

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

May 2001

For United States of America

km-E Us 5/01 Vol. 44, No. 5

Share Fully in the Harvest

¹ Jehovah's prophets of old as well as Jesus Christ himself spoke of an ingathering work. (Isa. 56:8; Ezek. 34:11; John 10:16) Such a work is now being accomplished as the Kingdom good news is preached worldwide. (Matt. 24:14) The distinction between those serving God and those not serving him is becoming very evident. (Mal. 3:18) What does this mean for us?

² **A Personal Responsibility:** We can learn from the example of Paul, who was fully involved in spearheading the Christian ministry. He felt a debt of responsibility to preach so that all people would have the opportunity to hear the good news and be saved. This moved him to labor incessantly in their behalf.

(Rom. 1:14-17) In view of the perilous situation facing mankind today, do we not have an even greater responsibility to preach to those in our assigned territory?—1 Cor. 9:16.

³ **Time for Urgent Action:** The preaching work can be compared to a search-and-rescue operation. People must be located and helped to safety before it is too late. Time is limited. Lives are at stake! No wonder that Jesus urged his disciples to "beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest."—Matt. 9:38.

⁴ Recognizing the urgency of today, many Kingdom workers have increased their share in this lifesaving activity. A teen-

ager named Hirohisa lived in a single-parent home with four younger siblings. He supported his family by getting up at three o'clock in the morning to deliver newspapers. Even so, Hirohisa wanted to do more in the ministry, so he began regular pioneering. Are there ways that you could share more fully in this never-to-be-repeated work?

⁵ "The time left is reduced." (1 Cor. 7:29) Therefore, may we do all we can in the most important work being carried out in the earth today—preaching the Kingdom good news and making disciples. Jesus likened this ministry to a harvest work. (Matt. 9:35-38) By our sharing fully in the harvest, the fruits of our labor may include helping someone to become part of the great crowd of worshipers described at Revelation 7:9, 10.

"The Word of God . . . Exerts Power"

¹ "The word of God is alive and exerts power," wrote the apostle Paul. (Heb. 4:12) What did he mean by that? God's word, or message, found in the Bible can have a strong influence on people. The wisdom that the Bible contains has the power to change one's life for the better. The comfort and hope that it offers draw humans to the Life-Giver, Jehovah God. Its message can start honesthearted ones on the road leading to eternal life. However, to see these effects, we must use the Bible when we witness to others.

² **Read a Scripture at Every Opportunity:** It appears that many publishers have got out of the habit of using the Bible at the door. Is that true of you? Because many people

do not seem to have time for a lengthy conversation, perhaps you have slipped into the routine of only offering literature or just paraphrasing a scripture. We encourage all publishers to make an earnest effort to read at least one verse from the Bible when presenting the good news, thus allowing the person to see that our message is indeed found in God's Word.

³ Although few people make reading the Bible a practice, it is still generally respected. Even busy people will often spare a minute or two to listen to a message read directly from God's Word. When an appropriate scripture is read with warmth and briefly explained, the power of Jehovah's word can have a good effect on the lis-

tener. But how can you bridge the gap from your opening comments to reading a verse from the Bible?

⁴ **Try This in Magazine Work:** A traveling overseer makes effective use of the Scriptures when engaging in magazine work. He carries a small Bible in his pocket. After presenting the magazines and briefly featuring an article, he opens the Bible without hesitation and reads a verse that ties in with the article. This may be done by simply asking, "What do you think of this encouraging promise?" and then proceeding to read a selected scripture.

⁵ Make it your goal to share a verse or two from the Bible with every listener. Its motivating power can open the way for more people to be drawn to God.—John 6:44.

SERVICE MEETING SCHEDULE

NOTE: Our Kingdom Ministry will schedule a Service Meeting for each week during the summer months. Congregations may make adjustments as needed to allow for attending the "Teachers of God's Word" District Convention. Use 15 minutes on the last Service Meeting before attending the convention to repeat pointed counsel from this month's insert that may be appropriate locally. During the month of October, an entire Service Meeting will be arranged to review convention highlights. In preparation for that discussion, all of us can take meaningful notes at the convention, including a list of the points that we wish to apply personally in our own life and in the field ministry. Then we can be prepared to explain how we have applied those suggestions since attending the convention. It will be mutually upbuilding to hear how we benefited from the good instruction that was received.

Week Starting May 14

Song 3

6 min: Local announcements and selected Announcements from *Our Kingdom Ministry*. Consider the above note regarding Service Meeting adjustments and what is planned for a Service Meeting in October, when there will be a review of district convention highlights.

9 min: What Are Your Plans for the Summer? An elder or a ministerial servant and his family discuss their plans for the summer months. They talk about attending all sessions of the district convention, auxiliary pioneering, and perhaps taking a vacation and enjoying some recreation. They all agree that they do not want to neglect theocratic activities, such as attending congregation meetings, sharing in field service, and having their family Bible study, even if they travel elsewhere. They will make sure that they report their field service activity to the secretary promptly, regardless of whether they are at home or out of town.

14 min: "Conventions—Time for rejoicing!" Talk by an elder. Ex-

plain why large gatherings of Jehovah's people were held in Bible times and why they are equally beneficial today. These occasions provide strengthening association and vital spiritual food. Stress the importance of everyone being in attendance all three days of the district convention.

John Danzy

16 min: "Organized Decently and by Arrangement."* Describe some of the extensive arrangements that must be made to organize a convention. Emphasize the importance of fully cooperating with the procedures that have been put into place for our benefit. Review ways that all of us can show proper respect and avoid needless problems.

Song 31 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting May 21

Song 52

10 min: Local announcements. Accounts report.

17 min: "Listen and Take In More Instruction." Talk and audience discussion. Explain why the instruction provided at conventions is vital spiritual food that we need. Comment on the tremendous time and effort required to put on such a program. Invite audience to comment on what each one can do to ensure the greatest benefit to himself and others. Stress the reasons why all of us should be in our seats when each session begins.

18 min: "Do Good and Be Praised!"* Explain why we attract much attention when we attend a large convention. Favorable comments from observers add to the Kingdom witness, while critical remarks can turn people away. Point out specific things we should do to demonstrate that we have Christian qualities that include genuine concern for others.

Song 105 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting May 28

Song 58

13 min: Local announcements. Remind publishers to turn in field service reports for May. Review "Simplified Subscription Renewal

Process." Encourage all subscribers not to allow their *Watchtower* and *Awake!* subscriptions to expire.

15 min: Local needs.

17 min: "The Word of God...Exerts Power."* Include two well-prepared demonstrations, showing how brief presentations can focus attention on God's Word.

Song 79 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting June 4

Song 100

12 min: Local announcements and field service experiences.

15 min: "Share Fully in the Harvest."* When discussing paragraph 4, include the example from the September 15, 1996, *Watchtower*, page 19, paragraph 10, showing what some are doing to expand their ministry.

18 min: "We Have Worked Our Territory Many Times!"* To be handled by service overseer. (Congregations having seldom-worked territory can review the article "Magazines Announce the Kingdom," in the April 1998 *Our Kingdom Ministry*.) Discuss what can be done locally to give more thorough coverage when working territory. Relate experiences in the 1997 *Yearbook*, page 204, and the February 15, 1996, *Watchtower*, page 26. Stress importance of keeping good house-to-house records, following up not-at-homes, and making prompt return visits.

Song 142 and concluding prayer.

* Limit introductory comments to less than a minute, and follow with a question-and-answer discussion.

FEBRUARY SERVICE REPORT

Number of:	Avg. Hrs.	Avg. Mags.	Avg. R.V.	Avg. Bi.St.
Sp'l Pios.	134	118.2	99.4	50.7 4.6
Pios.	90,334	60.5	42.4	19.8 1.6
Aux. Pios.	13,988	47.9	36.7	13.5 1.0
Pubs.	832,729	8.5	7.7	3.3 0.3
TOTAL	937,185			Baptized: 1,216

July 21-29 Conventions—Time for Rejoicing!

¹ The conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses are occasions of great rejoicing. For over a hundred years, these gatherings have contributed to the increase that has been taking place in our organization. From small beginnings, we have seen Jehovah's rich blessings on our worldwide work. At our first convention in modern times, in Chicago, Illinois, in 1893, a total of 70 of the 360 in attendance were baptized in symbol of their dedication to Jehovah. This past year's series of "Doers of God's Word" District Conventions had a combined worldwide attendance of 9,454,055, with 129,367 baptized. What a wonderful cause for rejoicing!

² Ever since Bible times, the ^{why} gatherings of God's people have provided a prominent means for imparting instruction from Jehovah. In the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, the people listened to the reading of the Law "from daybreak till midday." (Neh. 8:2, 3) Because of getting a better understanding of the Law on that occasion, the people experienced "a great rejoicing." (Neh. 8:8, 12) We too rejoice that conventions provide a fine opportunity for us to receive good instruction and spiritual food "at the proper time" from Jehovah through "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matt. 24:45) Since Jesus said that man must live on "every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth," conventions are vital to our spiritual well-being.—Matt. 4:4.

³ It Is Worth All the Effort to Attend: All of us should make it our personal goal to be present for this year's entire "Teachers of God's Word" District Convention. We should plan to arrive early each day and remain until we join in saying "Amen!" to the closing prayer. To accomplish this we may have to adjust our schedule. Getting time off from our employment to attend the convention may present some difficulties. We need to take a firm stand, not leaving anything to chance. If we need accommodations and/or transportation, we should make arrangements early. Whatever effort we have to make will be worth it!

⁴ Jehovah's people do not measure the blessings of attending a convention in dollars and cents. Note the examples of some who were determined to attend the 1958 Divine

Will International Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses in New York City. One brother closed down his construction business for two weeks to volunteer his help and attend the assembly. A brother in the Virgin Islands sold five acres of land so that his entire family of six could attend. A young couple sold their motorboat so that they could take all three of their children, ages two months to seven years, to the assembly. Three fleshly brothers from California were told that if they were absent from their jobs, those jobs would not be there when they returned. That, however, did not keep them from going to that unforgettable assembly.

⁵ Jehovah Rewards Our Earnest Effort: Jehovah sees and blesses the efforts of his people. (Heb. 6:10) As an example, at the 1950 Theocracy's Increase Assembly, those in attendance heard the landmark talk "New Systems of Things." Brother Frederick Franz aroused and quickened the interest of all by asking: "Would this international assembly be happy to know that here, tonight, in our midst, there are a number of prospective princes of the new earth?" Over 50 years later, we still rejoice in this clarified understanding of Psalm 45:16.

⁶ After attending last year's district convention, an appreciative family head wrote the following: "Brothers, you will never know how much of a lifesaver this convention has been. My family moved to the city for employment reasons, only to find our spirituality floundering. . . . We had let our Christian obligations fall by the wayside. We even stopped attending meetings and sharing in service altogether. . . . This convention has rejuvenated us, and once again we are setting spiritual goals and getting organized to accomplish these."

⁷ Jehovah is supplying us with the spiritual food we need. He spreads a rich table at our conventions. Our appreciation for this provision should enable us to say what Cornelius said when he was visited by the apostle Peter: "At this time we are all present before God to hear all the things you have been commanded by Jehovah to say." (Acts 10:33) Let us make it our goal to be "present before God" at every session of this year's "Teachers of God's Word" District Convention and rejoice!

Organized “Decently and by Arrangement”

¹ For a district convention to be successful, there must be a merging of many efforts. The convention administration arranges a suitable meeting site as well as rooming contracts. Individuals and family groups make their travel and rooming plans. And congregations coordinate their volunteer efforts to staff the many departments needed to operate the convention. The goal is to have “all things take place decently and by arrangement.”—1 Cor. 14:40.

² As you coordinate your efforts with those of the convention organization, keep in mind that months—sometimes years—of preparation are needed. Hundreds of brothers spend much time getting things set up. This includes renting facilities, gathering equipment, and recruiting workers. This advance preparation results in spiritual blessings for all. What can we do to assist?

³ Cooperate With Rooming Arrangements: It is vital that all of us cooperate with convention arrangements. This is especially necessary when we arrange for our rooming accommodations. Literally hundreds of rooms are needed for each convention. The majority of our brothers have limited funds and must depend on inexpensive room rates. Extensive efforts have been made to negotiate the best possible hotel rates. We must lovingly consider the needs of others and ‘keep an eye, not in personal interest upon just our own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others.’—Phil. 2:4.

⁴ Our adhering closely to convention guidelines for obtaining rooms results in benefits for all concerned. Ignoring these guidelines creates needless problems. How so? When we cooperate with these suggestions, hotels know in advance how many rooms they have booked and thus how many guests they will have. This helps them with their planning and can result in continued rate reductions in future years. If many of us cancel our reservations or make alternative plans, this inconveniences the hotel management as well as our brothers and sisters who may have wanted accommodations in the same facility. The management may make fewer rooms available for our conventions in the future,

feeling that we will not honor our commitments. How much better it is when we are true to our word, letting our “Yes mean Yes!” —Matt. 5:37.

⁵ Consider These Good Results: After one convention, a campsite manager observed: “I have noticed that Jehovah’s Witnesses are very honest in all they do. Last week I had 40 of them at my campsite, and they did not create any problems. On the contrary, they are the only ones who come and tell you if they have an extra person staying in their trailer or tent. As far as I am concerned, they are the best customers you can have.” How wonderful it would be if all those renting facilities to us could have such a fine experience! What a witness that would give!

⁶ The regional manager of a hotel chain once said: “I can’t recall ever having such a large group that exemplified their beliefs so tremendously as Jehovah’s Witnesses. We hope you will return.” This comment demonstrates that fine conduct is refreshing not only to us but also to many in the world who observe us.

⁷ Basic Ways We Can Cooperate: There are simple things that we can do to cooperate with the convention arrangement for making rooming reservations. (1) Do not reserve more hotel rooms than you plan to use. (2) Send the appropriate deposit to hold your room. (3) Do not abuse complimentary breakfast provisions that may be offered to guests. (4) Remember that hotel owners properly expect us to abide by their rules.

⁸ As servants of Jehovah God, we have the opportunity to reflect his personality in all that we do. This includes making arrangements for and attending conventions where God’s name is involved. Remember, he “is a God, not of disorder, but of peace.” (1 Cor. 14:33) Thus, let us be determined that all onlookers discern this quality about Jehovah from what they see in us—our conduct and demeanor as we plan for and attend the “Teachers of God’s Word” District Convention. May honesthearted observers come to realize that Jehovah’s congregated throngs are organized “decently and by arrangement.”—Ps. 68:26.

"Listen and Take In More Instruction"

¹ The book of Proverbs portrays wisdom as calling out: "Listen, for it is about the foremost things that I speak, and the opening of my lips is about uprightness. I have counsel and practical wisdom. . . . Listen to me; yes, happy are the ones that keep my very ways. For the one finding me will certainly find life, and gets goodwill from Jehovah." (Prov. 8:6, 14, 32, 35) Those words well describe the instruction that awaits us at the "Teachers of God's Word" District Convention.

² The needs of the worldwide brotherhood have been analyzed, and the convention program has been prepared to address those needs. The spiritual instruction and practical suggestions that will be offered can, if applied, help us to be happy, to maintain a good relationship with Jehovah, and to stay on the road to everlasting life. Certainly, we have good reason to "listen and take in more instruction."—Prov. 1:5.

3 Before the Program: To benefit fully from what is presented, we need to be in our seats and in the proper frame of mind when the program begins. This requires good personal organization. A key factor is to get an early start. Get to bed early the night before. Wake up early enough to give everyone in your group time to get ready and to have something to eat. Arrive early at the convention site so that you can find seating and care for necessary matters before the program begins. Doors will open at 8:00 a.m., and the program begins at 9:30 a.m. each day.

⁴ Since the primary purpose of gathering is to praise Jehovah "among the congregated throngs," each session should open in a manner that magnifies our God. (Ps. 26:12) To that end, all are encouraged to be seated *before* the opening song is announced. This is in harmony with the Scriptural admonition: "Let all things take place decently and by arrangement." (1 Cor. 14:40) What does that mean for each of us? When you see the chairman seated on the platform during the musical prelude, promptly take your seat. This will enable you to share wholeheartedly in the song that opens each session, lifting up praise to Jehovah.—Ps. 149:1.

5 During the Program: Ezra "prepared his heart to consult the law of Jehovah and to

do it." (Ezra 7:10) How can we prepare our hearts to receive the instruction Jehovah provides? As you review the titles of the various parts listed on the printed program, ask yourself, 'What is Jehovah telling me by means of this program? How can I use the information to benefit myself and my family?' (Isa. 30:21; Eph. 5:17) Continue asking those questions throughout the convention. Make note of the points that you plan to use. Take time to discuss them at the end of each day's sessions. This will help you to retain and apply the information,

⁶ Concentrating for several hours at a time can be a challenge. What can help us to resist the tendency to drift mentally? Take advantage of the power of the eye. To a large extent, what we focus our eyes on commands our attention. (Matt. 6:22) Therefore, resist the urge to turn your head at every noise or movement. Keep your eyes focused on the speaker. Follow along in your copy of the Bible when a scripture is read, and keep your Bible open as the text is discussed.

⁷ Christian love will move us to avoid disturbing others while the program is in progress. (1 Cor. 13:5) This is "a time to keep quiet" and listen. (Eccl. 3:7) Therefore, avoid unnecessary talking and moving about. Minimize trips to the rest room by planning ahead. Do not eat or drink until the designated time, unless serious health factors are involved. Those who bring cellular phones, pagers, camcorders, and cameras should not use these in a way that distracts others. Parents should arrange for their entire family—including teenagers—to sit together so that they can properly supervise their children.—Prov. 29:15.

⁸ Last year an elder who has been attending conventions for many decades observed: "I felt that this convention was outstanding for another reason. Almost everyone in the audience was taking notes, including young children. It was a delight to see. Bibles were put to good use when speakers called for them to be opened to certain passages." Such attentive listening is truly commendable. It not only brings benefits to us and to our fellow convention delegates but above all glorifies our Grand Instructor, Jehovah God.—Isa. 30:20.

Do Good and Be Praised!

¹ "They have a serenity about them that I have never seen in any other people." "It is a pleasure to have this group." These are typical of the many positive comments received from onlookers after last year's district conventions, underscoring the fine reputation we have as an organization. (Prov. 27:2; 1 Cor. 4:9) Ultimately, such praise goes to Jehovah. (Matt. 5:16) Another excellent opportunity to praise God is now before us at this year's "Teachers of God's Word" District Convention.

² Each year we receive kindly reminders regarding appropriate conduct at the convention. Why? Because as the attitude, dress, and behavior of the world continue to decay, we refuse to be swayed. We do not want our fine reputation marred. (Eph. 2:2; 4:17) Let us keep the following cautions in mind.

³ **Do Good—At Hotels:** We are known as honest people. (Heb. 13:18) Hence, we should be truthful about the number of people staying in our hotel room. We must not cook in the room if this is not permitted. One manager commented that he was able to keep room prices down for Jehovah's Witnesses because he never has to replace missing towels. He knows that the property will be well cared for. Surely we would not take "souvenirs" from the hotel. Rather, where customary, leave an appropriate tip to show appreciation for services rendered. And always be courteous and patient in dealing with hotel personnel.

⁴ Observers are impressed when they see our young ones behaving in a polite and obedient manner. (Eph. 6:1, 2) Parents, please supervise your children so that they do not become a disturbance to others, including when they use the swimming pool or other recreational facilities. All should avoid slamming doors or making loud noises, especially late in the evening.

⁵ We can do good by being considerate of non-Witness hotel guests who are also using the premises. Some hotels complain that convention delegates use all the ice in the ice machines to fill their coolers. Likewise, it is inappropriate to take complimentary food items or fill containers with coffee for later use. Never should we feel that we are an exception with regard to hotel policies.

⁶ **Do Good—At the Convention Site:** It has been noted that some delegates have refused to cooperate with the attendants, even speaking to

them in an unchristian manner. Because of failing to follow the instructions of the brothers and parking where not legally permitted, some delegates have had their cars towed away. Certainly, a me-first attitude does not identify one as a doer of good, nor does it bring praise to Jehovah God. Let us therefore be loving, patient, and cooperative.—Gal. 5:22, 23, 25.

⁷ When the convention doors open at 8:00 a.m., some brothers and sisters can be seen running, pushing, and shoving to obtain the "best" seats. Injuries have resulted because of this type of behavior. While it has been suggested that we bring a light lunch to eat at noon, it is not appropriate to set up tables in the parking lot to serve a large meal. This would give the impression of the tailgate parties that are common at sporting events.

⁸ **Do Good—By Our Dress and Grooming:** Following one of last year's district conventions, the editor of a large metropolitan newspaper wrote: "More than anything else, it was the deportment of the Witnesses themselves that was most striking. How refreshing it was to see so many people carry themselves with such an air of dignity and respect. Dressed in their Sunday finest, hundreds of families representing the gamut of racial and ethnic backgrounds quietly streamed into the arena. Their behavior was in sharp contrast to that of most crowds that file into the arena. In fact, the Witnesses contrast greatly with most crowds in general. It's become all too common to see rude public behavior. . . . Indeed, the crowd of Witnesses is refreshing." May we never allow our dress and grooming or our conduct to detract in any way from the spiritual atmosphere of the convention.—Phil. 1:10; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10.

⁹ **Do Good—At the Baptism:** Baptismal candidates will want to treat this occasion with utmost dignity. Wearing modest bathing apparel will show appreciation for the sacredness of the occasion. It would be most beneficial for Bible study conductors to review with their students before attending the convention the "Questions From Readers" in the April 1, 1995, issue of *The Watchtower*.

¹⁰ Our decorum and godly conduct testify to our Christian beliefs and make it easier for honesthearted ones to recognize the truth. Let us, therefore, "keep doing good" and be praised while attending the "Teachers of God's Word" District Convention.—Rom. 13:3.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Literature offer for **May**: The Watchtower and Awake! magazines. Where interest is found on return visits, subscriptions may be offered. Offer the Knowledge book or Require brochure, with a view to starting home Bible studies. **June**: What Does God Require of Us? or Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life. Concentrate on starting home Bible studies.

July and August: Any of the following 32-page brochures may be used: Does God Really Care About Us?, Enjoy Life on Earth Forever!, "Look! I Am Making All Things New," Should You Believe in the Trinity?, The Divine Name That Will Endure Forever, The Government That Will Bring Paradise, What Happens to Us When We Die?, What Is the Purpose of Life—How Can You Find It?, and When Someone You Love Dies.

The brochures A Book for All People, Our Problems—Who Will Help Us Solve Them?, Spirits of the Dead—Can They Help You or Harm You? Do They Really Exist?, and Will There Ever Be a World Without War? may be offered where appropriate.

■ The presiding overseer or someone designated by him should audit the congregation's accounts on June 1 or as soon as possible thereafter. When this has been done, make an announcement to the congregation after the next accounts report is read.

■ Beginning the week of July 30, 2001, we will study Isaiah's Prophecy—Light for All Mankind I in the Congregation Book Study.

■ **DISTRICT CONVENTION PARKING**: At all convention sites where we have secured control of the parking facilities, the spaces will be made available at no charge on a first-come,

first-served basis. No parking tickets will be used, but convention badge cards will serve as identification for parking. Only those who have a state-approved disabled license plate or placard will be allowed to park in the parking reserved for the disabled. Being aware that considerable expense is involved, we can show our appreciation by making voluntary contributions to the worldwide work at our Kingdom Hall or at the convention. Any checks contributed at the convention should be made payable to "Jehovah's Witnesses." Since parking space is usually limited, carpooling should be done to the extent possible rather than having only one or two persons per car. At a few locations, this parking arrangement cannot be fully implemented this year. Congregations affected by any variation in this arrangement will be so advised by their local convention headquarters.

Simplified Subscription Renewal Process

Subscribers to *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, whether printed magazines or audio-cassettes, have received two notifications that their subscriptions are expiring. The first is a preprinted, bar-coded Expiring Subscription slip that is distributed to subscribers through the congregation. This form has been reformatteed and will now be printed on off-white paper. The bar code is used to renew the subscription quickly with automated equipment. This is the recommended form to renew a subscription.

The second notification was the subscription renewal form that was inserted into the wrapped magazine or, for audiocassette subscriptions, was mailed directly to the subscriber. Subscribers to the printed magazines will no longer receive a subscription renewal form inserted into the

magazine. Instead, an expiration message will be printed on the subscription wrapper. Likewise, most subscribers to the audiocassette editions of *The Watchtower* or *Awake!* will no longer receive an expiring subscription notification in the mail. An expiration message will instead be printed on the outside of the cassette subscription package. However, renewal notices will continue to be mailed to subscribers who receive Braille labels and others who receive the audiocassettes as free matter for the blind.

The message printed on the magazine wrapper or on the audiocassette package will serve as a reminder that the subscription will soon expire. If you see the printed message but have not already received the Expiring Subscription slip, please contact the brother who handles subscriptions in your

congregation. Renewal subscriptions should always be submitted through the congregation.

For subscriptions obtained from the field, the primary means of notification will be the preprinted Expiring Subscription slip distributed through the congregation. As soon as these forms arrive in the congregation, emphasis should be placed on handing them out to the publishers who originally obtained the subscriptions. Since the subscribers will no longer receive a renewal form inserted in the magazine, it is vital that we follow up with these interested ones and encourage them to renew their subscriptions.—See *Our Kingdom Ministry*, October 1988, page 8, and January 1986, page 8.

These timely journals will continue to shine forth spiritual light in a darkened world. We are sure that all will work along with this new arrangement so that all subscribers to *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* do not miss a single issue.

"We Have Worked Our Territory Many Times!"

¹ Have you ever felt that your territory is worked so often that there are no more sheeplike people left in it? Perhaps you have thought: 'I know how the people will respond. Why keep going back to those who are not interested?' It is true that many territories are worked often. However, this fact should be viewed positively, not negatively. Why so? Note the four reasons given below.

2 Our Prayers Have Been Answered: Jesus said: "The harvest, indeed, is great, but the workers are few. Therefore beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2) For decades we have supplicated Jehovah for more help. In many places, we now have the additional workers needed, and we are covering the territory more frequently. Should not the fact that Jehovah has answered our prayers cause us to rejoice?

3 Persistence Bears Good Fruit: Even in often-worked territories, people are responding to the Kingdom message and are coming to a knowledge of the truth. Therefore, we should keep calling again and again in hopes of finding more honesthearted ones. (Isa. 6:8-11) As Jesus' early disciples did, "go continually" to the people in your assigned territory, endeavoring to stir up their interest in the Kingdom of God. —Matt. 10:6, 7.

4 In Portugal many congregations cover their territory every week, but they are still finding sheeplike ones. One sister in particular has a very positive attitude. She says: "Before leaving for the service every morning, I pray to Jehovah to help

me find someone interested in studying the Bible." One day she arranged for a study with the workers in a hairdresser's shop. Later, though, only one person showed up for the study. That person said: "The others are not interested, but I am." Within a month she was conducting two Bible studies of her own. Soon thereafter she was baptized, and she later entered the pioneer service!

5 The Work Is Getting Done: The good news is being preached, just as Jesus foretold it would be. (Matt. 24:14) Even in places where people do "not want to listen to [us]," they are being put on notice by means of the preaching activity. We expect some to be unreceptive or even opposed to the truth. Yet, such ones have to be duly warned about the coming judgment from Jehovah.—Ezek. 2:4, 5; 3:7, 8, 19.

6 We Are Not Finished Yet: It is not up to us to decide when to stop the preaching work. Jehovah knows exactly when it should end. He knows whether there are people in our territory who may yet respond to the good news. Today, some people say they are not interested, but drastic changes in their lives—loss of employment, serious illness, death of a loved one—may make them more receptive at another time. Because of prejudice or because of simply being too busy to listen, many people have never really heard what we preach. Repeated friendly calls may make them take notice and listen.

7 Those who have grown up in recent years and who now have families of their own are taking life more seriously and

are asking questions that only God's Word can answer. One young mother invited two Witnesses into her home and said: "As a little girl, I could never understand why my mother turned the Witnesses away and told them she was not interested, when all they wanted to do was talk about the Bible. I made up my mind then that when I grew up, got married, and had my own home, I would ask Jehovah's Witnesses to come in and explain the Bible to me." That is what she did, to the delight of the Witnesses who called on her.

8 Can You Be More Effective? It may not always be the people we call on who make it seem hard to work the territory frequently. Sometimes it is we ourselves. Do we start out with negative ideas? That can affect our attitude and likely our tone of voice and facial expression. Display a positive spirit and a pleasant countenance. Try a fresh approach. Vary your presentation, and strive to improve it. Perhaps you can alter your opening question or work a different scripture into the conversation. Ask other brothers and sisters what they have found to be successful in working the territory. Work in the service with a variety of publishers and pioneers, and note what makes their ministry effective.

9 The Kingdom-preaching work has Jehovah's approval and blessing, and our participation in it proves our love for him and our neighbor. (Matt. 22:37-39) So let us carry out our work to its completion, not tiring of working the territory time after time.