

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

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Be Whole-Souled!

¹ We have a multitude of reasons to be grateful to Jehovah. These include the things that he has done in the past, is doing right now, and will yet do for us in the future. What should our gratitude move us to do? A psalm of David answers: "I will bless Jehovah at all times; constantly his praise will be in my mouth." —Ps. 34:1.

² The Bible clearly shows that we are commanded to preach. This is a work that we perform "whole-souled as to Jehovah." (Col. 3:23) How much will we do in the ministry if we are truly whole-souled? When we consider the love of Jehovah in our behalf, surely our hearts move us to have a devoted share in telling others about him and his precious purposes! We are moved to do what we can.

³ It would be reasonable to expect

that a person who is whole-souled wants to keep his attention focused on sacred service. The psalmist, who obviously felt that way, declared: "Seven times in the day I have praised you." (Ps. 119:164) Those who share the psalmist's feelings seek to take advantage of opportunities to praise Jehovah. As their circumstances permit, they serve zealously to the extent possible.

⁴ **We Are Surrounded by Opportunities to Praise Jehovah:** We do not have to wait until we are sharing in the door-to-door work to preach the good news. Our workmates, schoolmates, relatives, and acquaintances all need to hear the Kingdom message. When traveling, we can start conversations that may lead to giving a witness to hotel personnel, restaurant workers, service station at-

tendants, or taxi drivers. While at home, we may witness to neighbors or deliverymen. If we are hospitalized, there are nurses, doctors, and other patients to whom we can preach informally.

⁵ **Informal Witnessing Gets Results:** Two Witnesses were walking in a park one day and struck up a conversation with a young man who was strolling with his child. Eventually he and his wife embraced the truth. The young man later revealed that only a short time before he first met the two Witnesses, he had prayed to God, asking, 'If you exist, please let me know you.' He considers the encounter in the park to be Jehovah's answer to his prayer.

⁶ Those who are whole-souled in their desire to help others spiritually experience great joy. They know that such service, "with a complete heart," pleases Jehovah.—1 Chron. 28:9.

We Never Had It So Good Spiritually!

¹ Most people yearn for the day when they can say, "We never had it so good!" In their mind, that day will come when they have an abundance of material things, allowing them to 'take their ease, eat, drink, and enjoy themselves.' (Luke 12:19) In contrast, right now we are able to say that in a spiritual sense, we are not lacking anything good. (Ps. 34:10) How is that possible?

² Proverbs 10:22 declares that "the blessing of Jehovah—that is what makes rich." We who experience such divine favor can truly say that God "furnishes us all things richly for our enjoyment." (1 Tim. 6:17) This makes us the richest people on earth!

³ **Counting Our Blessings:** Few of us have an abundance of material things. Yet, we are blessed because we are not overly anxious about our daily necessities. Jehovah knows what things we need, and he promises to provide them. (Matt. 6:31-33) His assurance gives us peace of mind that is truly priceless.

⁴ Our spiritual blessings, however, are even greater. Our lives depend on spiritual food from Jehovah. (Matt. 4:4) Those who look to worldly sources for spiritual sustenance go hungry while we eat and drink to satisfaction. (Isa. 65:13) The 'faithful slave' gives us access to an inexhaustible supply of knowledge that leads to everlasting life.—Matt. 24:45; John 17:3.

⁵ Our precious worldwide brotherhood provides us with the warm fellowship of loving brothers and sisters living in every part of the earth. (John 13:35) The local congregation is a haven of peace, where we can find comfort and refreshment. The elders are keeping watch over our souls, helping us to cope with many kinds of problems. (Heb. 13:17) Our drawing close to our brothers results in an interchange of encouragement, strengthening us to persevere.—Rom. 1:11, 12.

⁶ Even our work is a blessing. Many secular jobs are tedious and unfulfilling. Sharing the good news brings

joy to others and happiness to ourselves. (Acts 20:35) We are truly able to see good for all our hard work.—Eccl. 2:24.

⁷ Most of all, we have a marvelous hope for the future. (Rom. 12:12) We look forward to a perfect new world of righteousness, where we will live with our loved ones in happiness and peace forever! This hope is a treasure worth more than anything this world has to offer.—1 Tim. 6:19.

⁸ **How Can We Show Our Appreciation?** We can never repay Jehovah for what he has done for us. We can only express our appreciation by (1) thanking him every day for his undeserved kindness (Eph. 5:20), (2) demonstrating our love by being obedient (1 John 5:3), (3) sanctifying his name by preaching the good news (Ps. 83:18), and (4) supporting the Christian congregation by our wholehearted cooperation.—1 Tim. 3:15.

⁹ We have every reason to be the happiest people on earth. (Ps. 144:15b) May our attitude, conduct, and service reflect the joy we feel in our spiritual paradise. We never had it so good!

SERVICE MEETINGS FOR MAY

Week Starting May 6

Song 153

10 min: Local announcements. Review "What Are Your Plans for the Summer?"

15 min: "Be Whole-Souled!" Questions and answers. As time permits, consider "Points to Discuss as a Family," in the October 15, 1981, *Watchtower*, page 25.

20 min: "Speak Truth to Your Neighbor." Questions and answers. Review suggested presentations. Encourage new ones to share in magazine distribution, using brief presentations to get started. Have two demonstrations that include pointing out the statement on page 2 of *The Watchtower*: "Publication of *The Watchtower* is part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations." We are pleased to accept modest donations from people who enjoy the magazines.

Song 148 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting May 13

Song 63

7 min: Local announcements. Accounts report.

18 min: "We Never Had It So Good Spiritually!" Questions and answers. Have two or three publishers, including a teenager, mention some of their blessings. Conclude by showing how increased appreciation moves us to zealous activity in sacred service.

20 min: "1996 'Messengers of Godly Peace' District Convention." Question-and-answer coverage of paragraphs 1-17. Read paragraphs 10-11, 16.

Song 193 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting May 20

Song 126

10 min: Local announcements. Review arrangements for field service activity during worldly holiday on May 27. Encourage all to share in magazine distribution.

15 min: "Keep On Speaking the Truth." Stress need to make return visits, with the goal of starting studies. Offer six-month subscriptions to those who show genuine interest. Have two brief demonstrations.

20 min: "1996 'Messengers of Godly Peace' District Convention." Question-and-answer coverage of paragraphs 18-24. Read paragraph 18. Review "District Convention Reminders."

Song 28 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting May 27

Song 121

5 min: Local announcements.

15 min: Offering *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life* During June.

Service overseer first discusses why the *Knowledge* book was published. He then reviews some of its highlights with two or three capable publishers. Book answers questions about our future, human suffering, God's Kingdom, godly conduct, family life, and the benefits of prayer. Two different ones in group demonstrate approach that can be used to start a study on either the initial call or a return visit. Service overseer then covers following points. There is a need to conduct more effective Bible studies in a shorter period of time. This book was specially designed for that purpose. It presents the truth in a positive, concise manner. Questions on each paragraph, as well as at the end of every chapter, help us to focus on the main points. The book covers the answers to the questions asked of newly dedicated ones who wish to get baptized. Encourage all to work with the goal of starting studies in June.

10 min: Question Box. Read and discuss with audience.

15 min: "Are You Too Busy?" Questions and answers. As time permits, include comments from the June 8, 1990, *Awake!*, pages 14-16. Have one or two publishers briefly relate what they have done to cope successfully with a busy theocratic schedule.

Song 155 and concluding prayer.

CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY

Schedule for congregation studies in the book *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*.

May 6: Chapter 2

May 13: Chapter 3

May 20: Chapter 4

May 27: Chapter 5

FEBRUARY SERVICE REPORT

Number of:	Av. Hrs.	Av. Mags.	Av. R.V.	Av. Bi.St.
Sp'l Pios.	173	121.2	79.3	52.2 5.3
Pios.	74,698	73.9	38.5	24.1 2.4
Aux. Pios.	14,510	57.3	31.1	16.5 1.5
Pubs.	835,141	9.0	6.1	3.5 0.4
TOTAL	924,522			Baptized: 2,081

What Are Your Plans for the Summer?

When we think of summer, we think of warm weather, arrangements to attend a district convention, and plans for a relaxing vacation or a pleasant visit with relatives and friends. When making your summer plans, here are a few reminders that may help you to keep Kingdom interests in first place:

■ Make definite plans to attend the district convention. Arrange for your transportation and accommodations well in advance in order to avoid any problems.

■ If you go away for a vacation, plan to attend the meetings of the local congregation and share in the ministry. Be sure to turn in your field service reports; if necessary, mail them to your congregation's secretary.

■ A visit with relatives who are not in the truth may give you a chance to do some productive informal witnessing. Be sure to bring your Bible and a supply of literature.

■ Have you thought about helping a nearby congregation that needs assistance in covering its territory? Talk to the elders or the circuit overseer to get information about the needs in your area.

■ School vacations provide an excellent opportunity for young people to expand their service activity. Youths, can you enroll as auxiliary pioneers?

■ With pleasant weather and longer daylight hours, you may find that you can get excellent results in the service by doing more evening witnessing, when many people are at home.

■ Elders should be alert to keep congregation activities well organized, arranging for someone to care for the responsibilities assigned to those who will be away.

Remember that "the plans of the diligent one surely make for advantage." (Prov. 21:5) Plan to make the most of your summertime theocratic opportunities.

1996 "Messengers of Godly Peace" District Convention

¹ The district convention program this year will surely help us to maintain our godly peace, and it will explain our role in helping others to find such peace. As announced in the January 1996 *Our Kingdom Ministry*, the theme is "Messengers of Godly Peace." Have you made your plans so as not to miss any of the program?

² **A Three-Day Program:** We know you will thoroughly enjoy this year's convention and will return home with renewed vigor. (2 Chron. 7:10) This year we will again have a three-day program. Have you already made arrangements to get time off from secular work so that you can attend for the entire period? Some of the earlier conventions will be held before school is dismissed for the summer. If you have children of school age, have you respectfully informed their teachers that they will be absent on Friday for this important part of their religious training?

³ The February 15, 1996, *Watchtower* lists the dates and locations for 198 conventions in the United States branch territory. By now the secretary of your congregation has informed you of the one to which you are assigned. In addition to English, there will be conventions in American Sign Language, Chinese, French, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

⁴ The program will begin all three days at 9:30 a.m. and conclude on Sunday at approximately 4:00 p.m. Doors will open at 8:00 a.m. The only ones permitted to enter before then are those with work assignments, and these will not be allowed to save seats until the building opens for everyone. Will we demonstrate kindness to our older and infirm brothers by leaving the seats vacant in areas that are more convenient and comfortable? Remember that "love . . . does not look for its own interests." —1 Cor. 13:4, 5; Phil. 2:4.

⁵ **Will You Be Sharpened?** After quoting Proverbs 27:17, "By iron, iron itself is sharpened," the August 15, 1993, *Watchtower* observed: "We are like instruments that need regular sharpening. Since expressing love for Jehovah and making decisions based on our faith means being different from the world, we constantly have to cut a different path, as it were, from the majority." How can we apply that counsel?

⁶ We are and must remain different from the world. The constant effort to accomplish this has to be maintained if we are to be zealous for fine works. (Titus 2:14) That is why the *Watchtower* article quoted above went on to say: "When we are with others who love Jehovah, we sharpen one

another—we incite one another to love and fine works." The district convention is one of the provisions from Jehovah to help us stay sharp spiritually. We cannot afford to miss any part of the program.

⁷ **A Wise Person Will Listen:** Listening is an art that has to be developed. It has been said that the average person remembers only about half of what he has heard—no matter how carefully he thinks he listened. Since we live in an age of distractions, at times we may experience difficulty concentrating for long periods. Can we try to increase our attention span, especially when sitting in a large audience listening to someone speak? If you were asked to give a summary of each day's program after returning home from the convention, would you be able to do so? How can all of us improve our ability to listen and pay close attention to each part presented on the convention program?

⁸ **Keen interest is essential**, for the divine gift of memory cannot function efficiently without it. For example, the more interest a person shows in a subject, the easier it is to remember the main points of a talk or program part. Yet, much depends on our paying more than the usual attention to the things we are privileged to hear at district conventions. Our keen interest in and attentiveness to each part of the convention program has a bearing on our present spiritual condition as well as on our future prospects. At conventions we are taught Jehovah's ways and are given instructions for accomplishing a lifesaving work. (1 Tim. 4:16) Think of yourself as a ship in a storm-tossed sea. The promises of Jehovah are the solid anchor of hope. If a person is inattentive at Christian programs and allows his mind to drift, he may miss vital points of counsel and instruction that could prevent him from suffering spiritual shipwreck. —Heb. 2:1; 6:19.

⁹ In many parts of the world, our brothers put forth great physical effort to attend meetings. It is marvelous to see their rapt attention at conventions. In some places, though, individuals have distracted others by milling around the convention grounds during sessions. Others come in late. At some past conventions, it was difficult to hear the first few minutes of the program because of so many wandering in the corridors and behind the seating areas. These are usually not brothers on work assignments or mothers attending to the needs of their small children. Much of the disturbance is from people who are just visiting. This year the Attendant Department will be giving more attention to the problem, and hopefully, all will be seated when the chairman invites us

to do so. Your cooperation in this regard will be greatly appreciated.

¹⁰ What practical suggestions will help us to be more attentive to the convention program and to retain more of what is presented? What has been said in past years bears repeating: (a) Focus on the main reason for going to the convention city. It is, not to engage in recreation, but to listen and learn. (Deut. 31:12) Try to get sufficient rest each night. If you come to the convention very tired, concentration will be difficult. (b) Give yourself plenty of time to park your car and get seated before the program starts. Rushing to the seats at the last minute will usually result in your missing some of the opening part. (c) Take brief notes of key points. Excessive note-taking can be a hindrance to good listening. When writing, make sure you do not miss other points because of concentrating on your notes. (d) When a convention part is introduced, view it with eager anticipation. Ask yourself, 'What can I learn from this part that will increase my appreciation and love for Jehovah?' How can the information help me to manifest the new personality more fully? How will this help me to improve in my ministry?"

¹¹ **Conduct That Adorns Our Ministry:** Paul encouraged Titus to show himself "an example of fine works." By showing uncorruptness in his teaching, Titus would help others to "adorn the teaching of our Savior, God, in all things." (Titus 2:7, 10) Each year, we receive kindly reminders about why godly conduct is so important while we are traveling to and from the convention, as well as when we are at hotels and restaurants and at the convention itself. Last year we again heard some heartwarming comments that we would like to share with you.

¹² The manager of a hotel stated "It is always a pleasure to accommodate the Witnesses because they are patient, cooperative, and they keep a close eye on their children." One hotel desk clerk said that it makes his job "so much easier when the Witnesses are checking in and out of the hotel because, despite having to wait in line, they are always polite, patient, and understanding." A woman in New England was so impressed with the conduct of the Witness youths staying at the same motel that she requested some literature about our organization.

¹³ On the other hand, there is room for improvement in certain areas. We would like to share some observations that have been sent to the Society. One traveling overseer reported that the children of Jehovah's Witnesses need more supervision at hotels. Some have been seen running in the hallways, riding up and down in the elevators, making a lot of noise around the swimming pool, and staying in the pool well past the posted closing time, thus disturbing the sleep of other guests. We need to train our children to understand that Christian

conduct is not on a time schedule. It does not end when we walk out of the convention facility. It must last 24 hours a day. Our conduct at the hotel, in restaurants, and on the streets should be as honorable as when we are sitting down during the sessions with our brothers, being taught by Jehovah.—Isa. 54:13; 1 Pet. 2:12.

¹⁴ We would also like to share a kindly reminder about tipping. Waiters, waitresses, hotel maids and bellmen, and others in similar occupations are dependent upon tips to make a living.—See *Awake!* of June 22, 1986, pages 24-7. *2.25 an hour*

¹⁵ Although food service has been discontinued at our conventions, there is still considerable expense involved in renting the facility, providing parking, and caring for miscellaneous matters. Our voluntary donations care for these expenses. One sister with teenage children came to the convention with limited funds. However, she and the children still helped out with a small contribution. What each one decides to do in this regard is a personal matter, but we know you appreciate such reminders.—Acts 20:35; 2 Cor. 9:7.

¹⁶ **Recognized by the Way We Dress:** The way we dress reveals much about us and about our feelings toward others. Most teenagers and many adults are surrounded by faddish, slipshod styles of clothing in school or in their place of employment. Each year clothing styles become more extreme, even shocking. If we are not careful, we could easily be influenced by worldly peers to dress as they do. Many styles are inappropriate to wear at meetings for worship. A note received after one of last year's conventions expressed appreciation for the program but added: "I did wonder why there were so many young girls with such short dresses, low tops, and high slits." Surely all of us desire to be dressed in a manner that befits Christian ministers both at the convention and while socializing after the program. At all times we do well to reflect on the apostle Paul's counsel for Christians to be adorned in "well-arranged dress, with modesty and soundness of mind."—1 Tim. 2:9.

¹⁷ Who is to determine what is modest, "well-arranged" dress? Being modest means being "neither bold nor self-assertive." The dictionary also defines modest as "unpretentious." Neither the Society nor the elders are to set out rules about dress or grooming. Even so, should it not be clear to a Christian which clothing styles are simply not modest or decent? (Compare Philippians 1:10.) Our grooming and clothing should not attract undue attention. We must be pleasing in appearance, not worldly or offensive. As ministers of the good news, our being appropriately dressed and groomed during the time that we are in the district convention city brings honor to Jehovah and reflects well on the organization. Hence, parents will set the example and then make sure their children dress prop-

erly for the occasion. Elders will want to set a good example and be ready to offer kind counsel if necessary.

¹⁸ **Hotels:** Earlier we quoted hotel personnel who said that they were impressed because the brothers were patient, polite, and cooperative. We want to continue to display these Christian qualities if we have to wait in line to register. We appreciate the hotels that have cooperated with the Society in providing rooms at an affordable price. Although we may be tired from travel, we should remember to treat hotel employees with kindness. Our doing so may cause some to examine the truth more closely. Please review the January 1996 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert for more information regarding hotel accommodations. Additionally, no cooking is to be done in hotel rooms unless they have a kitchen for that purpose.

¹⁹ **Cameras, Camcorders, and Audiocassette Recorders:** It is permissible to use cameras and other recording equipment, provided we show consideration for others in attendance. If we move around taking pictures during sessions, not only will we distract others who are trying to listen but we will miss some of the program ourselves. We usually benefit more from the convention by paying close attention to the speakers and taking conservative notes. We may be recording for a brother or a sister who is a shut-in; however, for our own use, we may find upon returning home that after taping many hours of the program, there will not be time for us to review much of what we recorded. No recording devices of any sort are to be connected to the electrical or sound systems, nor should equipment block aisles, walkways, or the view of others.

²⁰ **Seating:** We continue to note improvement in the matter of saving seats. Last year, most of you followed the directions: SEATS MAY BE SAVED ONLY FOR YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS AND ANY WHO MAY BE TRAVELING WITH YOU IN YOUR CAR. You probably found it to be less stressful because many were following these clear directions. Even more important, your compliance was pleasing to Jehovah and to the 'faithful slave,' who gives the spiritual food.—Matt. 24:45.

²¹ There is a growing number of our brothers who have special health needs. Some come to the convention in wheelchairs and need to be cared for by family members. Others are on various medications for chronic maladies such as heart problems or seizures. It truly warms our heart to see these dear brothers and sisters at the convention, determined not to miss any of the spiritual food. However, at times, there has been the problem of some persons becoming ill during the convention, with no family or congregation members to render assistance. In certain cases the convention administration was required to call for an emergency med-

ical service to transport a brother or a sister to the hospital. The responsibility for the care of the chronically ill should fall primarily on family members and close relatives. The convention First Aid Department is not in a position to provide care for the chronically ill. If a member of your family is in need of special care, please be sure he is not left alone in case an emergency arises. In addition, there will be no arrangements at the conventions for special rooms to accommodate those who have allergies that preclude their sitting in the general seating areas. Elders will want to be alert to any in their congregation who have special health needs and make sure arrangements are made ahead of time for their care.

²² **Convention Food Needs:** Many positive comments have been made regarding the benefits of bringing our own food. One brother wrote: "I can clearly see a huge spiritual dividend from this. All that time and energy can now be diverted to spiritual matters. I have not heard one negative comment." A sister wrote: "By example, you dear brothers encourage us as individual Christians to examine ourselves and seek ways to simplify our lives and increase our theocratic activity." A traveling overseer wrote about the former food service provisions: "The old arrangement caused a good number of the brothers to miss the entire assembly program." Regarding the food the brothers brought, one elder wrote: "They had just what they wanted, and they didn't have to wait in line for it." Lastly, another sister wrote: "After the sessions it was peaceful and quiet and there was an air of cheerfulness." Yes, each one could bring enough to sustain himself through the afternoon period. Many commented on the fact that they had more time to visit with friends.

²³ There will be no food service again this year. You might take a few minutes to review the May 1995 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert, paragraph 26, for suggestions on practical, nourishing food items that can be taken to the convention. Please remember, no glass containers or alcoholic beverages are to be brought into the convention facility. If small coolers are necessary, they must fit under your seat. Have in mind that there is sufficient time during the noon break to eat and drink what you bring. As at our Kingdom Halls during meetings, we always refrain from eating during convention sessions. Thus we demonstrate respect for the arrangement for worship and the spiritual food being provided.

²⁴ Soon the first "Messengers of Godly Peace" District Conventions will begin. Have you completed your preparations to attend, and are you now ready to enjoy three days of happy fellowship and spiritual good things? It is our sincere prayer that Jehovah will bless your efforts to attend this summer's convention.

District Convention Reminders

Baptism: Baptismal candidates should be seated in the designated section before the program begins on Saturday morning. It has been observed that some wear types of attire that are not dignified and detract from the occasion. A *modest* bathing suit and a towel should be brought by each one who plans to be baptized. Congregation elders reviewing the questions in the *Our Ministry* book with baptismal candidates will want to make sure that each one understands these points. After the baptism talk and prayer by the speaker, the session chairman will give brief instructions to the candidates and will then call for a song. After the last stanza, the attendants will direct the candidates to the immersion site. Since baptism in symbol of one's dedication is an intimate and personal matter between the individual and Jehovah, there is no provision for so-called partner baptisms in which two or more baptismal candidates embrace or hold hands while being baptized.

Badge Cards: Please wear the 1996 badge card at the convention and while traveling to and from the convention site. This often makes it possible for us to give a fine witness while traveling. Badge cards and holders should be obtained through your congregation, as they will *not* be available at the convention. Do not wait until a few days before the convention to ask for cards for you and your family. Remember to carry your current Advance Medical Directive/Release card.

Rooming: We are asking for the cooperation of everyone in using **ONLY** the listing of accommodations provided by the convention. If we bypass the Society's arrangement and secure a hotel not on the approved list or pay more than the agreed-upon rate at one of the listed hotels, we undermine much of the hard work of our brothers who negotiate with the hotels for better rates. **IF YOU EXPERIENCE A PROBLEM WITH A HOTEL**, please do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the Rooming Department overseer at the convention so that he can assist you in resolving the matter right away. Congregation secretaries should be sure that Special Needs Room Request forms are promptly forwarded to the appropriate convention address. If you must cancel an accommodation made through the special needs arrangement, you should immediately notify both the landlord or hotel and the convention Rooming Department so that the room can be reassigned.

Baby Strollers and Lawn Chairs: In most locations, baby strollers cannot be used in places of public assembly. Fire regulations prohibit placing them in corridors and aisles or between rows of seats. Since large crowds may cause congested conditions, baby strollers are potentially dangerous not only to the baby but also to any who may stumble over them. So please do not bring them to the convention site. However, infant or car seats are permissible, since these can be secured in seats next to the parents. Also, please do not bring lawn chairs. They are dangerous and are not allowed at large public facilities. Your cooperation in these matters is appreciated.

Volunteer Service: With no more food service, many who formerly worked in that department may now find that they can volunteer to work elsewhere. Can you set aside some time at the convention to assist in one of the departments? Serving our brothers, if only for a few hours, can be very helpful and bring a good measure of satisfaction. If you can assist, please report to the Volunteer Service Department at the convention. Children under 16 years of age can also make a fine contribution by working under the direction of a parent or other responsible adult.

Words of Caution: Keep alert to potential problems so as to avoid unnecessary difficulty. Often thieves and other unscrupulous individuals will prey on people who are away from their home environment. Be sure your vehicle is locked *at all times*, and never leave anything visible to tempt someone to break in. Thieves and pickpockets focus their attention on large gatherings. It would not be wise to leave any valuables at your seat. You cannot be sure that everyone around you is a Christian. Why offer any temptation? Reports have been received of attempts made by some outsiders to lure children away. **KEEP YOUR CHILDREN IN SIGHT AT ALL TIMES.**

Television and video services available in many hotels often feature lewd, pornographic programs. Be alert to this snare, and do not permit children to have unsupervised access to the television in the room.

Please do not phone or write the management of the convention auditorium, seeking information about any convention matters. If the information is not available from the elders, you may write to the address of a specific convention, as found on the back of the Special Needs Room Request forms, one of which is posted on the congregation's information board.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Literature offer for **May**: Individual copies of both *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* For territory that is covered frequently, any appropriate brochure may also be used. Where interest is found on return visits, subscriptions may be offered. **June**: *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. **July and August**: Any of the following 32-page brochures: *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 Government That Will Bring Paradise*, *What Is the Purpose of Life—How Can You Find It?*, and *When Someone You Love Dies*. Where appropriate, brochures such as *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.

■ New Publications Available:

Sing Praises to Jehovah (Lyrics only)

—Iloko

Who Really Rules the World? (Tract No. 22)

—Bengali

■ New Videocassettes Available:

The Bible—Mankind's Oldest Modern Book

—French, Korean

QUESTION BOX

■ Now that we have the book *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*, how long should a home Bible study be conducted?

Our *Kingdom Ministry* for September 1993 recommended that a home Bible study be continued with newly interested ones until two books have been studied. Now that we have the *Knowledge* book, it seems advisable to make an adjustment in this procedure, as outlined on pages 13 and 14 of the January 15, 1996, issue of *The Watchtower*.

The *Knowledge* book is designed to help those "rightly disposed for everlasting life" to learn what they need to know in order to make a dedication to Jehovah and get baptized. (Acts 13:48) Therefore, after completing this new publication, it should not be necessary to study a second book with the same student. As your Bible students begin to embrace the truth, you can progressively encourage them to round out their knowledge by attending meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses as well as by reading the Bible and various Christian publications.

If you are thoroughly familiar with the questions on pages 175 to 218 of the book *Organized to Accomplish Our Ministry*, this may be

helpful. Although you should not make reference to these questions or review them with the Bible student, it may be good to emphasize points in the *Knowledge* book that will enable the student to express a proper understanding of basic Bible truths when the elders review questions with baptism candidates.

There is no need to supplement the information in the *Knowledge* book, bringing in outside material or additional arguments to support Bible teachings or to disprove false doctrines. This would only serve to extend the study over a longer period of time. Rather, it is hoped that the book can be covered rather quickly, perhaps in about six months. This emphasizes the need for us to study the material thoroughly in advance so that we can present it clearly and concisely. The student should likewise be urged to study in advance, look up cited scriptures, and endeavor to discern clearly what the book is teaching in each chapter.

The Watchtower has stressed the need for Jehovah's Witnesses to conduct a greater number of effective Bible studies in a shorter period of time. (See Isaiah 60:22.) Effective use of the *Knowledge* book can help new ones to acquire the knowledge that leads to everlasting life and act upon it.—John 17:3.

Are You Too Busy?

¹ Paul exhorted that we "always have plenty to do in the work of the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58) We are urged to maintain a daily routine for personal study, share regularly in the ministry, attend meetings faithfully, and care for congregation assignments diligently. Added to that, we must assist others who need our help. With so much to do, at times we may feel overwhelmed, thinking that we have to look for ways to cut down on our work load.

² There are situations that may make it both wise and reasonable to eliminate certain activities or reduce their level. Some individuals feel that they are expected to do everything requested of them by others. A lack of balance in this regard can produce pressure and stress that can ultimately become devastating.

³ **Be Balanced:** The key to balance lies in applying Paul's counsel to "make sure of the more important things." (Phil. 1:10) That simply means that we concentrate on the things that really matter and, if time and circumstances permit, care for some things of lesser importance. Family obligations certainly rank high among those things that are vital. Certain secular responsibilities have to be handled. However, Jesus taught that our priorities should be based on the premise that we seek the Kingdom first. We must first do the things that will allow us to fulfill our dedication to Jehovah.—Matt. 5:3; 6:33.

⁴ Having this in mind, we will make sure that we cut out of our busy schedule any unnecessary personal pursuits, excessive recreational activities, and nonessential commitments to others. In planning our activity for each week, we will set aside time for sufficient personal study, a reasonable share in service, attendance at meetings, and any other things close-

ly connected with our worship. The remaining time may be divided among other pursuits, depending on how much they contribute toward achieving our primary goal of being balanced Christians who keep the Kingdom first.

⁵ Even then, we may still feel our load is oppressive. If so, we need to respond to Jesus' invitation: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you." (Matt. 11:28) Also, look to Jehovah, "who daily carries the load for us" and gives to the tired one power. He promises that he will never allow the righteous one to totter. (Ps. 55:22; 68:19; Isa. 40:29) We can be confident that our prayers will be answered, making it possible for us to persevere in an active life of theocratic activity.

⁶ While we are sure to be kept busy in pursuing worthwhile Kingdom interests, we can rejoice in knowing that our labor is not in vain in connection with the Lord.—1 Cor. 15:58.

Speak Truth to Your Neighbor

¹ One of the two greatest commandments is: "You must love your neighbor as yourself." (Matt. 22:39) Such love will prompt us to share with our neighbor the best thing we have—the truth that we have found in God's Word. Since the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines amplify the Bible's message of truth, distributing these journals during the month of May is one way for us to 'speak truth with our neighbors.'—Eph. 4:25.

² *The April 22 "Awake!" should be featured until your supply is exhausted. You might initiate your presentation by asking:*

■ "What is your reaction to a world without war? [Allow for response.] Did you know that the world's religions actually promote wars and killing? [Allow for response.] In sharp contrast, notice what the Bible says the true worshippers of God will do." Read Isaiah 2:2-4 from the top of page 4 of the magazine, and then on page 10 read the first paragraph under the sub-heading "Calling to Lovers of Peace." Next, ask: "Do you know how God will do that? The answer is found in this

magazine, and this is your copy to read."

³ *When offering the May 15 "Watchtower," try referring to a recent news event that has caused people to feel insecure, and then ask:*

■ "What do you think it would take to make us feel truly secure in this life? [Allow for response.] In all honesty, is it realistic to trust in humans to solve the problems facing mankind? [Allow for response; then read Psalm 146:3.] The psalmist next gives us reason to be optimistic about the future. [Read Psalm 146:5, 6.] This article, 'True Security, Now and Forever,' explains why we can trust in Jehovah God to bring better conditions to the earth." Offer to leave a set of magazines and to return to discuss how it is possible to enjoy a secure life right now.

⁴ *The cover story of the May 22 "Awake!" should capture the interest of people in both house-to-house and business territory. You could introduce it by saying:*

■ "Many women have experienced the nightmare of sexual harassment in

the workplace. The situation has become so serious that courts have begun to punish offenders and compensate victims. As a service to the community, we have published this report, which dispels common myths about the matter. It also provides practical ideas for women and for men as to how to protect themselves from becoming either a victim or one accused of sexual harassment. Would you like to read this issue of *Awake!* magazine? [Allow for response.] While we leave our journals without charge, we do accept small donations for our worldwide work."

⁵ *If you prefer a brief presentation, you might try this:*

■ "Many feel that most of today's popular magazines feature too much commercialism, sex, or violence. [Show *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*] We're distributing these wholesome journals that are based on the Bible. They are very educational and teach us to worship God, love our neighbor, and maintain upright conduct. If you prefer this type of reading material, I know you'll enjoy what you find in these issues."

⁶ If we are zealous in speaking the truth to our neighbors, we may be able to bring a great deal of joy to many.—Acts 8:4, 8.

Keep On Speaking the Truth

¹ The apostles declared: "We cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20) Today we too must keep on *speaking* the truth. Although the distribution of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* is a means for locating those who will listen, we must return if we are to teach interested ones more of the truth.

² *When following up a placement of the special April "Awake!" with its topic "When Wars Will Be No More," you could introduce a Bible study by asking:*

■ "Last time, we talked about the wars of the nations and religion's part in them. Had you realized that such events clearly prove we are living in what the Bible calls the last days? [Show the *Knowledge* book. Read the first paragraph of chapter 11, and highlight the box on page 102.] This book explains this subject along with 18 others listed here in the contents. [Show page 3.] If I may, I'd like to demonstrate how this book can help you to get an understanding of these impor-

tant Bible matters." If allowed, start a study on page 6.

³ *If you promised to return and explain how it is possible to enjoy a secure life now, you might say something like this:*

■ "When we first met, I shared with you a passage from the Bible that gives us reason for optimism about man's future. Today I would like to call your attention to something that shows who it is that can give us a feeling of security right now." Read Psalm 4:8. Turn in the *Knowledge* book to page 168 and read paragraph 19. Then ask: "Would you enjoy having a free home Bible study that shows clearly how you too can find this kind of security in your life?" If the answer is yes, turn to chapter 1.

⁴ *To add to your magazine route those with whom you placed the May 22 "Awake!," you could try this approach:*

■ "You seemed quite eager to read the *Awake!* magazine that I left with you

on the subject of sexual harassment in the workplace. Did you find the material interesting? [Allow for response.] Regular readers of *Awake!* often say they appreciate its fair and thorough treatment of such important subjects. I think you will find that to be true also of this latest issue. [Briefly feature the cover story.] Would you like to read it?"

⁵ *You could make a direct offer of a study on the return visit by saying:*

■ "We distribute our magazines worldwide to inform people everywhere about what the Bible teaches. If individuals appreciate what they learn, we offer a free home Bible study. [Refer to the box 'Would You Welcome a Visit?' on the back cover of *The Watchtower*.] We use this book, *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*, as a guide. Let me briefly show you how a study is conducted."

⁶ If we keep on speaking the truth, we can be sure that there will be some who will listen and respond favorably.—Mark 4:20.