

Imitate Jehovah's Impartiality

¹ Jehovah is concerned about people. He impartially accepts anyone who does his will. (Acts 10:34, 35) When Jesus preached to people, he likewise was impartial. (Luke 20:21) We need to imitate their example, as did Paul, who wrote: "There is the same Lord over all, who is rich to all those calling upon him."—Rom. 10:12.

² Proclaiming the good news of God's Kingdom to all whom we meet brings glory to God. We must continue to share this wonderful message with others, regardless of their race, social status, education, or financial standing. (Rom. 10:11-13) This means preaching to those who will listen—men, women, young, and elderly. We need to call at

every door to give each householder an opportunity to hear the truth.

³ **Take an Interest in Everyone:** Our goal is to contact everyone we can. With this in mind, some publishers have been successful in witnessing to people in doctor's offices, hospitals, nursing homes, welfare offices, and rehabilitation centers. Additionally, publishers have witnessed to funeral directors, school supervisors and counselors, and judges. When approaching officials, it is appropriate to express appreciation to them for the helpful services they provide in the community. Be respectful, and select timely articles that deal particularly with

their type of work and the problems associated with it.

⁴ In one instance a sister managed to speak to a judge in his office. After a lively conversation, he volunteered this comment: "Do you know what I like about Jehovah's Witnesses? They have well-founded principles from which they do not deviate." A fine witness was given to this influential person.

⁵ We cannot read the hearts of people. However, by talking with everyone we meet, we show our faith in God's ability to direct our work. In addition, this gives people the privilege to hear and respond to the message of hope. (1 Tim. 2:3, 4) Let us use our time wisely and endeavor to imitate Jehovah's impartiality by reaching all the people we can with the good news.—Rom. 2:11; Eph. 5:1, 2.

Haven't We Heard That Before?

¹ Of course we have! Jehovah repeats many things in his Word for the benefit of his people. Jesus often repeated his teachings about various aspects of the Kingdom. His apostles continually reviewed spiritual matters with those who were firmly grounded in the truth.—Rom. 15:15; 2 Pet. 1:12, 13; 3:1, 2.

² In our time Jehovah's organization has arranged for important subjects to be reviewed over and over again at congregation meetings. Certain publications have been studied repeatedly. Yes, it is important to hear things that we have heard before!

³ **Repetition Fills a Vital Need:** Jehovah's reminders deepen our understanding, expand our viewpoint, and strengthen our deter-

mination to stay on course spiritually. (Ps. 119:129) Reviewing God's standards and principles is like looking in a mirror. It helps us scrutinize ourselves and counteracts the tendency to be "a forgetful hearer."—Jas. 1:22-25.

⁴ If we do not keep reminding ourselves of the truth, other things will influence our hearts. God's reminders strengthen us to resist the corrupting influences of Satan's world. (Ps. 119:2, 3, 99, 133; Phil. 3:1) The regular reminders we receive regarding the fulfillment of God's purposes prompt us to "keep on the watch." (Mark 13:32-37) Repetition of Scriptural truths helps us remain on the road to everlasting life.—Ps. 119:144.

⁵ How to Benefit Personally:

We must 'incline our hearts to God's reminders.' (Ps. 119:36) When a familiar subject is to be considered at a congregation meeting, we should prepare in advance, look up the cited scriptures, and reflect on how we can apply the information. Let us not skip the written review in the Theocratic Ministry School, thinking that it is not needed. (Luke 8:18) Never would we want to become inattentive because basic truths are often repeated at our meetings.—Heb. 5:11.

⁶ May we share the attitude of the psalmist: "In the way of your reminders I have exulted, just as over all other valuable things." (Ps. 119:14) Yes, we have heard these valuable things before, and likely we will hear them again. Why? Because Jehovah knows that we need to hear them!

SERVICE MEETING SCHEDULE

NOTE: Beginning with this issue of *Our Kingdom Ministry*, the Service Meeting Schedule will include an outline for the first Service Meeting of the following month. This adjustment is being made to compensate for possible delayed shipments of *Our Kingdom Ministry* because of a new shipping arrangement.

Week Starting December 6

Song 207

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

15 min: "Imitate Jehovah's Impartiality." Limit introductory comments to less than a minute, and follow with a question-and-answer discussion. Explain the meaning of impartiality, how Jehovah displays it, and how we can demonstrate this in our ministry.—See *Insight*, Volume 1, page 1192, paragraphs 4-7.

20 min: "Haven't We Heard That Before?" Talk and audience discussion. Invite audience to comment on how repetition has helped them to understand and appreciate the truth more fully.—See *The Watchtower*, July 15, 1995, pages 21-2, and August 15, 1993, pages 13-14, paragraphs 10-12. Song 218 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting December 13

Song 168

10 min: Local announcements. Accounts report. Offer suggestions on how to respond tactfully to holiday greetings. If the congregation has copies of the *Greatest Man* or *Great Teacher* books in stock, show how they can be used to good advantage in the ministry during the Christmas holidays.

15 min: "The Theocratic Ministry School for 2000." A talk by the Theocratic Ministry School overseer. Review the following changes in the schedule for the new year. Assignment No. 3 will be based on "Bible Topics for Discussion" as found in the *New World Translation*. Assignment No. 4 will continue to cover Bible characters from *Insight on the Scriptures* and during the last three months of the year will be based on "Bible Topics for Discussion." Where the number sign (#) appears next to this assignment, it is preferred that a brother handle it.

Encourage all to keep up with their weekly Bible reading and to be diligent in fulfilling assignments in the school.

20 min: "What Will You Say to an Atheist?" Questions and answers. Review various reasons why many have lost faith in God. Suggest some ways we might approach them to help them see the logic in recognizing God's existence. Have one or two brief demonstrations. For more information, see *Reasoning* book, pages 145-51, and *Mankind's Search for God*, chapter 14. Song 220 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting December 20

Song 219

10 min: Local announcements. Have publishers relate brief pointed experiences they have enjoyed recently in field service.

15 min: Responding to Potential Conversation Stoppers. Audience discussion and demonstrations. Read "Comments" on pages 15-16 of the *Reasoning* book. Pick out two or three "conversation stoppers" from pages 16-20, or use others that are frequently encountered in your territory. Review some of the suggested responses, and analyze why they may be effective locally. Briefly demonstrate a few of them. Invite audience to relate responses they have used with good results.

20 min: Should I Accept Employment Involving a Religious Organization? Talk by an elder, based on the April 15, 1999, *Watchtower*, pages 28-30. Some individuals have accepted such employment and later discovered that what they were doing was not in harmony with Bible principles. Review the questions we need to consider when making a decision about doing secular work that has some religious connections. Encourage all to pursue a course that will ensure a good standing before Jehovah.—2 Cor. 6:3, 4, 14-18. Song 109 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting December 27

Song 166

10 min: Local announcements. If your congregation will change meeting times for the new year, give kind encouragement urging all to maintain

regular meeting attendance at the new times. Inform Bible students and other interested ones of any changes, and begin using handbills that show the new schedule. Remind all to turn in field service reports for December.

15 min: Local needs.

20 min: Offering Older Books During January. Talk and demonstrations. Show two or three older 192-page books, published prior to 1986, that are in congregation stock, and encourage publishers to pick up some for the field ministry. (If none are available, discuss the alternate offer for January.) Explain why these older publications are still effective for cultivating interest in the Bible. In each book highlight talking points and illustrations that can be used to good advantage in starting conversations. Demonstrate one or two presentations. Where interest is found, the *Require* brochure can be used to start a study. Song 224 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting January 3

NOTE: Congregations are not to move their Service Meeting for the week of January 3 to an earlier night unless the circuit overseer is visiting. Song 10

8 min: Local announcements.

17 min: Know How to Give an Answer. (Col. 4:6) Talk and audience discussion. The *Reasoning* book is a wonderful aid in paving the way to share Bible truth with others. When a householder raises an objection to one of our beliefs, perhaps we can use the feature "If Someone Says—" at the end of the section dealing with that belief. Discuss the remarks about the Bible that are noted on pages 64-8, and consider why the suggested replies may prove to be effective.

20 min: "2000 'Doers of God's Word' District Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses." Secretary handles question-and-answer coverage of article in insert. First, read December 15, 1999, convention assignment letter. Use the cited scriptures to show why all of us need to follow the Society's direction closely. Stress the importance of everyone arranging definite vacation dates ahead of time in order to attend every day of the convention, including Friday. Commend the brothers for co-operating with the Society's arrangements. Song 56 and concluding prayer.

2000 "Doers of God's Word" District Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses

¹ "I will laud you in the big congregation; among a numerous people I shall praise you." (Ps. 35:18) Imagine how thrilled David would be today to see so many thousands peacefully assembling together to take in divine instruction at our conventions! Were you among the 1,414,534 who attended one of the "God's Prophetic Word" District Conventions? From late May through early September 1999, a total of 201 conventions were held in 71 cities in the contiguous United States. Our district conventions in 2000 will provide us with new opportunities to gather with fellow praisers of Jehovah, who are "conscious of their spiritual need" and happy and eager to "hear what the spirit says to the congregations."—Matt. 5:3; Rev. 2:29.

² **Making Your Hotel Reservation:** Each year we are happy to provide you with information on how you can make rooming arrangements for the convention, and we appreciate very much your cooperation with these instructions. The local Rooming Department has prepared a Recommended Lodging List of hotels that will begin accepting reservations in January. Please carefully follow the instructions in this insert in the box entitled "Steps in Making Your Hotel Reservation." Because of fire and safety regulations, you should arrange for no more than four persons in each room. If a particular hotel permits more than four persons to a room, this will be clearly indicated on the Recommended Lodging List under the heading "Adults."

³ Hotels available for your convention appear on the first Recommended Lodging List. When these hotels are filled, a revised list will be sent to your congregation. If you have called all the hotels on the list and no rooms are available, please inform your congregation secretary. Using the address or telephone number shown at the top of the list, he will contact the Rooming Department and advise them of the situation.

Rather than making a reservation at a hotel not on the list, wait for the new list.

⁴ Once you make a reservation, please do not switch your reservation to another hotel. Hotels are added because there are brothers and sisters who still need rooms, not to provide more choices for those who already have rooms reserved. Following this direction gives us the opportunity to demonstrate our love for our Christian brothers and to avoid the "me first" attitude so prevalent in the world today.—1 Cor. 10:24.

⁵ **Sending Deposits to Hotels and Handling Hotel Problems:** To guarantee a room reservation, within ten days of making your reservation, a one-night deposit must be made for each room reserved. Without a deposit, the hotel has the right to give your room to someone else. For any difficulties experienced before or after the convention, you may write or call the Rooming Department, using the address or telephone number shown at the top of the Recommended Lodging List. If a problem arises during the convention, you should go to the convention Rooming Department as soon as possible so that the brothers can assist you before you check out of the hotel.

⁶ **Caring for Those With Special Needs:** Relatives, the elders, and others in the congregation who are aware of the unique circumstances of the elderly, the infirm, full-time servants, or others with special needs can show their loving concern and care by assisting these ones to attend the convention. (Compare 1 Timothy 5:4.) The Society's Special Needs Room Request form outlines the qualifications for submitting this form. This provision is only for publishers in good standing, including those with well-behaved children, who have been approved by the Congregation Service Committee. These requests should be sent to the Rooming Department as soon as possible,

Program Times

Friday and Saturday
9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Sunday
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

using the convention address shown on the reverse side of the form.

⁷ **Attending Another Convention:** If you need a Recommended Lodging List or information for another convention, the congregation secretary can provide you with the address of the convention headquarters, which is found on the reverse side of the Special Needs Room Request form. Always enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your request. If there is more than one convention held in that city, be sure to indicate the dates of the convention you will attend.

⁸ **Arrange to Be in Attendance All Three Days:** Has Satan tried to distract you from giving attention to spiritual things? Sadly, many brothers and sisters and their families are missing out on vital spiritual food. How? By not attending the Friday district convention sessions. In some instances it has been noted that a large percentage of our brothers are missing the spiritual instruction and fellowship that the Friday sessions provide.

⁹ It is possible that some brothers are reluctant to approach their employers to request the time off to attend the convention. Is this your situation? Why not pray to Jehovah about the matter and muster up the courage to explain your situation to your employer? Remember the good outcome for Nehemiah, who was in a similar situation. (Neh. 2:1-6) Have faith in our heavenly Father's willingness to help you, knowing that if you put Kingdom interests first, he will provide life's necessities.—Matt. 6:32b, 33.

¹⁰ **How Do Our Conventions Affect You?** A sister from the eastern United States wrote: "Thank you so much for the 1999 district convention. Associating with brothers whom I see only once each year brings me much joy. I came in contact with the truth as a pregnant teenager, and I still recall with great fondness when my Bible study conductor took me to my first convention. I looked at the clouds above my head in that open-air stadium as we sang the Kingdom song 'Myriads of Brothers,' and I wept. 'With all these beautiful people around me,' I asked myself, 'how could Jehovah want me?' That day I decided to serve Jehovah fully." How heartwarming! It is certainly a pleasure to be associated with Jehovah's clean people, is it not?

¹¹ During the final part of the last days, we need our annual district convention more than ever before. It is a provision from Jehovah

to maintain our spiritual health and balance. Therefore, be resolved to attend all three days of this year's "Doers of God's Word" District Convention. How can you follow through with your resolve? Ask your employer beforehand for the time off from work to attend the entire convention. If your means are limited, start now to set aside the necessary funds to attend. Ask Jehovah to help you overcome any obstacle. As you do so, you can look forward to enjoying the warm companionship of your brothers and sisters and to hearing the sayings of everlasting life from our loving heavenly Father, Jehovah.—Compare John 6:68.

Steps in Making Your Hotel Reservation

1. Call hotels during regular business hours (in January, if possible). Use the hotel telephone numbers provided on the Recommended Lodging List.
2. Inform the hotel that you are one of Jehovah's Witnesses attending the Watchtower convention.
3. Provide the dates you will stay in the hotel.
4. Be sure that you are receiving the room rate(s) shown on the Recommended Lodging List. Do not accept a higher rate.
5. If rooms are not available, call another hotel on the list.
6. Make your reservation, and ask for a confirmation number.
7. Make your deposit by credit card, check, or money order. Do NOT send cash. If deposit is made by
Credit card: Instruct the hotel to charge the deposit to your card immediately.
Check or money order: Write the confirmation number on the front, and mail *within ten days*.

Also, Please:

- Stay only in hotels on the Recommended Lodging List.
- Reserve room(s) only for yourself or for people with whom you have made specific arrangements.
- Keep your first reservation.

THEOCRATIC MINISTRY SCHOOL REVIEW

Closed-book review on material covered in Theocratic Ministry School assignments for the weeks of September 6 to December 20, 1999. Use a separate sheet of paper to write down answers to as many of the questions as you can in the time allotted.

[Note: During the written review, only the Bible may be used to answer any question. References that follow the questions are for your personal research. Page and paragraph numbers may not appear on all references to *The Watchtower*.]

Answer each of the following statements True or False:

1. Jehovah has permitted independent human rule in order to prove that His way of ruling is always right and just. (Deut. 32:4; Job 34:10-12; Jer. 10:23) [w97 2/15 p. 5 par. 3]
2. The Bible indicates that God condemns all complaining. [w97 12/1 p. 30 pars. 3-4]
3. Parents keep relationships with their married children in proper perspective by recognizing the godly principles of headship and good order. (Gen. 2:24; 1 Cor. 11:3; 14:33, 40) [fy p. 164 par. 6]
4. Mark 6:31-34 shows that Jesus was moved with pity for the crowd only because of their sickness and poverty. [w97 12/15 p. 29 par. 1]
5. If a Christian of the other sheep class is not able to attend the Memorial of Jesus' death, he should celebrate it a month later in harmony with the principle stated at Numbers 9:10, 11. (John 10:16) [Weekly Bible reading; see w93 2/1 p. 31 par. 9.]
6. While Christian grandparents do not take over the responsibility of the father and mother to inculcate Bible truths in their children, grandparents can play a complementary role in contributing to the spiritual development of a child. (Deut. 6:7; 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14, 15) [fy p. 168 par. 15]
7. Proverbs 6:30 shows that stealing may be excused or justified under certain circumstances. [g97 11/8 p. 19 par. 2]
8. In 1530, William Tyndale was the first to use God's name, Jehovah, in an English translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. [w97 9/15 p. 28 par. 3]
9. Today, the antitypical city of refuge is God's provision for protecting us from

death for violating his commandment about the sanctity of blood. (Num. 35:11) [Weekly Bible reading; see w95 11/15 p. 17 par. 8.]

10. The name Deuteronomy, meaning "Second Law," is appropriate because this Bible book is a mere repetition of the Law. [Weekly Bible reading; see si p. 36 par. 4.]

Answer the following questions:

11. What is pictured by the two leavened loaves offered by the high priest during the Festival of Pentecost? (Lev. 23:15-17) [Weekly Bible reading; see w98 3/1 p. 13 par. 21.]
12. When did the Christian Jubilee begin, and what kind of liberty did it bring at that time? (Lev. 25:10) [Weekly Bible reading; see w95 5/15 p. 24 par. 14.]
13. According to the record in the book of Numbers, survival depends on what three things? [si p. 30 par. 1]
14. In what way was Moses a fine example in demonstrating that he did not have a jealous spirit? (Num. 11:29) [Weekly Bible reading; see w95 9/15 p. 18 par. 11.]
15. How does the case of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram illustrate that seeing does not always lead to believing? [w97 3/15 p. 4 par. 2]
16. What two aspects of honoring elderly parents are highlighted at Matthew 15:3-6 and 1 Timothy 5:4? [fy pp. 173-5 pars. 2-5]
17. What important lesson is highlighted at Numbers 26:64, 65? [Weekly Bible reading; see g95 8/8 pp. 10-11 pars. 5-8.]
18. How does Phinehas' example help us to appreciate what dedication to Jehovah means? (Num. 25:11) [Weekly Bible reading; see w95 3/1 p. 16 pars. 12-13.]

19. How might one in the antitypical city of refuge 'go out of the boundary' of the city? (Num. 35:26) [Weekly Bible reading; see w95 11/15 p. 20 par. 20.] *By leaving arrangement*
20. In what way was the Codex Sinaiticus a boon to Bible translation? [w97 10/15 p. 11 par. 2] *old*

Provide the word(s) or phrase needed to complete each of the following statements:

21. Jehovah has permitted evil to exist to establish once and for all the fundamental truth that he alone is ~~supreme~~ *God* and that ~~faithfulness~~ *obedience* to his laws is essential for the continued peace and happiness of all his creations. (Ps. 1:1-3; Prov. 3:5, 6; Eccl. 8:9) [w97 2/15 p. 5 par. 4]

22. The book of Leviticus is outstanding in highlighting the seriousness of blood, showing that the only use permitted for it is as ~~life~~ *food*. [si p. 29 par. 33]

23. In harmony with Psalm 144:15b, true happiness is a condition of the heart, based on genuine ~~affection~~ *love* and a good ~~relationship~~ *relationship* with Jehovah. [w97 3/15 p. 23 par. 7]

24. The Bible that resulted from the translation of the Hebrew Bible into common Greek, completed about 150 B.C.E., came to be known as the ~~Septuagint~~ *Septuagint*. Jerome's translation of the Bible into Latin came to be known as the ~~Vulgate~~ *Vulgate*, being completed about 400 C.E. [w97 8/15 p. 9 par. 1; p. 10 par. 4]

25. By drawing on the accounts about Balaam and Korah as recorded in the book of Numbers, Jude warned Christians to be on guard against the pitfalls of ~~idolatry~~ *idolatry* and ~~whispering~~ *whispering*. [si p. 35 par. 35]

Select the correct answer in each of the following statements:

26. Once a year, on the (~~Festival of Booths~~; Day of Atonement; Passover), the whole nation of Israel, including alien residents who worshiped Jehovah, had to (cease from all work; pay tithes; present first-fruit offerings) and fast. (Lev. 16:29-31) [Weekly Bible reading; see w96 7/1 p. 10 par. 12.]

27. One of the goals of the New World Bible Translation Committee was to produce a translation that was (as literal as possible; a paraphrase of the original languages; in harmony with a particular doctrinal understanding) in order to give the reader closer access to the flavor of the original languages and associated thought processes. [w97 10/15 p. 11 par. 5]

28. According to Hebrews 13:19, persistent prayers of fellow believers can make a difference as to (what God permits; when God acts; how God will maneuver things). [w97 4/15 p. 6 par. 1]

29. The "blue string above the fringed edge of the skirt" of the Israelites was required as a (sacred decoration; sign of modesty; visual reminder to be separate from the world as Jehovah's people). (Num. 15:38, 39) [Weekly Bible reading; see w83 10/15 p. 20 par. 16.]

30. The time period covered by the book of Deuteronomy is (two months; one year; two years), and its writing was completed early in (1513; 1473; 1467) B.C.E. [si p. 36 par. 6]

Match the following scriptures to the statements listed below:

Num. 16:41, 49; Matt. 19:9; Luke 2:36-38; Col. 2:8; 3:14

31. Asceticism does not lead to special holiness or real enlightenment. [w97 10/8 p. 21 par. 3] *Col 2:8*

32. Fornication is the only Scriptural ground for divorce with the possibility of remarriage. [fy pp. 158-9 par. 15] *Matt 19:9*

33. Being very active in theocratic activities, even in later years, can help one cope with the loss of a marriage partner. [fy pp. 170-1 par. 21] *2 Co 2*

34. Finding fault with Jehovah's way of administering justice through his appointed servants can have disastrous consequences. [Weekly Bible reading; see w96 6/15 p. 21 par. 13.] *Num 16:41, 49*

35. Unselfish love binds a married couple together and makes them want to do what is best for each other and for their children. [fy p. 187 par. 11] *Col 3:14*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Literature offer for **December:** *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life* with the *New World Translation*. **January:** Any 192-page book published prior to 1986 that the congregation may have in stock. Congregations that do not have a supply of such books may offer *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?* or *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*. **February:** *The Secret of Family Happiness*. **March:** *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. A special effort will be made to start home Bible studies.

■ Since the Gilead graduation will be held on Saturday, March 11, 2000, no tours will be conducted that day at the Society's facilities at Brooklyn, Paterson, and Wallkill, New York. Any who have planned to visit on that Saturday should reschedule their visit to another convenient time. No congregation literature requests will be processed for shipment or for pickup that day.

■ Congregations should begin requesting bound volumes of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* for 1999 with their December literature request. The bound volumes will be available in Chinese, Croatian, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, and Spanish. Until the bound

volumes are available and shipments are made, these will appear as "Pending" on congregation packing lists. Bound volumes are special-request items.

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

■ The Memorial for the year 2001 will be on Sunday, April 8, after sundown. This advance notice is given so that brothers may make necessary reservations or contracts for available halls when there are several congregations using the Kingdom Hall and other facilities must be found. The elders should have an agreement with the management ensuring that there will be no disturbances from other activities in the building so that the Memorial observance can proceed in a peaceful and orderly manner. Because of the importance of the occasion, in assigning a Memorial speaker, the body of elders should select one of the more qualified elders instead of simply taking turns or using the same brother every year. An exception will be made if there is a capable elder of the anointed who can give the talk.

■ New Publications Available:
Does God Really Care About Us?

—Tigrinya

How to Find the Road to Paradise (for Muslims)
—Gujarati, Nepali
New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures
—Shona
Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work
—Persian
Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!
—Yoruba
The Guidance of God—Our Way to Paradise
—Arabic
What Does God Require of Us?

—Sorani Kurdish

■ New Audiocassettes Available:
What Does God Require of Us? (single cassette)
—Quechua
When Someone You Love Dies (single cassette)
—English

SEPTEMBER SERVICE REPORT

| Number of: | Av. Hrs. | Av. Mags. | Av. R.V. | Av. Bi.St. |
|------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------------|
| Sp'l Pios. | 144 | 119.2 | 100.6 | 52.7 4.4 |
| Pios. | 90,955 | 67.7 | 49.4 | 21.1 1.6 |
| Aux. Pios. | 29,012 | 50.8 | 38.6 | 13.2 0.8 |
| Pubs. | 810,133 | 9.2 | 8.0 | 3.4 0.3 |
| TOTAL | 930,244 | | | Baptized: 1,791 |

The August *Our Kingdom Ministry* set a goal of 90,000 regular pioneers to be enrolled by September 1. We are happy to report a new peak of 90,955 regular pioneers for the month of September. This is an increase of 11,679, or nearly 15 percent, over the previous peak of August 1999. We look forward to future service reports.

The Theocratic Ministry School for 2000

¹The Theocratic Ministry School has proved to be a rich blessing to Jehovah's people. Over the past 50 years, it has helped millions to develop their abilities as public speakers and teachers of Bible truths. (Ps. 145:10-12; Matt. 28:19, 20) Can you see how the school has helped you? It can continue to do so during 2000 if you share in it fully and apply the counsel that is given.

²Instructions about assignments and the publications that will be used are listed on the first page of the school schedule for 2000. The time allotted for each part, the source

material, how the material is to be presented, and other details are considered. Please take the time to read the instructions carefully and apply them.

³Weekly Bible Reading:

There are two separate programs for weekly Bible reading listed on the school schedule. One is the standard reading program that covers about five pages of the Bible. Bible highlights are based on this reading. The other reading program is supplemental and covers twice as much material. By following this program, you will be able to read the entire Bible in three years. It is un-

derstood that some may want to read more than is scheduled in the supplemental program, and others may not be able to keep up with it. Rather than comparing yourself with others, rejoice in what you can accomplish. (Gal. 6:4) The vital thing is to read God's Word daily.—Ps. 1:1-3.

⁴To enroll in the Theocratic Ministry School, you should speak with the school overseer. Please take your assignments seriously, and do not cancel unnecessarily. Appreciate the school as a provision from Jehovah. Prepare well, become thoroughly familiar with the assigned material, and express yourself from the heart, thus benefiting to the full from this unique school.

What Will You Say to an Atheist?

¹ "I am an atheist," a professor from Poland told a missionary in Africa. However, the sister was able to have a discussion with the woman and gave her the book *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?* When the missionary returned the next week, the professor told her: "I'm no longer an atheist!" She had read the entire *Creation* book and now asked for a Bible study. What can you do to succeed in giving a witness to those who say that they do not believe in God? First, consider the various reasons why people make this claim.

² Factors That Contribute to Disbelief: Not all atheists were raised as such. Many were exposed to a form of religion and at one time believed in God. However, serious health or family problems or certain injustices they experienced weakened their faith. For others, courses taught in schools of higher learning have had a negative impact on their concept of God. Note the following examples of atheists who eventually developed a strong belief in Jehovah God and became his Witnesses.

³ A woman in Paris had been born with a debilitating bone disease. Although baptized as a Catholic, she proclaimed herself an atheist. When she asked the nuns why God had allowed her to be born with such a disability, their answer was: "Because he loves you." She refused to accept that absurd idea. Also, consider a young person in Finland who was diagnosed as having an incurable muscle disease and was

confined to a wheelchair. His mother took him to a Pentecostal who claimed to cure sick people. But there was no miraculous healing. As a result, the young man lost interest in God and became an atheist.

⁴ A man in Honduras was raised a Catholic but studied Socialist philosophy and atheism. Convinced by university teaching that mankind is the product of evolution, he ceased to believe in God. Similarly, a woman in the United States was raised a Methodist. In college, she took psychology classes. How was her belief affected? She said: "In one summer they destroyed every bit of faith I had in religion."

⁵ Reaching the Hearts of Sincere Ones: Many individuals who say that they do not believe in God would appreciate knowing if there is a solution to the problems of poor health, family discord, injustice, and so forth. They are sincerely interested in finding answers to such questions as: "Why does evil exist?" "Why do bad things happen to good people?" and "What is the meaning of life?"

⁶ A husband and wife living in Switzerland had both been raised as atheists. When they were first contacted with the truth, their response was negative. But they had serious family problems and were considering divorce. When the Witness visited again, she showed the couple from the Bible how to overcome their problems. The couple were astonished at the practical counsel contained in the Scriptures, and they agreed to a Bible study. Their marriage was strengthened,

they progressed spiritually, and they got baptized.

⁷ What You Can Say to an Atheist: When someone tells you he is an atheist, endeavor to find out the reason why he says that. Is it because of the education he has received, the problems he has experienced, or religious hypocrisy and false teachings he has seen? You might ask him: "Have you always felt this way?" or "What is the reason for your conclusion?" His answer will help you determine what to say. Where powerful arguments are required, the book *Is There a Creator Who Cares About You?* may be just what is needed.

⁸ You might pursue a conversation with an atheist by asking:

■ "Have you ever wondered: 'If there is a God, why is there so much suffering and injustice in the world?' [Allow for response.] May I show you the Bible's view on this subject?" Read Jeremiah 10:23. After reading it, ask his opinion of the text. Then show him pages 16 and 17 in the brochure *Will There Ever Be a World Without War?* Or, instead, you may use chapter 10 of the *Creator* book. Invite him to accept the publication and read the material.—For further suggestions, see the *Reasoning* book, pages 150-1.

⁹ Admittedly, not all atheists will accept the truth. But there are many who are willing to consider another viewpoint. Use logic, persuasion and, above all, the power of God's Word to help them see the truth.—Acts 28:23, 24; Heb. 4:12.