

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

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Fear Jehovah All Day Long

¹ "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom." (Ps. 111: 10) It stimulates us to do good works and helps us to turn away from what is bad. (Prov. 16:6) This fear is a profound reverence for our Creator, moving us to shun displeasing and disobeying him. It is something that we need to cultivate and display all day long.—Prov. 8:13.

² Every day, the spirit of Satan's world exerts tremendous pressure on us to conform to its evil ways. (Eph. 6:11, 12) Our imperfect flesh is sinful and naturally tends toward what is bad. (Gal. 5:17) Hence, to obey Jehovah's commandments, be happy, and gain life, we have to

fear him all day long.—Deut. 10: 12, 13.

³ At Hebrews 10:24, 25, we are admonished to gather together so as to encourage one another "all the more so" during these times in which we live. Regular meeting attendance is vital if we are to survive these last days. Our fear of displeasing God moves us to attend meetings and value their purpose highly. Those who fear God view sharing in Christian meetings as a sacred privilege.

⁴ Obeying the command to preach the good news of the Kingdom is another way that we display our fear of God. (Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 10:42) A

primary goal of our preaching work is to help others cultivate the fear of Jehovah and submit to his will. We accomplish this by making return visits, endeavoring to start home Bible studies, and then teaching others all the commandments of God. We thereby demonstrate our fear of Jehovah and our love of neighbor.—Matt. 22:37-39.

⁵ Those not fearing God fail to develop an appreciative attitude toward spiritual things, and they succumb to the world's deadly air, or mental attitude. (Eph. 2:2) May our firm resolve be to "render God sacred service with godly fear and awe." (Heb. 12:28) We will thus reap the blessings of those who fear Jehovah all day long.

Do You Preach With Boldness?

¹ Despite being arrested and threatened by opposers, Peter and John continued declaring the Kingdom message with boldness. (Acts 4:17, 21, 31) What does it mean for us today to preach with boldness?

Boldly Giving a Witness: A synonym for "bold" is "intrepid," which means having "resolute fearlessness, fortitude, and endurance." For true Christians, preaching with boldness means being unafraid to speak up whenever there is an appropriate occasion to share the good news with others. (Acts 4: 20; 1 Pet. 3:15) It means that we are not ashamed of the good news. (Ps. 119:46; Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 1:8) Thus, boldness is a quality needed to accomplish our commission to preach the

good news of the Kingdom in this time of the end. It moves us to share the good news with people wherever they may be found.—Acts 4:29; 1 Cor. 9:23.

3 Boldness at School: Does an inclination to be fearful or timid make it difficult to preach to your schoolmates? At times it is not easy; in fact, it can be a real challenge. However, Jehovah will strengthen you if you pray for boldness to preach to others. (Ps. 138:3) Boldness will help you to identify yourself as one of Jehovah's Witnesses and to withstand ridicule. As a result, your preaching at school may save those who listen to you.—1 Tim. 4:16.

4 Boldness at Work: Are you known as one of Jehovah's Witnesses at work? The only way

your workmates can be reached with the good news may be by your preaching to them. Your boldness will also help you to get time off for your Christian meetings and conventions.

5 Bold When Under Trial: Mustering up boldness is crucial when we face opposition. (1 Thess. 2:1, 2) It helps us to hold fast to our faith when we are subjected to threats, ridicule, or outright persecution. (Phil. 1:27, 28) It fortifies us to stand firm when under pressure to compromise our adherence to the standards of our God, Jehovah. It strengthens us to maintain our peaceableness when others provoke disputes.—Rom. 12:18.

⁶ Whatever difficulties we personally face, may we persevere in preaching the good news with boldness.—Eph. 6: 18-20.

SERVICE MEETING SCHEDULE

Week Starting December 11

Song 50

10 min: Local announcements. Selected Announcements from *Our Kingdom Ministry*. 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 holiday season. Encourage everyone to view the video *The Bible—Accurate History, Reliable Prophecy* in preparation for the discussion at the Service Meeting the week of December 25. Those who have the video can share it with others who do not have it, or perhaps they can watch it together.

15 min: "Fear Jehovah All Day Long."* Include the explanation of godly fear given on page 26 of the January 8, 1998, *Awake!* Emphasize the wholesome benefits of fearing Jehovah.

20 min: "Peer Pressure and Your Privilege to Preach." Talk and interviews. Invite individuals who have experienced peer pressure to relate how they were able to keep active in the preaching work in spite of it. Song 78 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting December 18

Song 94

15 min: Local announcements. Accounts report. Outline special field service arrangements for December 25 and January 1. Answer the question: Is there any objection to sharing in celebrations that may have unchristian roots as long as this is not done for religious reasons?—See *Reasoning* book, pages 178-80.

12 min: "The Theocratic Ministry School for 2001." Talk by the school overseer. Encourage all to keep up with their weekly Bible reading and to be diligent in fulfilling assignments in the school.

18 min: "Do You Preach With Boldness?"* Elicit comments on the scriptures in the article. Using the *Our Ministry* book, page 86, show

how we can acquire greater boldness and be more effective in field service.

Song 124 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting December 25

Song 126

10 min: Local announcements. Invite audience to relate any recent experiences they have had in their witnessing activity. Review literature offer for January.

10 min: Local needs.

25 min: "Learning From the Video *The Bible—Accurate History, Reliable Prophecy*." Audience discussion. Offer suggestions on how this video can be used to motivate others. (1999 Yearbook, pages 51-2) In February we will review the second video in this series, *The Bible—Mankind's Oldest Modern Book*.

Song 151 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting January 1

NOTE: Congregations are not to move their Service Meeting for the week of January 1 to an earlier night unless the circuit overseer is visiting. In every congregation the convention insert should be considered on the Service Meeting as scheduled. If there is a circuit assembly this week, book study conductors should announce the convention location and dates at their regularly scheduled book studies. A copy of the Recommended Lodging List should be made available so that those in attendance can copy the hotel telephone numbers for making their reservations.

Song 171

8 min: Local announcements. If your congregation will change meeting times for the new year, kindly urge everyone 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. Comment on September field service report for the country and the local congregation. Remind publishers to

turn in field service reports for December.

17 min: How to Prepare for Return Visits. Father discusses with his family how they can be more productive in their ministry. He stresses Scriptural reasons for following up all interest found. Using guidelines provided in the July 1, 1999, *Watchtower*, page 22, paragraph 18, they prepare to make some return visits. All acknowledge that they have contacted people who should be visited again. Each one describes the response he got on an initial call, and the others suggest an idea and a scripture to use on the return visit. They find points in the *Require* brochure that might be used effectively. The parents have one of the children practice what he will say on his call. They plan a specific time to make return visits during the coming week.

20 min: "2001 'Teachers of God's Word' District Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses." Secretary handles question-and-answer coverage of article in insert. First, read the December 15, 2000, convention assignment letter from the Society. Then use the cited scriptures to show why all of us need to follow the Society's direction closely. Stress the importance of arranging for time off from work as soon as possible in order to be free to attend all three days of the convention. Commend everyone for cooperating with the Society's arrangements.

Song 212 and concluding prayer.

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

SEPTEMBER SERVICE REPORT

Number of:	Av. Hrs.	Av. Mags.	Av. R.V.	Av. Bi.St.
Sp'l Plos.	145	120.9	112.8	52.5 4.6
Plos.	92,434	66.7	50.2	20.7 1.6
Aux.Plos.	22,370	50.2	41.1	13.0 0.8
Pub.	822,127	9.3	8.5	3.4 0.3
TOTAL	937,076			Baptized: 1,560

2001 "Teachers of God's Word" District Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses

¹ The prophet Isaiah described Jehovah as the Grand Instructor, who in a fatherly way urges: "This is the way. Walk in it, you people." (Isa. 30:20, 21) But how do we hear Jehovah's words spoken for our benefit? Jehovah speaks to his people through the pages of the Bible as well as Bible-based publications, meetings, circuit events, and district conventions provided by "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matt. 24:45) We can be thankful to Jehovah that he continues to direct us in the way in which we should walk.

² Each year, the district convention provides us with the opportunity to gather with fellow believers and listen attentively to Jehovah's instructions. Last year, 1,428,139 persons attended the spiritually refreshing "Doers of God's Word" District Conventions. In 2001, three-day "Teachers of God's Word" District Conventions will be held throughout the country. We know that you are looking forward to making your arrangements to attend, so we are providing the following instructions to assist you.

³ **Making Your Hotel Reservation:** To prevent hotels from overcharging the brothers and sisters attending the convention, the Society gives direction regarding acceptable room rates to the local Rooming Department in each convention city. All hotels that cooperate with these room-rate policies are placed on the Recommended Lodging List, a copy of which is sent to each congregation. However, you will notice that hotels included on the list one year may not be included the following year. This usually happens for one of three reasons: (1) Hotel personnel have decided that they will not offer room rates that are acceptable to the Society. (2) The Rooming Department has chosen to list a different hotel for reasons of price or location. (3) The hotel has fallen below the Society's standards for cleanliness and/or safety.

⁴ The Society would like to continue holding

our conventions in convenient convention cities. Because the Society and the local Rooming Department have your long-term interests at heart, each year we ask that you make reservations only at hotels that are *currently* working with the Watchtower Convention. By the first week in January, your congregation will have received the Recommended Lodging List for your convention. When making your reservation, 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."

⁵ Be sure that you have called *all* the hotels on the Recommended Lodging List before informing your congregation secretary that there are no rooms available. 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. A revised list will be sent to your congregation. Rather than making a reservation at a hotel not on the list, wait for the new list. Once you have made 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 world's me-first attitude.—1 Cor. 10:24.

⁶ **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. Any difficulties experienced before or after the convention may be reported by writing or calling

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.

7 Caring for Those With Special Needs: The elderly, the infirm, those in full-time service, or others may require assistance in attending the convention. Relatives, the elders, and others in the congregation who are aware of the unique circumstances of those with special needs can lovingly make the necessary arrangements. The responsibility of family and congregation should not be shifted to the convention organization. (1 Tim. 5:4) The Society's Special Needs Room Request form outlines the qualifications for submitting this form. The Congregation Service Committee should review each applicant's qualifications before forwarding this form to the Rooming Department. The congregation secretary should include his telephone number on the form so that the Rooming Department can contact him if there are any questions. The approved forms should be mailed to the convention address shown on the reverse side of the form.

8 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.

9 How Do Hotel Personnel Feel About Jehovah's Witnesses? After commenting on the good behavior of Jehovah's people, the general manager of a hotel in the Midwest said: "When I see Jehovah's Witnesses checking in on Thursday, I 'check out' until Monday morning. I know that any problems will be minor. It is always a pleasure to have your people here." A hotel salesperson exclaimed: "Wonderful group! Everyone just kept saying, 'Thank you.'" Does it not make you proud to hear our brothers spoken of in this way? Imagine how happy Jehovah God is when he sees us acting in a way that brings praise to his name!

10 Conclusion: As the time draws near for you to attend your district convention, make it a

matter of prayer to Jehovah that you can be in attendance *at all sessions on all three days* and derive the most benefit from the program. Have you already requested time off from work for the three days of the convention you plan to attend? If you have not, do so as soon as possible. Last-minute requests for time off from work usually are not granted. The faithful and discreet slave has arranged this year's "Teachers of God's Word" District Convention to provide for our spiritual instruction and to build up our faith. So start making your plans now to be in attendance, following the psalmist's admonition: "In congregated throngs bless God!"—Ps. 68:26.

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 Observe:

- 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 4 to December 18, 2000. 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. David restrained Abishai from killing Shimei because David was guilty of the charges Shimei was making against him. (2 Sam. 16:5-13) [Weekly Bible reading; see w99 5/1 p. 32 par. 3.]
2. A clean, properly trained conscience not only leads to a warm, personal relationship with God but is essential to our salvation. (Heb. 10:22; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16) [w98 9/1 p. 4 par. 4]
3. The account of 1 Kings has little more than historical value for a Christian because only 2 of the 14 kings who ruled in Israel and Judah after Solomon's death succeeded in doing what was right in Jehovah's eyes. [si p. 64 par. 1]
4. Jesus' Thousand Year Reign can be compared to Solomon's peaceful and prosperous 40-year rule. (1 Ki. 4:24, 25, 29) [Weekly Bible reading; see w90 6/1 p. 6 par. 5.]
5. Abijah's decent burial is clear evidence that he was a faithful worshiper of Jehovah, the only one from the house of Jeroboam. (1 Ki. 14:10, 13) [Weekly Bible reading; see w95 4/1 p. 12 par. 11.]
6. Undergoing Christian baptism indicates that one has become a mature servant of God. [w98 10/1 p. 28 par. 2]
7. Jehovah empowered Elijah with superhuman boldness and immunized him against fear. (1 Ki. 18:17, 18, 21, 40, 46) [Weekly Bible reading; see w98 1/1 p. 31 par. 2.]
8. Solomon's temple is a noteworthy structure not merely because of its glory and material splendor but because of its foreshadowing Jehovah's far more glorious spiritual temple. [si p. 69 par. 26]

9. The blindness that was brought on the military force of the Syrians at the word of Elisha was evidently mental blindness since they could see Elisha but could not recognize who he was. (2 Ki. 6:18, 19) [Weekly Bible reading; see si pp. 70-1 par. 10.]
10. Putting on "the Testimony," mentioned at 2 Kings 11:12, was a symbolic gesture illustrating that the king's interpretation of God's Law was final and should be obeyed. [Weekly Bible reading; see w91 2/1 p. 31 par. 6.]

Answer the following questions:

11. In harmony with 1 John 2:15-17, what should godly parents urge their children to avoid when guiding them in choosing suitable secular work? [w98 7/15 p. 5 par. 2] *hung Matendurie*
12. What is meant at 2 Samuel 18:8, which says: "The forest did more in eating up the people than the sword did"? [Weekly Bible reading; see w87 3/15 p. 31 par. 2.]
13. Who today may be compared to Goliath's kinsmen, the Rephaim, and what do they endeavor to do? (2 Sam. 21:15-22) [Weekly Bible reading; see w89 1/1 p. 20 par. 8.]
14. What is a beneficial Bible principle that we learn from 2 Samuel 6:6, 7? [si p. 63 par. 30] *Jesus tells you not to be loud*
15. What important principle can be learned from the incident involving the man who was put to death for violating the Sabbath? (Num. 15:35) [w98 9/1 p. 20 par. 2] *set standards & keep for man*
16. By doing what can we imitate the queen of Sheba, who traveled a long distance to hear "the wisdom of Solomon"? (1 Ki. 10:1-9) [Weekly Bible reading; see w99 7/1 p. 31 pars. 1-2.] *Show appreciation for greater Solomon*

17. According to 1 Kings 17:3, 4, 7-9, 17-24, in what three ways did Elijah demonstrate faith in Jehovah? [Weekly Bible reading; see w92 4/1 p. 19 par. 5.]

18. Why was Naboth's refusal to turn over his vineyard to Ahab not simply a reflection of stubbornness on his part? (1 Ki. 21:2, 3) [Weekly Bible reading; see w97 8/1 p. 13 par. 18.] *family inheritance belongs
by God not to be sold*

19. How have the words at 2 Kings 6:16 served to encourage Jehovah's servants today? [Weekly Bible reading; see w98 6/15 p. 18 par. 5.] *God sees - to strengthen servants*

20. In what ways should true Christians today guard against simony? [w98 11/15 p. 28 par. 5] *Don't buy privilege through favors or gifts*

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

21. A true Christian must not give in to worldly and participate in customs that displease God. (Prov. 29:25; Matt. 10: 28) [w98 7/15 p. 20 par. 5]

22. In witnessing before King Agrippa, Paul used scripture, emphasizing points that he and Agrippa knew. (Acts 26:2, 3, 26, 27) [w98 9/1 p. 31 par. 3].

23. Because God is invisible, some may feel he is impersonal, but frequent and intensive periods of study will enable a person to 'see the One who is invisible.' (Heb. 11:27) [w98 9/15 p. 21 pars. 3-4]

24. As seen in the case of Syrian general Noeman, sometimes great benefits are gained from just a little humility. [Weekly Bible reading; see w99 2/1 p. 3 par. 6-p. 4 par. 1.]

25. As Jehonadab's heart was with King Je-hu, the Gods today wholeheartedly acknowledge and cooperate with the Greater Je-hu, Jehovah, represented on earth by Anointed. (2 Ki. 10:15, 16) [Weekly Bible reading; see w98 1/1 p. 13 pars. 5-6.]

Select the correct answer in each of the following statements:

26. It was (Satan; Jehovah; Job) who incited David to sin by 'taking a count of Israel.' (2 Sam. 24:1) [Weekly Bible reading; see w92 7/15 p. 5 par. 2.]

27. In harmony with 1 Kings 8:1 and Ecclesiastes 1:1, Solomon congregated people to (build the temple; pursue the enemies of Israel; worship Jehovah). [Weekly Bible reading; see si p. 112 par. 3.]

28. The 20-year period during which Solomon built the temple and his house in Jerusalem is comparable to a period of doctrinal and organizational readjustment that began in (1919; 1923; 1931) and that ended in (1938; 1942; 1950). (1 Ki. 9:10) [Weekly Bible reading; see w92 3/1 p. 20 box.]

29. The term "heavens" as used at 2 Kings 2: 11 refers to the (spiritual dwelling place of God; physical universe; earth's atmosphere, where birds fly and winds blow). [Weekly Bible reading; see w97 9/15 p. 15 box.]

30. (Herod the Great; Caesar Augustus; Tiberius Caesar) was the one who ordered the census that resulted in Jesus' being born in Bethlehem rather than in Nazareth. [w98 12/15 p. 7 box]

Match the following scriptures to the statements listed below:

Ps. 15:4; 2 Sam. 12:28; 2 Sam. 15:18-22; 2 Ki. 3:11; Col. 3:13

31. Headship in Jehovah's theocratic arrangement should be respected. [si p. 63 par. 30]

32. Loyalty to Jehovah's organization and its representatives must be maintained. [sic p. 63 par. 30]

33. Appreciation for Jehovah's mercy can motivate one to exercise restraint and cover over shortcomings. [w98 11/1 p. 6 par. 3]

34. It is a privilege to show hospitality and to minister humbly to Jehovah's faithful, servants in special service. [Weekly Bible reading; see w97 11/1 p. 31 par. 1.]

35. A God-fearing person does his best to keep his word to pay his debts, even if unforeseen circumstances make it more difficult than anticipated. [w98 11/15 p. 27 par. 1.]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Literature offer for **December**: *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life with the New World Translation*. **January**: Any 192-page book published in or prior to 1986 that the congregation may have in stock. Congregations that have on hand *Mankind's Search for God* may also offer it. **February**: *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?, Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!*, or any 192-page book that the congregation has in stock. **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 10, 2001, no tours will be conducted that day at the Society's facilities at Brooklyn, Patterson, 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 2000 with their December literature re-

quest. 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.

- Memorial invitations for 2001 in the primary language of each congregation have been included with the annual shipment of forms. If other languages are spoken in your territory and you would like a supply of invitations in those languages, these should be requested immediately on a Literature Request Form (S-14). Memorial invitations are available in Albanian, Arabic, Armenian, Cambodian, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Croatian, Dutch, East Armenian, English, French, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Iloko, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Macedonian, Papiamento, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Samoan, Serbian, Spanish, Tagalog, Turkish, and Vietnamese. Please request only those languages needed for your territory.

Learning From the Video *The Bible—Accurate History, Reliable Prophecy*

After watching this video, can you answer these questions?

- (1) Who is the Source of the Bible's reliable information? (Dan. 2:28)
- (2) How does the Bible paint an accurate picture of ancient Egypt, and how did the prophecy recorded at Isaiah 19:3, 4 come true?
- (3) How has archaeology confirmed the Bible's portrayal of the Assyrians, their kings, and Assyria's end? (Nah. 3:1, 7, 13)
- (4) What prophecies involving Babylon have proved reliable?
- (5) What impact did Medo-Persia have on God's people?
- (6) How was Daniel 8:5, 8 fulfilled, and how far in advance was this foretold?
- (7) How did Jesus prove to be the true Messiah?
- (8) Which modern political powers fulfill prophecies found at Revelation 13:11 and 17:11?
- (9) What scenes in the video prove the truthfulness of Ecclesiastes 8:9?
- (10) How has this presentation strengthened your belief in the Bible's promises for the future?
- (11) How can you use this tool to convince others that the Bible is of divine origin?

The Theocratic Ministry School for 2001

¹ There are ample Scriptural reasons why all of us should participate as fully as possible in the Theocratic Ministry School.—Prov. 15:23; Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 15:32; 1 Tim. 4:12, 13; 2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Pet. 3:15.

² A program for weekly Bible reading has long been a feature of the school. It amounts to reading about one page of the Bible each day. Beginning this year, a Bible reading is also assigned for each written review week. The supplemental Bible reading, which was scheduled for the past three years, has

been completed. But if you wish to read more of the Bible than is scheduled, you may make up your own reading program.

³ Assignment No. 2 trains brothers for "public reading" of God's Word. (1 Tim. 4:13) When you have a reading assignment, practice it aloud again and again. You might use the Society's audiocassette recordings of the Bible to improve your pronunciation, modulation, and other aspects of good reading.

⁴ Assignments No. 3 and No. 4 are based on the *Reasoning*

book, which was prepared for use in the field ministry. If the assigned material is more than you can consider within the allotted time, select only what will be most practical for your congregation territory. Any setting that is appropriate for your territory may be used.

⁵ Make every reasonable effort to fulfill all your assignments in the school. Take the time to prepare well, and speak from your heart. You will be a source of encouragement to the congregation, and you will benefit personally by participating wholeheartedly in the Theocratic Ministry School during 2001.

Peer Pressure and Your Privilege to Preach

¹ Peer pressure is a powerful influence—for good or for bad. Fellow servants of Jehovah exert a positive influence that incites us to fine Christian works. (Heb. 10:24) However, non-Witness family members, workmates, schoolmates, neighbors, or other acquaintances can put pressure on us to follow a course that is contrary to Christian principles. They may speak “slightly of [our] good conduct in connection with Christ.” (1 Pet. 3:16) How can we maintain our determination to keep preaching despite negative peer pressure that we may encounter?

² **Family Members:** At times, a husband and father who is not one of Jehovah’s Witnesses may not want his wife and children to share in the public ministry. This was the situation in a household in Mexico. A man’s wife and seven children came into the truth. At first he was opposed because he did not want his family to preach and offer Bible literature from house to house. He felt that this was beneath their dignity. His wife and children, however, stood firm in their decision to serve Jehovah and to have a regular share in the ministry. In time, the man began to see the value of accepting God’s arrangement for the preaching work, and he too dedicated himself to Jehovah. It took him 15 years to accept the truth, but would he have ever done so had his family not persevered in their privilege to preach?—Luke 1:74; 1 Cor. 7:16.

³ **Workmates:** Your efforts to witness to workmates may not be well received by some. One sister related that when a discussion about the end of the world arose in the office, she was ridiculed because she suggested that they read Matthew chapter 24. However, a few days later, one of her workmates told her that she had read the chapter and was impressed. A publication was placed, and arrangements were made for a Bible study with her and her husband. The first study lasted until two o’clock in the morning. Following the third study, they started attending meetings, and soon thereafter they gave up the use of tobacco and began sharing in the ministry. Would this have happened if our sister had made no effort to share her hope with others?

⁴ **Schoolmates:** It is not unusual for Witness youths to experience peer pressure at school and to be afraid that other youths will belittle them for sharing in the preaching work. One Christian teenager in the United States said: “I had a fear of witnessing to other young people because I was afraid of being made fun of.” So she avoided opportunities to witness to her peers at school and in the territory. How can you develop the strength to stand up to peer pressure? Trust in Jehovah, seeking his smile of approval. (Prov. 29:25) Take pride in your ability to use the Word of God in your ministry. (2 Tim. 2:15) The youth just quoted began pray-

ing to Jehovah, asking him to help her cultivate the desire to talk to her schoolmates. She began witnessing informally at school, had good results, and was soon talking to everyone she knew. She concluded: “Those kids need and want a hope for the future, and Jehovah is using us to help them.”

⁵ **Neighbors:** We may have neighbors or other acquaintances who show some irritation toward us because of who we are and what we stand for. If you fear what they think, ask yourself: ‘Do they know the truth that leads to everlasting life? What can I do to reach their hearts?’ A circuit overseer observed that good results are achieved when witnessing to neighbors in measured doses. Beseech Jehovah for the needed strength and wisdom to continue seeking out honesthearted ones.—Phil. 4:13.

⁶ Our yielding to negative peer pressure may please opposers, but would doing so be in their best interests—or ours? Jesus was opposed by people in his own community. He even endured sharp remarks by his half brothers. But he knew that he could help them only by remaining true to the course God had set for him. Thus, Jesus “endured such contrary talk by sinners against their own interests.” (Heb. 12:2, 3) We must do the same. Be determined to make the most of your privilege to preach the Kingdom message. By doing so, “you will save both yourself and those who listen to you.”—1 Tim. 4:16.