3** Why should the topic of compassion interest you? Because the Bible urges you to imitate Jehovah. (Eph. 5:1) Yet, while humans were created to be compassionate, our imperfection as descendants of Adam inclines us toward self-interest. Sometimes we may find that it is not easy to decide whether we will help others or concentrate on ourselves. For some, this is an ongoing conflict, or a balancing act. What can help you to develop and maintain your interest in others? First, take time to examine how Jehovah has shown compassion and how others have shown it. Second, consider how you can imitate God's example and how your doing so is truly beneficial.

### JEHOVAH—THE PERFECT MODEL OF COMPASSION

**4** We find many instances where Jehovah's compassion must have been involved. Think of what God did for Lot. That righteous man was "greatly dis-

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4. (a) Why did Jehovah send angels to Sodom? (b) What does the account about Lot and his daughters teach us?

tressed" by the brazen conduct of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. Indeed, God determined that those immoral people deserved to die. (2 Pet. 2:7, 8) God sent angels to rescue Lot. They urged him and his family to flee from the doomed cities. "When he kept lingering, then because of Jehovah's compassion for him, the [angels] seized hold of his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, and they brought him out and stationed him outside the city." (Gen. 19:16) Does that example not indicate that Jehovah is fully aware of the difficult situations in which his faithful people sometimes find themselves?—Isa. 63:7-9; Jas. 5:11, ftn.; 2 Pet. 2:9.

**5** Not only has Jehovah shown compassion but he has also taught his people the need to display that quality. Consider the law given to Israel regarding the seizing of a man's garment as security for a loan. (**Read Exodus 22:26, 27.**) A hard-hearted lender might have been tempted to seize the debtor's garment, leaving him without a covering in which to sleep. Yet, Jehovah taught his people to avoid such an unfeeling attitude and course. His people were to be compassionate. Does not the principle reflected in that particular law move us to action? Would we want to leave our brothers out in the cold, so to speak, if there is something that we can do to relieve their suffering?—Col. 3:12; Jas. 2:15, 16; **read 1 John 3:17.**

**6** Jehovah felt compassion for his people Israel even when they sinned. We

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5. How does God's Word, such as at 1 John 3:17, help us learn to show compassion?

6. What lesson can we draw from Jehovah's persistent efforts to reform the sinful Israelites?

read: “Jehovah the God of their forefathers kept warning them by means of his messengers, warning them again and again, because he felt compassion for his people and for his dwelling place.” (2 Chron. 36:15) Should we not feel similar compassion for people who could potentially repent over a sinful life course and gain God’s favor? Jehovah does not want any to be destroyed in the coming judgment. (2 Pet. 3:9) So until God acts to destroy the wicked, let us continue to proclaim his compassionate warning message.

7 Many experiences could be used to illustrate God’s acts of compassion. Consider what happened to the family of a 12-year-old lad whom we will call Milan. It was during a time of ethnic strife in the early 1990’s. Milan, his brother, his parents, and a number of other Witnesses were riding on a bus from Bosnia to Serbia. They were on their way to a convention at which Milan’s parents intended to get baptized. But at the border, soldiers pulled the family off the bus because of their ethnicity; yet, they allowed the other brothers to proceed. After holding the family for two days, the officer in charge radioed his superior to ask what should be done with them. The officer was standing right in front of the family, so all heard the response, “Just take them out and shoot them!”

8 As the officer spoke to his men, two strangers came up to the family and quietly identified themselves as Witnesses. They had heard of the crisis from others on the bus. The two told Milan and his brother to get into their car to cross the border, as the children’s papers were

not being checked. The newcomers then told the parents to walk around the back of the border post and meet them on the other side. Milan did not know whether to laugh or to cry at this suggestion. “Do you think they are just going to let us walk off?” his parents asked. Yet, as they walked away, it seemed as if the soldiers were staring right through them. The parents and children were reunited on the other side of the border. They proceeded to the convention city, convinced that Jehovah had answered their desperate prayers for help. We know from the Bible that there have been times when Jehovah did not directly intervene to protect his servants. (Acts 7: 58-60) Yet, Milan shares how he felt. He says, “It seemed to me that the angels blinded the soldiers and that Jehovah rescued us.”—Ps. 97:10.

9 We can learn a lesson from Jesus. He felt compassion for the crowds he met, for “they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd.” How did he react to their pitiful state? “He started to teach them many things.” (Matt. 9:36; **read Mark 6:34.**) His attitude was in stark contrast to that of the Pharisees, who had no desire to help the common people. (Matt. 12:9-14; 23:4; John 7:49) Do you not feel a yearning, similar to what Jesus had, to feed spiritually famished people?

10 That is not to say that compassion is to be shown in every situation. God’s compassion was appropriate in the Bible examples mentioned above. How-

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9. How did Jesus respond to the condition of the crowds who followed him? (See opening picture.)

10, 11. Is compassion always appropriate? Explain.

7, 8. Why did one family believe that Jehovah had exercised compassion toward them?

ever, King Saul was disobedient when he showed what he may have felt was compassion. He spared the life of Agag, an enemy of God's people, and he also spared the best of the flock. Consequently, Jehovah rejected Saul from being king over Israel. (1 Sam. 15:3, 9, 15, ftn.) Jehovah, of course, is the righteous Judge. He can read people's hearts, and he knows when compassion is not warranted. (Lam. 2:17; Ezek. 5:11) The time is coming when he will execute judgment on all those who refuse to obey him. (2 Thess. 1:6-10) That will not be the time for him to show compassion for those whom he has judged to be wicked. Rather, executing them will be an appropriate expression of God's compassion for the righteous, whom he will preserve.

**11** Clearly, it is not our role to judge whether people should be executed or preserved alive. Instead, we need to do all we can now to *help* people. So how can we manifest fitting compassion for our fellow man in practical ways? Consider a number of suggestions.

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Show your compassion for others  
by offering practical help  
(See paragraph 12)

## CULTIVATING AND SHOWING APPROPRIATE COMPASSION

**12** *Be helpful in everyday life.* Showing compassion for one's neighbor and Christian brothers is a basic requirement of those who strive to imitate Jesus. (John 13:34, 35; 1 Pet. 3:8) One meaning of compassion is "to suffer together." A person who shows compassion is moved to relieve others' suffering, perhaps by helping them out of their difficulties. Seek opportunities to do so! For example, could you help someone by offering to perform a necessary chore, maybe running an errand for him?—Matt. 7:12.

**13** *Share in relief work.* The sufferings of those struck by disasters move many to manifest compassion. Jehovah's people are known for coming forward to help in such times of need. (1 Pet. 2:17) One Japanese sister lived in an area that was seriously damaged by the

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12. How can you show a compassionate attitude in your dealings with others?

13. What qualities of God's people become particularly evident in the aftermath of disasters?



earthquake and tsunami of 2011. She says that she was “very encouraged and comforted” by the efforts of the many volunteers from elsewhere in Japan and from overseas to repair property damage. She writes: “This experience helped me to realize that Jehovah cares. And fellow Witnesses care about one another. Many brothers and sisters all over the world are praying for us.”

**14 Assist the sick and the elderly.** When we see others experiencing the effects of Adamic sin, we are rightly moved to show compassion. We long to see sickness and aging brought to an end. So we pray for God’s Kingdom to come. In the meantime, we do what we can to assist those in need. Consider what one author wrote about his elderly mother, who suffered from Alzheimer’s disease. One day, she soiled her clothes. As she was trying to clean up, the doorbell rang. The visitors turned out to be two Witnesses who regularly called on the woman. The sisters asked if there was anything they could do to help. “It is embarrassing but yes,” the woman replied. The visitors helped her to clean up. Then they made her a cup of tea and stayed for a chat. The son was most grateful. “Hats off to these Witnesses,” he wrote. “They practice what they preach.” Does your compassion for the sick and the elderly move you to do all you can to lessen their suffering?—Phil. 2:3, 4.

**15 Help people spiritually.** People’s problems and worries move us to want to help them spiritually. The best way we can do that is by teaching them about God and

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14. How can you assist the sick and the elderly?
  15. What important opportunities does our preaching work offer?

about what his Kingdom will do for mankind. Another way is by helping them to see the wisdom of living by godly standards. (Isa. 48:17, 18) Could you increase the share you are having in the ministry, a work that truly honors Jehovah and manifests your compassion for others?—1 Tim. 2:3, 4.

### **COMPASSION IS GOOD FOR YOU TOO!**

**16** Mental-health experts say that practicing compassion can improve your health, well-being, and relationships. When you relieve the suffering of others, you will feel happier, more optimistic, less lonely, and less inclined to think negative thoughts. Yes, your showing compassion will benefit you. (Eph. 4:31, 32) Christians who lovingly seek to help others are rewarded with a good conscience, knowing that they are acting in harmony with godly principles. Having such a disposition makes for a more caring parent, a better spouse, and a better friend. Those who are quick to show compassion are, in turn, more likely to receive help and support when they need it.—**Read Matthew 5:7; Luke 6:38.**

**17** Knowing that compassion is good for you should not be your main reason for wanting to cultivate it. The principal reason should be your desire to imitate and glorify the Source of love and compassion, Jehovah God. (Prov. 14:31) He sets the perfect example for us. May we do all we can, then, to imitate him—to promote warm affection among our brothers and good relations with our neighbors by showing compassion.—Gal. 6:10; 1 John 4:16.

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16. How does a compassionate person benefit himself?
  17. Why do you want to cultivate and show compassion?



# I Have Been Blessed to Work With Spiritual Men

AS TOLD BY DAVID SINCLAIR

IN THE mid-1930's, my father and mother—James and Jessie Sinclair—moved to the Bronx, a borough of New York City. One of their new acquaintances was Willie Sneddon, who came from Scotland, as they did. Within minutes of their first encounter, the three were talking about their families. That was a couple of years before I was born.

Mother told Willie that shortly before the Great War, her father and her older brother drowned when their fishing boat hit a mine in the North Sea. Willie responded, "Your father is in hell!" Willie was one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and this was my mother's shocking introduction to Bible truth.

What Willie said upset my mother because she knew that her father was a good man. But Willie added, "Would it do any good if I told you that Jesus went to hell?" Mother recalled the church creed, which in its original form stated that Jesus descended into hell and was raised on the third day. So she wondered, 'If hell is a fiery place

where the wicked are tormented, why did Jesus go there?' This was the beginning of my mother's interest in the truth. She began attending meetings with the Bronx Congregation and got baptized in 1940.

At that time, Christian parents were given no special encouragement to study the Bible with their children. When I was a toddler, my father would care for me while my mother attended meetings and shared in the witnessing work on weekends. After a few years, he and I began attending meetings with my mother. She was very active in preaching the good news and conducted several Bible studies with interested people. In fact, there was a time when she held some of her studies as a group because her students lived quite near to one another. I accompanied her in field service during my school vacations. In that way, I learned a lot about the Bible and how to teach others what it says.

I am sorry to say that when I was little, I didn't fully appreciate the truth. I took it

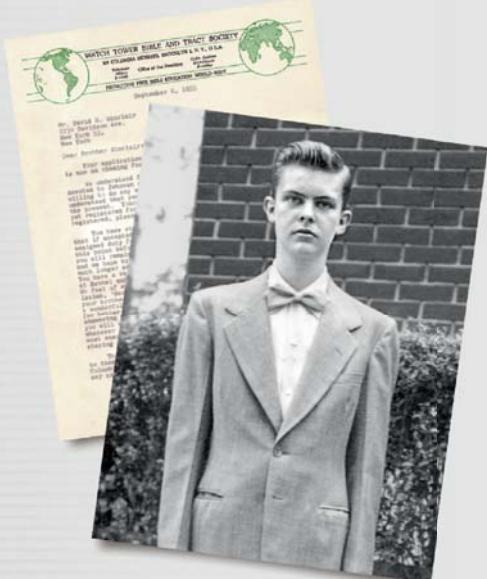


With my mother,  
and later  
with my father



Willie and  
Liz Sneddon

Letter inviting me  
to serve at Bethel



At age 17, I began my service  
at Brooklyn Bethel

for granted. However, when I was about 12, I became a Kingdom publisher and regularly shared in the field ministry from then on. At the age of 16, I dedicated my life to Jehovah, getting baptized on July 24, 1954, at a convention in Toronto, Canada.

### SERVING AT BETHEL

Some brothers in our congregation were or had been members of the Bethel family. They had a strong influence on me. Their abilities in speaking and explaining Bible truths impressed me. Although my school-teachers wanted me to attend university, my goal was to go to Bethel. Therefore, I turned in a Bethel application at that convention in Toronto. I did so again in 1955 at a convention in Yankee Stadium, New York City. Not long thereafter, when I was 17 years old, I received an invitation to start serving at Brooklyn Bethel on September 19, 1955. On my second day at Bethel, I began working in the Bindery at 117 Adams Street. I was soon working on a gathering machine, which assembled 32-page sections of books to get them ready for a machine that sewed the books.

After about a month in the Bindery, I was sent to the Magazine Department because I knew how to type. Back then, brothers and sisters typed address stencils (small metal plates) for new subscribers to *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* A few months later, I was working in the Shipping Department. Klaus Jensen, the department overseer, asked me if I would be willing to accompany the driver who was taking cartons of literature by truck to the docks for shipping worldwide. There were also sacks of magazines to be brought to the post office for mailing to congregations throughout the United States. Brother Jensen said that he thought the physical

work would do me good. I weighed only about 125 pounds (57 kg) and was as skinny as a rail. Those trips to the docks and the post office helped to strengthen me physically. Brother Jensen evidently knew what was good for me!

The Magazine Department also filled congregation requests for magazines. Thus I learned about languages in which our magazines were printed in Brooklyn and sent to other parts of the world. I had never heard of many of the languages but was happy to know that tens of thousands of magazines were being sent to far-flung places. Though I did not know it at the time, I would have the privilege of visiting many of those places in the years to come.

In 1961, I was assigned to work in the Treasurer's Office under the oversight of

Grant Suiter. After a couple of years there, I was called to the office of Nathan Knorr, who was then taking the lead in our worldwide work. He explained that one of the brothers working in his office was going to attend the Kingdom Ministry School for a month, after which he would work in the Service Department. I was assigned to take his place and work alongside Don Adams. By coincidence, Don was the brother who had accepted my Bethel application at the 1955 convention. Two other brothers already working in the same office were Robert Wallen and Charles Molohan. The four of us worked together for over 50 years. What a joy it has been to serve with such faithful spiritual men!—Ps. 133:1.

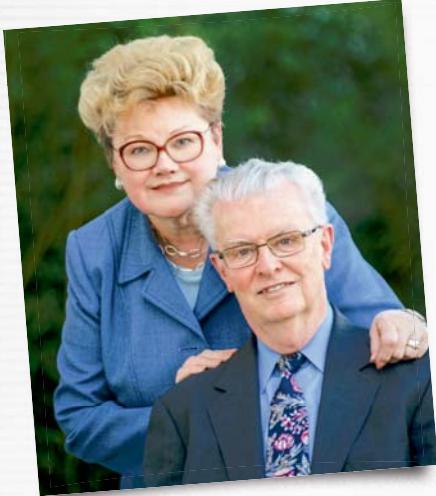
Starting in 1970, I was assigned to travel for a few weeks every year or two to visit a number of branch offices of the



124 Columbia Heights,  
where I worked for decades



With Robert Wallen, Charles Molohan,  
and Don Adams



With Livija

Watch Tower Society, making what were then called zone visits. This involved visiting Bethel families and missionaries worldwide, giving spiritual encouragement, and checking branch office records. What a joy it was to meet some who had graduated from the early classes of Gilead School and were still serving faithfully in their foreign assignments! It has been a privilege and a delight to visit over 90 countries in connection with that work.

#### I FOUND A FAITHFUL COMPANION

All Bethel family members in Brooklyn were assigned to congregations in the New York City area. The one that I was assigned to was in the Bronx. The first congregation in that borough had grown and divided. That original one became known as the Upper Bronx Congregation, which I attended.

In the mid-1960's, a Latvian family of Witnesses who had come into the truth in the south Bronx moved into the territory of that congregation. Livija, the eldest daughter, became a regular pioneer as soon as she finished high school. A few months

later, she moved to Massachusetts to serve where the need for Kingdom publishers was greater. I began writing to her with news about the congregation, and she would write back to tell me of her success in the ministry in the Boston area.

A few years later, Livija was appointed to be a special pioneer. She wanted to do as much as she could in Jehovah's service, so she applied for Bethel and was invited to come in 1971. It seemed that this might be a hint from Jehovah! On October 27, 1973, we got married and were privileged to have Brother Knorr deliver our wedding talk. Proverbs 18:22 says: "The one who finds a good wife has found something good, and he receives Jehovah's favor." Livija and I have thus been favored with over 40 years together in Bethel service. And we continue to support a congregation in the same general area of the Bronx.

#### SHOULDER TO SHOULDER WITH CHRIST'S BROTHERS

Working with Brother Knorr was truly a pleasure. He was a tireless worker for the truth and had tremendous appreciation for the missionaries around the world. Many of them were the first Witnesses in the countries to which they were assigned. It was very sad to see Brother Knorr suffer from cancer in 1976. Once, when he was bedridden, he asked me to read to him some material that was being processed for printing. He asked me to call Frederick Franz so that he too could come and listen to the reading. I later found out that because of Brother Franz' failing eyesight, Brother Knorr had been spending considerable time reading such material to him.

Brother Knorr died in 1977, but those who knew and loved him were comforted

because he had finished his earthly course faithfully. (Rev. 2:10) Thereafter, Brother Franz took the lead in our work.

By that time, I was doing secretarial duties for Milton Henschel, who had worked with Brother Knorr for decades. Brother Henschel informed me that my foremost responsibility at Bethel would now be to help Brother Franz in any way needed. I would regularly read material to him before it was printed. Brother Franz had a remarkable memory and the amazing ability to concentrate totally on what was being read. What a joy it was to help him in that way until he finished his earthly course in December 1992!

The 61 years that I have spent at Bethel have passed quickly. My parents both died faithful to Jehovah, and I look forward to

welcoming them back in a much better world. (John 5:28, 29) Nothing that this old system of things offers can compare with the wonderful privilege of working with faithful men and women in behalf of God's people around the world. Livija and I can truthfully say that during our years in full-time service, "the joy of Jehovah [has been our] stronghold."—Neh. 8:10.

No human is indispensable in Jehovah's organization, and the work of spreading Kingdom truths continues. It has been a joy and a privilege to work with many stalwart and loyal brothers and sisters over the years. Most of the anointed ones with whom I have worked are no longer here on earth. But I am grateful to have been a companion of such faithful spiritual ones in Jehovah's service.

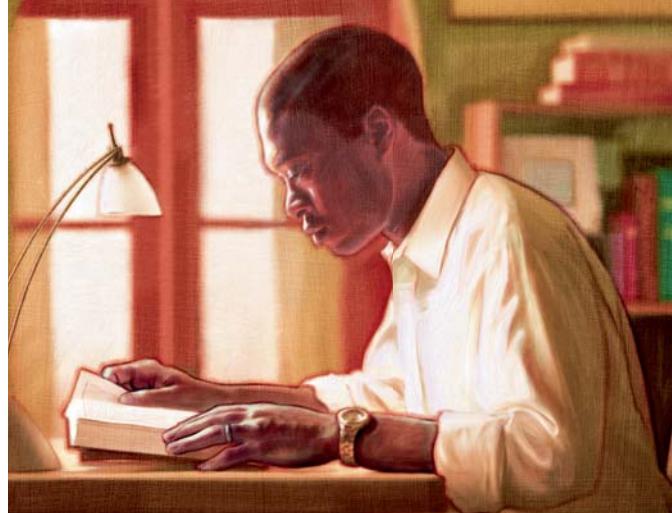
My first zone visit in Venezuela, in 1970



On a zone visit with Daniel and Marina Sydlik in 1977

What a delight to visit brothers in over  
**90 countries!**





## “The Word of Our God Endures Forever”

*“The green grass dries up, the blossom withers, but the word of our God endures forever.”—ISA. 40:8.*

SONGS: 95, 97

HOW HAS GOD'S WORD  
ENDURED . . .

changes in language?

political developments?

opposition to translation?

CAN you imagine what your life would be like without the Bible? You would have no reliable advice for day-to-day living. You would not have satisfying answers to questions about God, life, and the future. And you would not know of Jehovah's past dealings with the human family.

2 Thankfully, we do not face such a bleak situation. Jehovah has provided us with his Word, the Bible. And he has guaranteed that its message will endure forever. The apostle Peter quoted Isaiah 40:8. That verse does not specifically refer to the Bible as we know it; yet, the inspired words apply by extension to the Bible's message. (**Read 1 Peter 1:24, 25.**) Of course, we can benefit from the Bible particularly if it is available in a language that we understand well. Those who love God's Word have long recognized that fact. Although it has not always been easy, over the centuries sincere individuals have persevered in translating and distributing the Scriptures. Their desire was in harmony with God's will that “all sorts of people should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth.”—1 Tim. 2:3, 4.

1, 2. (a) What would life be like without the Bible? (b) We can benefit from God's Word especially if what is true?

**3** In this article, we will consider examples of how God's Word has endured (1) changes in language, (2) political developments that influenced the lingua franca, or common language, and (3) opposition to Bible translation. How will we benefit from this review? It will deepen our appreciation for God's Word. It will also deepen our love for the Author of the Bible, who provided it for our benefit.—Mic. 4:2; Rom. 15:4.

### CHANGES IN LANGUAGE

**4** Over time, languages tend to change. Words and expressions may come to mean something completely different. Perhaps you can think of examples of how a language that you speak has changed. The same is true of Hebrew and Greek, the languages that most of the Bible was written in. Modern Hebrew and Greek are quite different from those languages back in Bible times. So virtually everyone who wants to understand God's Word must read a translation of it—even those who know modern-day Hebrew or Greek. Some have felt that they should learn ancient Hebrew and Greek so that they could read the Bible in the original languages. That, however, may not be as profitable as they imagine.\* Thankfully, the Bible or portions of it have now been translated into nearly 3,000 languages. Clearly, Jehovah wants peo-

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\* See the article "Do You Need to Learn Hebrew and Greek?" in the November 1, 2009, issue of *The Watchtower*.

3. What will we consider in this article? (See opening picture.)

4. (a) How do languages change over time? (b) What shows that our God is not partial toward any language group, and how does that make you feel?

ple of "every nation and tribe and language" to have the opportunity to benefit from his Word. (**Read Revelation 14:6, footnote.**) Does that not draw you even closer to our loving and impartial God?—Acts 10:34.

**5** The reality that languages change over time also applies to the languages into which the Bible has been translated. A Bible translation that was easily understood when first produced may later become less effective. Consider an example involving a Bible translation into English. The *King James Version* was first produced in 1611. It became one of the most popular English Bibles, and it would come to have a significant impact on the English language.\* Notably, the *King James Version* drew only limited attention to God's name. It used "Jehovah" in a few verses, and it used the word "LORD" in capital letters in other verses in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name originally occurred. Later printings also used the word "LORD" in capital letters in some verses in the Christian Greek Scriptures. In that sense, the *King James Version* acknowledged the rightful place of God's name in the so-called New Testament.

**6** Even so, much of the wording in the *King James Version* became archaic over the centuries. The same is true of early Bible translations in other languages.

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\* A number of English idioms can be traced back to the *King James Version*. Examples include: "fell flat on his face," "the skin of my teeth," and "pour out your heart."—Num. 22:31; Job 19:20; Ps. 62:8.

5. What made the *King James Version* significant?

6. Why are we grateful for the *New World Translation*?

Are we not grateful, then, to have the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*? This translation is available in whole or in part in over 150 languages, thus being available to a vast part of the population today. Its clear wording allows the message of God's Word to reach our heart. (Ps. 119:97) Significantly, the *New World Translation* restores God's name to its rightful place in the Scriptures.

### COMMON LANGUAGE

<sup>7</sup> Political developments have sometimes influenced which language was the lingua franca, or common language, at any given time. How has God seen to it that such developments do not make his Word unclear to people? An example from the past helps us to find the answer. The first 39 books of the Bible were written by Israelites, or the Jews. They were the people initially "entrusted with the sacred pronouncements of God." (Rom. 3:1, 2) However, by the third century B.C.E., many Jews no longer understood Hebrew. Why not? Because Alexander the Great had expanded the Grecian Empire by means of his conquests. (Dan. 8:5-7, 20, 21) As that empire spread, Greek became the common language of many of its subjects, including Jews who were scattered over a vast area. But as many Jews became Greek-speaking, understanding the Hebrew Scriptures became more difficult for most. What was the solution?

<sup>8</sup> About the middle of the third century B.C.E., the first five books of the Bible were translated from Hebrew into

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7, 8. (a) Why were many Jews in the third century B.C.E. unable to understand the Hebrew Scriptures? (b) What is the Greek *Septuagint*?

Greek. Translation of the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures was completed in the second century B.C.E. The resulting collection of Bible books came to be known as the Greek *Septuagint*. The *Septuagint* is the first known written translation of the entire Hebrew Scriptures.

<sup>9</sup> The *Septuagint* did much to make the Hebrew Scriptures readable to Greek-speaking Jews and others. Just think how thrilling it must have been for them to hear or read God's Word in what had become their mother tongue! In time, portions of the Bible were translated into other common languages, such as Syriac, Gothic, and Latin. As readers considered the Holy Writings in a language they could understand, no doubt many came to have a favorite portion, just as we do today. (**Read Psalm 119:162-165.**) Indeed, God's Word has continued to endure despite changes to the common language.

### OPPOSITION TO BIBLE TRANSLATION

<sup>10</sup> At times, very powerful forces have tried to keep the Bible from the common people. However, sincere individuals have stood up to such opposition. For example, consider a 14th-century theologian named John Wycliffe. He strongly believed that everyone should be able to benefit from God's Word. But in his time, the common people in England had virtually no access to the Bible. Why not? For one thing, most could not afford to own a Bible, as copies were handwritten and very expensive to pro-

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9. (a) How did the *Septuagint* and other early translations affect readers of God's Word? (b) What is your favorite portion of the Hebrew Scriptures?

10. Why did most people have virtually no access to the Bible in John Wycliffe's time?

duce. Moreover, the majority of people were illiterate. Of course, they may have heard passages read when they went to church. It is doubtful, though, that they would have understood what they heard. Why? Because the official Church Bible (the *Vulgate*) was written in Latin. Yet, in the Middle Ages, Latin was essentially a dead language among the common people! How would the Bible's precious treasures be unlocked for them?—Prov. 2:1-5.

11 In 1382, the English translation later known as the Wycliffe Bible was produced. It quickly gained popularity among followers of Wycliffe. Desiring to get God's Word into the mind and heart of ordinary people, itinerant preachers, known as the Lollards, traveled on foot from village to village throughout England. Often the Lollards read portions of the Wycliffe Bible to those whom they met, and they left handwritten copies behind. Their efforts marked a real turning point, sparking a renewed interest in God's Word among the people.

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11. What was the impact of the Wycliffe Bible?

12 What was the reaction of the clergy? They showed hatred for Wycliffe, his Bible, and his followers. The religious authorities persecuted the Lollards and hunted down and destroyed as many copies of the Wycliffe Bible as they could find. Even after his death, Wycliffe was declared a heretic. Of course, it was not possible to punish someone who was no longer alive. Still, the clergy had Wycliffe's bones exhumed and burned and the ashes thrown into the river Swift. But the Church was unable to halt the momentum of God's Word among those who desired to read and understand it. In the centuries that followed, many in Europe and other parts of the world began to promote translation and distribution of the Bible for the benefit of the common people.

**“THE ONE TEACHING YOU  
TO BENEFIT YOURSELF”**

13 Christians today need not think that the work of translating the *Septuagint*,

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12. How did the clergy react to Wycliffe and his movement?

13. Of what are we convinced, and how does this strengthen our faith?

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John Wycliffe and others desired to make God's Word available to everyone. Do you have such a desire?  
(See paragraph 11)



Wycliffe's Bible, the *King James Version*, or any other translation was inspired by God. Nevertheless, when we review the history of these and many other translations that have been published, it gives support to this fact: Just as Jehovah promised, his Word has endured. Does that not strengthen your faith that all the other promises Jehovah has made will likewise come true?—Josh. 23:14.

14 Besides strengthening our faith, reviewing how the Bible has endured through the ages deepens our love for Jehovah.\* After all, why did he provide his Word in the first place? And why did he guarantee that it would survive? Be-

\* Note the box “See It for Yourself!”

14. How does God's Word deepen our love for him?

cause he loves us, and he wants to teach us how to benefit ourselves. (**Read Isaiah 48:17, 18.**) Naturally, it is fitting that we respond to Jehovah's love by loving him in return and by obeying his commandments.—1 John 4:19; 5:3.

15 It is only sensible to conclude that because we appreciate God's Word, we will want to derive full benefit from it. How can we get the most out of our personal Bible reading? What can help us to direct attention to the Bible in the ministry? How can those who teach from the platform make the Scriptures the focus of their teaching? We will consider the answers to those questions in the next article.

15. What will we consider in the following article?



## See It for Yourself!

On April 3, 2017, a Bible museum opened at our world headquarters in Warwick, New York, U.S.A. The permanent gallery of this museum is entitled “The Bible and the Divine Name.” The new museum also includes a rotational gallery that features rare Bibles and Bible-related artifacts. We invite you to visit the Bible museum and the other museums located at headquarters. Please go to [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org) to make a reservation for your visit. Look under **ABOUT US > OFFICES & TOURS.**



## “The Word of God . . . Exerts Power”

*“The word of God is alive and exerts power.”—HEB. 4:12.*

AS Jehovah’s people, we have no doubt that God’s word, his message to humans, “is alive and exerts power.” (Heb. 4:12) Many of us are living proof of the Bible’s power to change lives. Some of our brothers and sisters were formerly thieves, drug addicts, or sexually immoral. Others enjoyed a measure of success in this system of things but felt that something was missing in their life. (Eccl. 2:3-11) Time and again, individuals who seemed hopelessly lost found their way to the path of life by means of the Bible’s transforming power. You have likely read and greatly enjoyed a number of these experiences as published in *The Watchtower* in the series “The Bible Changes Lives.” And you have seen that even after accepting the truth, Christians continue to make spiritual progress with the help of the Scriptures.

2 Should we be surprised that many in modern times have made remarkable changes as a result of studying God’s Word? Not at all! Such experiences remind us of our first-century brothers and sisters, who had the heavenly hope. (**Read**

1. Why can there be no doubt that God’s Word exerts power? (See opening picture.)
2. How did God’s Word exert power in the first century?

SONGS: 96, 94

HOW CAN YOU  
UNLEASH THE POWER  
OF GOD’S WORD . . .

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in your personal life?

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in the ministry?

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when teaching from  
the platform?

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11.**) After listing a number of types of people who will not inherit God's Kingdom, the apostle Paul added: "That is what some of you were." But they had changed with the help of the Scriptures and of God's holy spirit. Even after accepting the truth, some had to overcome serious spiritual problems. The Bible mentions one anointed Christian in the first century who had to be disfellowshipped; later, he was reinstated. (1 Cor. 5:1-5; 2 Cor. 2:5-8) Do we not find it encouraging to consider the range of problems that our fellow believers have faced and that they have overcome by means of God's Word?

3 Because God's Word is such a powerful tool and we have it at our disposal, we surely want to make the best use of it. (2 Tim. 2:15) In this article, we will therefore consider how we may more fully unleash the power of God's Word (1) in our personal life, (2) when we share in the ministry, and (3) when we teach from the platform. These reminders will help us to show our love and gratitude to our loving heavenly Father, who teaches us to benefit ourselves.  
—Isa. 48:17.

### IN OUR PERSONAL LIFE

4 If God's Word is to have an effect on us, we need to read it regularly—daily if possible. (Josh. 1:8) Of course, most of us lead very busy lives. Still, we cannot afford to let anything—even legitimate responsibilities—disrupt our Bible reading routine. (**Read Ephesians 5:15, 16.**) Many of Jehovah's people have found

3. What will we consider in this article?
4. (a) What is needed if God's Word is to have an effect on us? (b) How do you make time for Bible reading?

## FURTHER UNLEASH THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD in your personal life:

- Read it regularly
- Meditate on it
- Apply what you learn



creative ways to make time for daily Bible reading, whether at the start of their day or at the end or somewhere in between. They feel as did the psalmist, who wrote: "How I do love your law! I ponder over it all day long."—Ps. 119:97.

5 In addition to reading the Bible, it is important for us to meditate on what we read. (Ps. 1:1-3) Only then will we be able to make the best personal application of its timeless wisdom. Whether reading God's Word in printed or electronic form, our goal should be to get it off the page and into our heart.

6 How can we meditate effectively? Many have found it helpful to pause after reading a portion of the Scriptures and consider such questions as the following: 'What does this tell me about

- 5, 6. (a) Why is meditation important? (b) How can we meditate effectively? (c) How have you personally benefited from reading God's Word and meditating on it?

in the ministry:



- Make liberal use of the Scriptures
- Isolate and explain key portions of a passage
- Introduce texts in a way that increases respect for God's Word

when teaching from the platform:



- Make the Scriptures the backbone of your talk
- Do not let experiences, illustrations, or your delivery overshadow the Bible
- Take time to explain, illustrate, and apply verses that you read

Jehovah? In what ways am I already applying in my life the principle contained in this portion of God's Word? In what areas could I improve? As we prayerfully meditate on God's Word, we will feel motivated to apply its counsel even more fully. Indeed, we will to a greater extent unleash its power in our own life.  
—2 Cor. 10:4, 5.

#### IN THE MINISTRY

7 What can help us to make good use of God's Word in our ministry? A first step is to use it liberally when we preach and teach. One brother expressed the matter this way, "If you were preaching from house to house with Jehovah himself, would you do all the talking or would you let him speak?" His point was: When we read directly from God's Word in the ministry, we are letting

7. How should we make good use of God's Word in our ministry?

Jehovah speak to the householder. A well-chosen scripture will likely be much more powerful than anything we might say. (1 Thess. 2:13) Ask yourself, 'Do I look for every opportunity to share a portion of God's Word with those to whom I bring the good news?'

8 Of course, more is needed than merely reading Bible texts to those we are conversing with. Why? Because many have little or no understanding of the Bible. That was true in the first century, and it is true today. (Rom. 10:2) So we should not assume that a person will grasp the point of a verse simply because we read it. We need to take time to isolate portions of the verse—perhaps rereading key words—and explain their meaning. Doing so can go a long way in helping the message of God's Word to

8. Why do we need to do more than merely read scriptures when preaching?

reach the mind and heart of our listeners.—**Read Luke 24:32.**

<sup>9</sup> We also do well to introduce scriptures in a way that engenders respect for the Bible. For example, we might say, “Let’s see what our Creator says on this topic.” When speaking with someone from a non-Christian background, we could say, “Notice what the Holy Writings tell us.” Or if we are preaching to someone who is secular-minded, we might ask, “Have you ever heard this ancient proverb?” Yes, we consider each person as an individual and adapt our approach accordingly.—1 Cor. 9:22, 23.

<sup>10</sup> Many have found that using God’s Word in the ministry can have a profound impact on those to whom they preach. Consider an example. A brother made a return visit on an elderly gentleman who had read our magazines for a number of years. Instead of simply presenting the latest issue of *The Watchtower*, the brother decided to read a scripture found in that issue. He read 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4, which says: “The Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort . . . comforts us in all our trials.” The householder was so moved by those words that he asked our brother to read the scripture a second time. The man mentioned how much he and his wife needed comfort, and he now showed interest in the Bible’s message. Would you not agree that God’s Word exerts power in our ministry?—Acts 19:20.

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9. How can we introduce scriptures in a way that engenders respect for the Bible? Give an example.

10. (a) Relate the experience one brother had.  
(b) How have you witnessed the power of God’s Word in your ministry?

## WHEN TEACHING FROM THE PLATFORM

<sup>11</sup> We all enjoy attending our Christian meetings as well as assemblies and conventions. Primarily, we attend to worship Jehovah. We also derive great benefit from the spiritual instruction we receive. Brothers who speak from the platform on these occasions enjoy a great privilege. At the same time, they should recognize that they have a weighty responsibility. (Jas. 3:1) They must always make sure that what they teach is solidly based on God’s Word. If you are assigned to teach from the platform, how can you unleash the power of the Bible in your presentation?

<sup>12</sup> Make sure that the Scriptures form the backbone of your talk. (John 7:16) What does that involve? For one thing, be careful that nothing—experiences, illustrations, or even your manner of delivery—overshadows or draws attention away from the Bible verses you use. Also, remember that simply *reading* a number of scriptures does not in itself constitute *teaching* from the Bible. In fact, using too many scriptures could result in none of them standing out in the mind of your listeners. So select your key scriptures carefully, and take time to read, explain, illustrate, and apply them well. (Neh. 8:8) When a talk is based on an outline provided by the organization, study the outline and the scriptures it uses. Try to understand the connection between the statements in the outline and the cited scriptures. Then use selected scriptures to teach

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11. What responsibility do brothers who teach from the platform have?

12. How can a speaker make sure that the Scriptures form the backbone of his talk?

the points in the outline. (You can find practical suggestions in studies 21 to 23 of *Benefit From Theocratic Ministry School Education*.) Above all, prayerfully ask for Jehovah's help to convey the precious thoughts contained in his Word.—**Read Ezra 7:10; Proverbs 3:13, 14.**

**13** A sister in Australia was deeply affected by the use of scriptures at a Christian meeting. Despite having had a tragic upbringing, she had responded to the Bible's message and had dedicated her life to Jehovah. Even so, she found it a challenge to accept Jehovah's love for her. In time, though, she became convinced that God loved her. What helped her to reach that conclusion? A turning point came when she meditated on a scripture that was used at one of our meetings and that she connected with other Bible verses.\* Have you similarly been affected by the use of God's Word at meetings, assemblies, and conventions?—Neh. 8:12.

**14** Are we not grateful to Jehovah for his written Word, the Bible? He not only lovingly provided it for the human family but also fulfilled his promise that it would endure. (1 Pet. 1:24, 25) Surely, we do well to read God's Word regularly, apply it in our own life, and use it when helping others. We thereby show our love and appreciation not only for this divine treasure but, most important, for its Author, Jehovah God.

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\* See the box "A Turning Point."

13. (a) How was one sister affected by the use of scriptures at a Christian meeting? (b) How have you benefited from Scriptural teaching presented at our meetings?

14. How can we show our appreciation for Jehovah's Word?

## "A TURNING POINT"

For many years after learning the truth, Victoria struggled to accept that God could love her. How was she finally helped to begin feeling truly loved by God? Victoria relates:

"A turning point came about 15 years after I was baptized. During a talk at the Kingdom Hall . . . , the speaker referred to James 1:23, 24. Those verses liken God's Word to a mirror in which we can see ourselves the way Jehovah sees us. I began to wonder if what I saw in myself was different from what Jehovah saw. At first, I resisted this new idea. I still felt that loving me was too much to expect of Jehovah.

"A few days later, I read a scripture that changed my life. The verse was Isaiah 1:18, where Jehovah is quoted as saying: 'Come, now, you people, and let us set matters straight between us. . . . Though the sins of you people should prove to be as scarlet, they will be made white just like snow.' I felt as if Jehovah were speaking to me, saying: 'Come on, Vicky, let's set matters straight between us. I know you, I know your sins, I know your heart—and I love you.'

"I was unable to sleep that night. I still doubted that Jehovah could love me, but I began thinking about Jesus' ransom sacrifice. All of a sudden, it dawned on me that Jehovah had been patient with me for so long, showing me that he loved me in so many ways. Yet, I was, in effect, saying to him: 'Your love is not great enough to reach me. Your Son's sacrifice is not enough to cover me.' It was as if I had been throwing the ransom back at Jehovah. But now, at last, by meditating on this gift of the ransom, I began to feel loved by Jehovah."



## “Be Courageous . . . and Go to Work”

*“Be courageous and strong and go to work. Do not be afraid or be terrified, for Jehovah . . . is with you.”—1 CHRON. 28:20.*

**SONGS: 38, 34**

### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

How can young ones  
and their parents  
show courage?

What courage may be  
needed on the part  
of older sisters?

How can baptized brothers  
show themselves  
courageous?

SOLOMON was instructed to oversee one of the most important construction projects of all time—that of the temple in Jerusalem. The building was to be “exceedingly magnificent, so that its fame and beauty [would] be known in all lands.” More important, the temple would be “the house of Jehovah the true God.” Jehovah directed that Solomon be the overseer of this project.—1 Chron. 22:1, 5, 9-11.

<sup>2</sup> King David was confident of God’s support, but Solomon was “young and inexperienced.” Would he have the courage to take on the task of building the temple? Would his youth and inexperience be an obstacle? To succeed, Solomon would need to be courageous and go to work.

<sup>3</sup> Solomon likely learned much about courage from his own father. In his youth, David fought wild animals that carried off his father’s sheep. (1 Sam. 17:34, 35) He displayed tremendous courage when he confronted a battle-hardened giant.

- 1, 2. (a) What important assignment did Solomon receive? (b) Why did David express concern about Solomon?
3. What could Solomon learn about courage from his father?

Yes, with God's help and a smooth stone, David defeated Goliath.—1 Sam. 17:45, 49, 50.

**4** How appropriate it was later for David to urge Solomon to be courageous and construct the temple! (**Read 1 Chronicles 28:20.**) If Solomon did not prove to be courageous, fear could paralyze him, and inactivity would be worse than failure.

**5** Like Solomon, we need help from Jehovah to be courageous and complete the work. To that end, we can reflect on some past examples of courage. And we can think about how we can show courage and get our work accomplished.

### EXAMPLES OF COURAGE

**6** Consider the courage Joseph showed when Potiphar's wife tempted him to commit sexual immorality. He must have known that he could face severe consequences if he refused her. Even so, rather than give in, he showed courage and took decisive action.—Gen. 39:10, 12.

**7** Rahab is another example of courage. When Israelite spies went to her home in Jericho, she could have given in to fear and turned them away. But with confidence in Jehovah, she courageously hid the two men and helped them to get away safely. (Josh. 2:4, 5, 9, 12-16) Rahab accepted that Jehovah is the true God, and she trusted that somehow he would give the land to the Israelites. She did not let fear of others, including the king of Jericho and his men, para-

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4. Why did Solomon need to be courageous?
  5. Why do we need courage?
  6. What impresses you about Joseph's courage?
  7. Describe the courage that Rahab showed. (See opening picture.)

lyze her. Rather, she acted in a way that in the end preserved her and her family.—Josh. 6:22, 23.

**8** Jesus' faithful apostles set a fine example of courage. They had seen the courage Jesus displayed. (Matt. 8:28-32; John 2:13-17; 18:3-5) That example helped them to build courage. When opposed by the Sadducees, the apostles would not stop teaching on the basis of Jesus' name.—Acts 5:17, 18, 27-29.

**9** Joseph, Rahab, Jesus, and the apostles displayed an inner strength that motivated them to perform good works. Their courage was not overconfidence. It came from reliance on Jehovah. We too face circumstances that require courage. Rather than rely on ourselves, we must rely on Jehovah. (**Read 2 Timothy 1:7.**) Let us consider two areas of life where we need courage: in our family and in the congregation.

### SITUATIONS REQUIRING COURAGE

**10** Christian youths face many situations in which they need to show courage to serve Jehovah. They can learn from and follow the basic example of Solomon as he showed courage in making wise decisions to complete the construction of the temple. Though Christian youths can and should receive guidance from their parents, youths themselves have important decisions to make. (Prov. 27:11) The wise decisions they make about good associations, wholesome entertainment, moral cleanliness, and baptism all call for courage. That is because such young ones are

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8. How did Jesus' courage affect the apostles?
  9. How does 2 Timothy 1:7 help us to identify the fundamental source of courage?
  10. Why do Christian youths need courage?

going against the will of Satan, the one who taunts God.

**11** One important decision young ones must make involves their goals. In some lands, young ones are pressured to set goals that center on higher education and a well-paying job. In other lands, economic conditions may make young ones feel that they must focus on helping to provide materially for their families. If you find yourself in either situation, consider the example of Moses. Raised by the daughter of Pharaoh, Moses could have set his goals on attaining prominence or economic security. What pressure he must have felt to do so from his Egyptian family, teachers, and counselors! Rather than give in, Moses courageously took a stand for pure worship. Once he left behind the riches of Egypt, Moses put his confidence in Jehovah. (Heb. 11:24-26) That led to Jehovah's blessing at the time, and no doubt more blessings await Moses in the future.

**12** Likewise, Jehovah will bless young ones who courageously work at setting spiritual goals and putting Kingdom interests first in their lives. He will help them provide for the needs of their families. In the first century, the young man Timothy focused on spiritual goals, and you can too.\*—**Read Philippians 2: 19-22.**

**13** A Christian sister in Alabama, U.S.A., had to develop courage to set

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\* You will find some practical steps for setting spiritual goals outlined in the article “Use Spiritual Goals to Glorify Your Creator,” published in *The Watchtower* of July 15, 2004.

11, 12. (a) How did Moses set a fine example of courage? (b) How can young ones imitate Moses' example?

13. How did courage help a young sister reach her goals?

spiritual goals. She writes: “Growing up, I was really shy. I could barely talk to people at the Kingdom Hall, much less knock on the doors of complete strangers.” With the help of her parents and others in the congregation, this young Christian achieved her goal of becoming a regular pioneer. She states: “Satan’s world promotes higher education, fame, money, and having a lot of material things as good goals. Often, those pursuits are unattainable and bring only stress and heartache. Serving Jehovah, though, has brought me the greatest happiness and sense of accomplishment.”

**14** Christian parents also need courage. For example, your employer may regularly ask you to work overtime on evenings and weekends—times that you have set aside for family worship, field service, and Christian meetings. Courage is required to turn down such regular requests and set the right example for your children. Or perhaps a few parents in the congregation allow their children to do things that you do not want your child to do. Those parents may ask why your child does not get involved in such activities. Will you be courageous and tactfully explain the reason for your decision?

**15** We show courage when we help our children to set and reach spiritual goals. For instance, some parents may hesitate to encourage their child to pursue a career of pioneering, to serve where the need is greater, to enter Bethel service, or to work on theocratic construction

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14. What are some instances when Christian parents need courage?

15. How can Psalm 37:25 and Hebrews 13:5 help parents?



Are you resolved to be courageous in all aspects of your life?  
(See paragraphs 13-17)

projects. The parents may fear that their child will not be able to care for them when they are old. However, wise parents show courage and put faith in Jehovah's promises. (**Read Psalm 37:25; Hebrews 13:5.**) Then an added way that you can demonstrate courage and reliance on Jehovah is by helping your child to do the same.—1 Sam. 1:27, 28; 2 Tim. 3:14, 15.

**16** A couple in the United States helped their children set spiritual goals. The husband explains: “Before our children could walk and talk, we would speak to them about the joys of pioneering and serving the congregation. Now this is their goal. Having and achieving spiritual goals helps our children to counteract pressures from Satan's system and to focus on what is real—Jehovah.” A brother who has two children wrote: “Many parents expend much effort and resources

helping their children reach goals in such areas as sports, recreation, and education. It makes so much more sense to expend effort and resources in helping our children reach goals that will help them to maintain a good standing with Jehovah. It has been a great source of satisfaction not only to see our children reach spiritual goals but to share the journey with them.” You can be sure that God will bless parents who help their children to set and reach spiritual goals.

### COURAGE IN THE CONGREGATION

**17** There is also a need to show courage in the congregation. For instance, elders need courage when caring for judicial matters or when helping those who face life-threatening medical emergencies. Some elders visit prisons to care for the spiritual needs of inmates. What of single sisters? There are now many opportunities for them to expand their

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16. How have some parents helped their children to set spiritual goals, and how has this proved beneficial?

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17. Give examples of courage in the Christian congregation.

ministry by pioneering, moving to where the need is greater, working with the Local Design/Construction program, and applying for the School for Kingdom Evangelizers. Some are even able to attend Gilead School.

**18** Older women are a blessing to the congregation. How we love these dear sisters! Some may not be able to do as much as they once did in God's service, but they can still show courage and go to work. (**Read Titus 2:3-5.**) For example, an older sister needs courage if she is asked to talk to a younger sister about modest dress. She will not scold the sister about her choice of clothing, but she may be able to encourage the younger one to consider how her choice of clothing may affect others. (1 Tim. 2:9, 10) Such loving expressions of concern may have a positive effect.

**19** Others who should be courageous and go to work are baptized brothers. Courageous men who are willing to take on more responsibility are a blessing to a congregation. (1 Tim. 3:1) However, some may be reluctant to reach out. Perhaps a brother has made mistakes in the past, and now he feels that he is not worthy of being a ministerial servant or an elder. Another brother might have feelings of inadequacy about fulfilling an assignment. If you feel that way, Jehovah can help you develop courage. (**Read**

**18.** How can older sisters show courage?

**19.** (a) How can baptized brothers be courageous? (b) How can Philippians 2:13 and 4:13 help brothers to develop courage?

**Philippians 2:13; 4:13.)** Remember, at one point, Moses did not feel qualified for an assignment. (Ex. 3:11) Yet, Jehovah helped him, and in time, Moses developed courage to accomplish the work. A baptized brother can develop similar courage by seeking God's help in earnest prayer and by daily reading the Bible. Meditating on accounts of courage will also help. He can humbly ask the elders for training and make himself available to help in whatever way is needed. We urge all baptized brothers to be courageous and work hard for the congregation!

#### **"JEHOVAH . . . IS WITH YOU"**

**20** King David reminded Solomon that Jehovah would be with him until the work of building the temple was finished. (1 Chron. 28:20) With his father's words impressed on his mind and heart, Solomon did not allow his youth and inexperience to become an obstacle. He showed great courage, went to work, and with Jehovah's help completed the magnificent temple in seven and a half years.

**21** As Jehovah helped Solomon, he can help us to be courageous and to accomplish our work, both in our family and in the congregation. (Isa. 41:10, 13) When we show courage in our worship of Jehovah, we can be confident of his blessing now and in the future. Therefore, "be courageous . . . and go to work."

**20, 21.** (a) What assurance did David provide Solomon? (b) Of what can we be confident?



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