

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

September 2005

For United States of America

km-E Us 9/05 Vol. 48, No. 9

Dear Kingdom Publishers:

With the start of the new service year, there are 9 new circuits in the United States branch territory, making a total of 41 new circuits in the last five years. Of these, 22 are Spanish, 11 are English, and 8 are other languages. The United States branch territory now comprises 580 circuits and 45 districts.

Outstanding work is being done to spread the good news in Bermuda and the Turks and Caicos islands, which are part of the United States branch territory. The 679 publishers serving on these islands conduct an average of 536 Bible studies each month, and their Memorial attendance of 1,385 was more than twice the number of publishers.

At Wallkill, visitors have been coming in record numbers to see the completed printery addition. After visiting for the first time, one older sister said: "This tour was awe-inspiring! I have so much to tell the brothers back home. If Jehovah is willing, I plan to come back every year."

The printery expansion and other Bethel construction projects were accomplished, thanks to the help of more than 1,500 Regional Building Committee volunteers. A brother overseeing the construction work stated: "The **willingness** of those invited has been encouraging, and their experience has been a

¹ Our desire to please Jehovah moves us to center our lives on spiritual activities. His Word instructs us to 'keep on seeking first the kingdom' and to "make sure of the more important things." (Matt. 6:33; Phil. 1:10) How can we buy out time for Kingdom interests and keep less important activities in their place?—Eph. 5:15-17.

² **Put Kingdom Activities First:** Schedule your time so that it is not wasted on nonessentials. Some start each month by blocking out specific times on their calendar for the field ministry. Then they are careful not to allow other matters to interfere with those plans. The same can be done to buy out time for meetings, personal study, and conventions. Many have a daily plan that begins or ends with Bible reading. Set aside a specific time for each important activity, and do not let other things need-

lessly interfere.—Eccl. 3:1; 1 Cor. 14:40.

³ **Limit Use of the World:** In some lands, sports, entertainment, recreation, hobbies, and other pursuits are readily available. Many spend an inordinate amount of time watching television or using computers. However, becoming preoccupied with leisure activities and new gadgets that this world has to offer will inevitably lead to disappointment. (1 John 2:15-17) Hence, the Scriptures urge us not to use the world to the full. (1 Cor. 7:31) By heeding that wise counsel, you can show Jehovah that his worship occupies first place in your life.—Matt. 6:19-21.

⁴ The time left for this present system is about to run out. Those who put Kingdom interests first will be happy and will gain God's favor. (Prov. 8:32-35; Jas. 1:25) May we, therefore, make wise use of this valuable resource, our time.

tremendous asset. We sincerely appreciate their help."

We would also like to express our gratitude to the many thousands of brothers and sisters who came from 45 states to assist those whose homes were damaged or destroyed by the hurricanes that struck Florida. How privileged we are to be part of a loving Christian brotherhood!

—1 Pet. 2:17.

All this zealous activity in advancing Kingdom interests is commendable! Your generous financial support of the work is also very much appreciated. (Prov. 3:9, 10) May Jehovah continue to bless our united efforts to "serve for the praise of his glory."—Eph. 1:12.

Your brothers,
U.S. Branch Office

SERVICE MEETING SCHEDULE

Week Starting September 12

Song 29

10 min: Local announcements. Selected Announcements from *Our Kingdom Ministry*. Use the suggestions on page 8 (if appropriate for your territory) to demonstrate how to present the September 15 *Watchtower* and the September 22 *Awake!* Other realistic presentations may be used. Have an elder give one of the presentations and a youth give the other. After each demonstration, highlight some good aspects of the presentation.

20 min: "Use Your Time Wisely."* Invite audience to comment on how they arrange to set aside time each day to read the Bible. Encourage families and individuals to use the May 2005 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert to schedule spiritual activities.

15 min: "Conducting Progressive Bible Studies."* Audience discussion based on parts 1 and 2 of the insert. The August 2004 *Our Kingdom Ministry*, page 1, may also be consulted. Why is it important to prepare thoroughly each time you conduct a Bible study? What does this involve? Invite the audience to relate how they have applied the suggestions provided. Conclude by commenting on the shaded box at the top of the first page of the insert.

Song 110 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting September 19

Song 168

10 min: Local announcements. Review highlights of the branch letter, which appears on the

front page of this issue of *Our Kingdom Ministry*.

20 min: How Did We Do Last Year? Service overseer reviews the past service year, focusing on the good things accomplished in the ministry. Give appropriate commendation. Mention one or two areas that need attention in the coming year. Comment on the activity of the pioneers, commending them for their good work. Relate the good results achieved from efforts to assist inactive ones.

15 min: "Keep Building One Another Up."* Invite the audience to comment on how they have benefited from the loving concern of others.

Song 199 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting September 26

Song 122

10 min: Local announcements. Read accounts report and donation acknowledgments. Remind publishers to turn in field service reports for September.

15 min: Local needs.

20 min: Making Known the Good News With Magazines. During October, we will be offering *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* In an introductory talk, discuss the following suggestions from the February 2005 *Our Kingdom Ministry*, page 8, paragraphs 3-6: (1) Offer the magazines as a set. (2) Schedule one day each week to share in magazine work. (3) Set a personal monthly goal of magazine placements. (4) Take advantage of every appropriate opportunity to offer magazines. (5) Make good use of older issues. Make local application of these sug-

gestions. Then demonstrate how to present the October 1 *Watchtower* and the October 8 *Awake!* using the suggestions on page 8 of this month's *Our Kingdom Ministry* (if appropriate for your territory). Other realistic presentations may also be used. In addition, draw attention to secondary articles that may appeal to people in the local territory, and demonstrate a presentation that features one of those articles. After each demonstration, highlight some good aspects of the presentation.

Song 3 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting October 3

Song 54

5 min: Local announcements.

20 min: "Help Others to Become 'Obedient From the Heart.'"^{*} As time permits, invite audience to comment on the cited scriptures.

20 min: Making Jehovah's Heart Rejoice. (Prov. 27:11) Interview two or three long-time faithful servants of Jehovah. Invite each to relate one or two things that have helped them to maintain their obedience to Jehovah. Among the things that might be mentioned are diligent personal Bible study, regular meeting attendance, association with other loyal ones, whole-souled participation in the field ministry, heartfelt prayer, and avoiding unwholesome entertainment. What tests of obedience did they face, and how did they meet those tests successfully? How have they been blessed for their obedience?

Song 170 and concluding prayer.

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

SAVE

Conducting Progressive Bible Studies

This insert is a compilation of key points from the series of articles on conducting progressive Bible studies that has appeared in *Our Kingdom Ministry*. All are encouraged to save this insert and to consult it when conducting Bible studies. In addition, points from this insert may be highlighted during meetings for field service, and service overseers may use it as the basis for talks they present when visiting book study groups.

Part 1: What Is a Bible Study?

If you regularly and systematically have Bible discussions, though brief, using the Bible or along with it one of the recommended publications, you are conducting a Bible study. The study may be reported when it has been conducted two times after the study arrangement is demonstrated and if there is reason to believe that the study will continue.—km 7/04 p. 1.

Recommended Publications

- *What Does God Require of Us?*
- *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*
- *Worship the Only True God*
- *You Can Be God's Friend!* may be used to study with people who have limited education or reading ability.

Part 2: Preparing to Conduct the Study

We need to present the information in a way that touches the student's heart. This requires thorough preparation with the student in mind.—km 8/04 p. 1.

How to Prepare

- Examine the title, subheadings, and visual aids of the chapter or lesson.
- Identify the answers to the printed questions, marking only key words and phrases.
- Decide which cited scriptures to read during the study. Make brief notes in the margin of the study publication.
- Prepare a brief review of main points.

Personalize the Lesson

- Pray about the student and his needs.
- Anticipate points that the student may have difficulty understanding or accepting.
- Consider: What does he need to understand or work on in order to make spiritual progress? How can I reach his heart?
- As needed, prepare an illustration, an explanation, or a series of questions to help the student grasp a point or a scripture.

Part 3: Effective Use of the Scriptures

Our purpose in conducting Bible studies is to "make disciples" by helping people to understand and accept the teachings of God's Word and apply them in their lives. (Matt. 28:19, 20; 1 Thess. 2:13) Therefore, the study should center on the Scriptures.—km 11/04 p. 4.

Teach From God's Word

- Show the student how to find specific texts in his own copy of the Bible.
- Look up and discuss Bible texts that show the Scriptural basis for our beliefs.
- Use questions. Instead of explaining Bible texts to the student, have him explain them to you.

- Keep it simple. Do not try to explain every aspect of a scripture. Include **only** what is needed to make the point clear.
- Make practical application. Help the student to see how Bible texts apply to him personally.

Part 4: Training Students to Prepare

A student who reads the lesson beforehand, marks the answers, and thinks of how to express them in his own words makes rapid spiritual progress. Therefore, once a regular study has been established, prepare a lesson together to show the student how. With most students, it will be helpful to prepare an entire chapter or lesson together.—km 12/04 p. 1.

Markings and Notations

- Explain how to find direct answers to the printed questions.
- Show the student your copy of the study publication in which you have marked only the key words or phrases.
- Help the student to see that each cited text supports a point in the paragraph, and show him how to make brief notations in the margin of his study publication.

Survey and Review

- Show the student how to examine the chapter or lesson title, subheadings, and illustrations before beginning his detailed preparation.
- Encourage the student to review the main points at the conclusion of the preparation session.

Part 5: Determining How Much Material to Cover

The amount of material that can be considered will depend on the ability and the circumstances of both the teacher and the student.—km 1/05 p. 1.

Build Solid Faith

- Do not sacrifice the student's having a clear understanding of God's Word for the sake of speed.
- Spend whatever time is necessary to help the student understand and accept what he is learning.
- Allow sufficient time to consider key scriptures that provide the basis for the teachings.

Keep the Study Moving

- If the student is inclined to speak at length about personal matters, you may need to arrange to discuss these after the study.
- Do not talk excessively during the study. Limit the discussion of side points and experiences so as not to hinder the student from acquiring an accurate knowledge of basic Bible teachings.

Part 6: When a Student Raises a Question

Once a Bible study is well-established, it is usually best to consider Bible teachings in an orderly manner rather than jump from subject to subject. This helps the student to build a foundation of accurate knowledge and to progress spiritually.—km 2/05 p. 6.

Be Discerning

- Questions related to the study material can usually be answered on the spot.
- Questions unrelated to the study material or that require research can be considered at another time. It may be helpful to write down such questions.
- If the student has difficulty accepting a certain teaching, consider additional material that thoroughly discusses the subject.
- If the student is still not convinced, leave the subject for another time and continue with the study.

Be Modest

- If you do not know the answer to a question, do not venture an opinion.
- Progressively teach the student how to do research.

Part 7: Offering Prayer at the Study

In order for Bible students to make spiritual progress, Jehovah's blessing is essential. Therefore, it is proper to open and close an established study with prayer.—km 3/05 p. 4.

How to Introduce Prayer

- With those who are religiously inclined, prayer can often be offered from the very first study.
- With others, we need to discern the appropriate time to introduce prayer.
- Psalm 25:4, 5 and 1 John 5:14 can be used to explain why prayer is offered.
- John 15:16 can be used to show that we should pray to Jehovah through Jesus Christ.

What to Include in Prayers

- It is fitting to praise Jehovah as the Source of instruction.
- Express sincere interest in the student.
- Express appreciation for the organization that Jehovah is using.
- Request Jehovah's blessing on the student's efforts to apply what he is learning.

Part 8: Directing Students to the Organization

Our goal in conducting Bible studies is not only to teach doctrinal information but also to help students become part of the Christian congregation. Take a few minutes each week on the study to share a point about Jehovah's organization.—km 4/05 p. 8.

Congregation Meetings

- Describe each congregation meeting. From the first study, invite them to attend.
- Share outstanding points that were presented at the meetings.
- Build enthusiasm for the Memorial, assemblies, and the visit of the circuit overseer.
- Use photographs in our publications to help them visualize what takes place.
- Encourage them to read the brochure *Jehovah's Witnesses—Who Are They? What Do They Believe?*

Use Videos to Build Appreciation

- *Jehovah's Witnesses—The Organization Behind the Name*
- *Our Whole Association of Brothers*
- *United by Divine Teaching*
- *To the Ends of the Earth*

Part 9: Preparing Students to Witness Informally

As Bible students begin to exercise faith in what they are learning, they are impelled to speak about it.—km 5/05 p. 1.

Encourage Them to Witness

- Are there friends and family members whom they could invite to sit in on the study?
- Have any of their workmates, schoolmates, or other acquaintances expressed interest?

Train Them to Share Their Beliefs

- At selected points during the study, ask the student, "How would you use the Bible to explain this truth to your family?"
- Help the student appreciate the need to be respectful and kind when speaking with others about God and his purposes.

- The brochure *Jehovah's Witnesses—Who Are They? What Do They Believe?* can be used by students to help friends and family members understand our Bible-based beliefs and activities.

Part 10: Training Students in the House-to-House Ministry

When the elders determine that a Bible student qualifies as an unbaptized publisher, he may begin to share with the congregation in the public preaching work.—km 6/05 p. 1.

Preparing Together

- Show the new publisher where he can find suggested presentations.
- Help him select a simple approach that is practical for the local territory.
- Encourage him to feature the Bible in his ministry.
- Rehearse together. Show him how to handle common responses tactfully.

Preaching Together

- Let the student observe as you give the presentation that you prepared together.
- Take into consideration the personality and abilities of the student. In some cases, it may be best to have him give only part of the presentation.
- Help the new publisher establish a regular schedule for participating in the ministry.

Part 11: Helping Students to Make Return Visits

Preparation for a return visit begins with the initial call. Encourage the student to take a sincere interest in those with whom he speaks. Progressively train him to draw them out, to listen to their comments, and to note the things that concern them.—km 7/05 p. 1.

Preparing to Return

- Review the initial call, and help the student select a subject that will appeal to the householder.
- Prepare a brief presentation that features one Bible text along with one paragraph in a publication.
- Prepare a question that can be raised at the conclusion of the discussion.

Follow Up Interest Diligently

- Encourage the student to return promptly on all who show interest.
- Help the student see the need to persist in trying to reach those who are hard to find.
- Show the new publisher how to make appointments, and help him appreciate the need to return as promised.

Part 12: Helping Students Start and Conduct Bible Studies

Your imitating Jesus by setting a proper example in your own ministry is vital. As your student observes your lead in the ministry, he will appreciate that the objective in making return visits is to start Bible studies.—km 8/05 p. 1.

Offering a Bible Study

- Explain to the student that it is not generally necessary to describe the study arrangement in detail.
- Often it is best simply to demonstrate the study using one or perhaps two paragraphs from a study publication.
- Review and rehearse one of the suggestions for starting Bible studies.
—km 8/05 p. 8; km 1/02 p. 6.

Training Students to Be Teachers

- Encourage students to enroll in the Theocratic Ministry School.
- Arrange for new publishers to go on other Bible studies in which they might have a small share in teaching.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Literature offer for **September:** *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life.* Before requesting additional supplies from the branch office, congregations should use what is available locally and check if nearby congregations have a surplus on hand. **October:** The *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. Where interest is shown, offer the *Require* brochure and make a special effort to start Bible studies. **November:** *Learn From the Great Teacher.* If individuals say they have no children, offer the *Knowledge* book or the tract *Would You Like to Know More About the Bible?* **December:** *The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived.* As an alternative offer, you may use *My Book of Bible Stories*, *The Bible—God's Word or Man's?*, or *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*.

■ The elders are reminded to follow through on instructions given on pages 21-3 of the April 15, 1991, *Watchtower* regarding any disfellowshipped or disassociated ones who may be inclined toward becoming reinstated.

■ The special public talk for the 2006 Memorial season will be given on Sunday, April 30. The subject of the talk will be announced later. Those congregations having the visit of the circuit overseer or an assembly that weekend will have the special talk the following week. No congregation should have the special talk before Sunday, April 30, 2006.

■ Since October has five full weekends, it would be an excellent month to auxiliary pioneer.

■ Congregations should begin requesting bound volumes of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* for 2005 and the *Watchtower Library—2005 Edition* on CD-ROM with their next literature request. A listing of the languages in which these items are available will appear in the "Announcement to All Congregations," which is mailed each month. Please note that *Watchtower Library—2005 Edition* is a provision for baptized members of the congregation and is made available only through the congregation.

■ During the 2006 service year, all who are serving as auxiliary pioneers during the month in which the circuit overseer visits the congregation will

be invited to attend the first half of the meeting held with the pioneers during the week of the visit. All who can do so are encouraged to benefit from this special arrangement.

■ Beginning with the October 2005 issue, the branch service report in *Our Kingdom Ministry* will appear one month later than it had previously. Thus, the June service report will appear in the October issue instead of the September issue. This adjustment will bring *Our Kingdom Ministry* for the United States in line with that of other branches.

■ The *Annual Congregation Property Documents Review Work Sheet* (T-33-E) and *Safety Inspection Work Sheet* (T-34-E) are to be completed each September by the secretary of the congregation holding title to Kingdom Hall property. Copies of the completed forms should promptly be provided to the body of elders for each congregation meeting in the Kingdom Hall and to the Regional Building Committee. If corrective actions are needed, the elders should care for these. When the circuit overseer visits the congregation, he will review both work sheets.

Keep Building One Another Up

¹ The apostle Paul did all that he could to strengthen fellow believers. (Acts 14:19-22) Likewise, we are concerned when our brothers face difficult situations, and we want to help them. The Bible indicates that all, not just elders, should take an interest in others. (Rom. 15:1, 2) Consider two ways in which we can heed the loving admonition: "Keep comforting one another and building one another up."—1 Thess. 5:11.

² **Discern Others' Needs:** God's Word reports that Dorcas "abounded in good deeds and gifts of mercy." (Acts 9:36, 39) She took note of those who were in need and did what she could to help them. What a fine example she set for us! You

may learn that an older one needs a ride to the meeting. Or there may be a pioneer who has no one to work with in service on a weekday afternoon. If you discern such a need and offer practical assistance, imagine how that one will be encouraged!

³ **Spiritual Conversations:** We can also build others up by our speech. (Eph. 4:29) An experienced elder observed: "If you want to be encouraging, talk about spiritual things. To start an upbuilding conversation, you might use a simple question, such as, 'How did you learn the truth?'" Show a sincere interest in the young people in the congregation. Reach out to those who are discouraged and those who may be

shy. (Prov. 12:25) Do not allow discussing the world's entertainment to crowd out good spiritual discussions with fellow believers.—Rom. 1:11, 12.

⁴ What, though, can you say to build others up? In your personal Bible reading and study, did you recently find a principle that deepened your appreciation for Jehovah? Were you moved by something you heard in a public talk or at a *Watchtower Study*? Or was your heart touched by a faith-strengthening experience? If you treasure up such spiritual gems, you will always have something encouraging to share with others.—Prov. 2:1; Luke 6:45.

⁵ By offering practical assistance and making wise use of our tongue, may we keep building one another up.—Prov. 12:18.

Help Others to Become “Obedient From the Heart”

¹ Obedience is fundamental to worshipping Jehovah acceptably. (Deut. 12:28; 1 Pet. 1:14-16) Soon, God's judgment will come upon “those who do not know God and those who do not obey the good news.” (2 Thess. 1:8) How can we help others to become “obedient from the heart” to the teachings of God's Word? —Rom. 6:17.

² **By Helping to Build Faith and Love:** In the Scriptures, obedience is closely associated with faith. The apostle Paul spoke of “the command of the everlasting God to promote *obedience by faith*.” (Rom. 16:26) Hebrews chapter 11 cites numerous examples of faith, many of which involved acting in harmony with Jehovah's expressed will. (Heb. 11:7, 8, 17) On the other hand, disobedience is associated with lack of faith. (John 3:36; Heb. 3:18, 19) We need to develop skill in the use of God's Word in order to help others develop the kind of faith that produces obedience.—2 Tim. 2:15; Jas. 2:14, 17.

³ Obedience is also linked with love for God. (Deut. 5:10; 11:1, 22; 30:16) “This is what the love of God means,” says 1 John 5:3, “that we *observe his commandments*; and yet his commandments are not burdensome.” How can we help Bible students to develop love for Jehovah? Look for opportunities during the study to build appreciation for Jehovah's qualities.

1. What does Jehovah require of his worshippers?
2. Why is it important to help others build strong faith?
3. (a) How is obedience linked with love? (b) How can we help Bible students to develop love for Jehovah?

Express your own deep feelings for God. Help the student think in terms of developing a personal relationship with Jehovah. More than anything else, love for Jehovah will motivate others—as well as ourselves—to obey him from the heart.—Matt. 22:37.

⁴ **By Our Example:** A powerful means by which we can encourage others to obey the good news is by our example. However, constant effort is required on our part to cultivate “an obedient heart.” (1 Ki. 3:9; Prov. 4:23) What does this involve? Nourish your heart through regular Bible study and meeting attendance. (Ps. 1:1, 2; Heb. 10:24, 25) Seek association with those whose hearts are unified in true worship. (Prov. 13:20) Share regularly in the field ministry, with a sincere desire to help people in your territory. Pray for Jehovah's help to guide the development of a good heart. (Ps. 86:11) Avoid things that can corrupt your heart, such as immoral or violent entertainment. Pursue things that bring you closer to God and that strengthen your relationship with him.—Jas. 4:7, 8.

⁵ Jehovah assured his ancient people that blessings would overtake them if they listened to his voice. (Deut. 28:1, 2) Likewise today, Jehovah is richly blessing “those obeying him as ruler.” (Acts 5:32) By our teaching and example, therefore, may we help others to become obedient from the heart.

4. (a) Why is our example important? (b) What must we do to cultivate “an obedient heart”?
5. How are obedient ones being blessed?

What to Say About the Magazines

THE WATCHTOWER® Sept. 15
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

“People around the earth have heard of Jesus Christ. Some say he was no more than an outstanding man. Others worship him as God Almighty. Who do you think Jesus Christ was? [Allow for response.] This magazine explains exactly who he was, where he came from, and where he is now.” Read John 17:3.

Awake!® Sept. 22

“Many people cannot afford a decent place to live. Do you think that one day there will be adequate housing for everyone? [Allow for response.] *Awake!* features an updated report on the housing crisis. It also shows why we can be confident that this promise of God will be fulfilled.” Read Isaiah 65:21, 22.

THE WATCHTOWER® Oct. 1
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

Read the question on the cover. Then ask: “Do you know which sign this is referring to? [Allow for response.] Then read Matthew 24:3.] This issue of *The Watchtower* considers five key elements of the sign and explains why we need to recognize it.” Show the box on page 6.

Awake!® Oct. 8

“The misuse of alcohol causes countless problems. This magazine shows the effect that alcohol has on the body. [Show picture on page 7.] These articles discuss how people can break free from alcohol abuse and what others can do to be of help.”