

JANUARY 2016

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
FEBRUARY 29–APRIL 3, 2016



COVER IMAGE:  
**MADAGASCAR**

A pioneer shares a Bible passage  
with an oxcart driver on the Alley of the Baobabs  
in Morondava, Madagascar

PUBLISHERS  
**29,963**

BIBLE STUDIES  
**77,984**

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE  
**135,122**

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Jehovah has given us what the apostle Paul called God’s “indescribable free gift.” (2 Cor. 9:15) What is that gift? How does it compel us to walk in the footsteps of Christ Jesus, to love our brothers, and to forgive others from the heart? We will answer these questions and consider practical things we can do during the Memorial season.

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These two articles will explain how someone knows that he or she has received the heavenly calling and what it means for that person to be one of the anointed. Additionally, we will consider how anointed ones should view themselves and how we should react to any increase in the number of partakers worldwide.

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### 28 WEEK OF MARCH 28–APRIL 3 Working Together With God —A Cause for Rejoicing

From earliest times, Jehovah has invited others to work with him to accomplish his purpose. It is his purpose that a global witness be given, and he has invited us to share in that work. This article considers the blessings we receive by being God’s fellow workers.

  
**THE WATCHTOWER®**  
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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THEY OFFERED  
THEMSELVES  
WILLINGLY



# in Oceania



**RENEÉ**, a sister in her mid-30's, grew up in a family of zealous Witnesses in Australia. "We moved many times to help in areas where there was a greater need for Kingdom preachers," she says. "Dad and Mum made things interesting, exciting, and fun! When I had two children of my own, I wanted them to have that same kind of life."

"Many people were interested in the good news.  
We wanted to give them the opportunity to  
have a regular personal Bible study."  
—Burnett

Burnett, Simone,  
Eston, and Caleb



Reneé’s husband, **Shane**, a brother in his late 30’s, had similar spiritual goals. He explains: “After the birth of our second child, we read in *The Watchtower* about a family of Witnesses who had gone to the southwestern Pacific in their yacht to preach in the islands of Tonga.\* That article prompted us to write to the Australia and New Zealand branch offices of Jehovah’s Witnesses to ask where there was a greater need for Kingdom preachers.† In response, we were invited to move to **Tonga**—the very place we had read about!”

After Shane, Reneé, and their children, **Jacob** and **Skye**, had lived in Tonga for about a year, a succession of riots forced them to return to Australia, but they kept in mind their goal of expanding their ministry. In 2011, they moved to **Norfolk Island**, a tiny Pacific island about 900 miles (1,500 km) east of Australia. How did that move turn out? Today, 14-year-old Jacob says, “Jehovah not only looked after us but he also made the ministry fun!”

## REACHING OUT TO SERVE AS A FAMILY

Like Shane, Reneé, and their children, many other Witness families have offered themselves willingly to serve as “need greaters.” What motivated them to move?

**Burnett** and **Simone**, a couple in their mid-30’s, and their sons, **Eston** and **Caleb**, now ages 12 and 9, moved to Burketown, an isolated town in **Queensland, Australia**. “Witnesses had preached there only every three or four years,” explains Burnett. “Many people were interested in the good news. We wanted to give them the opportunity to have a regular personal Bible study.”

**Mark** and **Karen**, now in their early 50’s, served in several congregations near Sydney, Australia, before they and their three children, **Jessica**, **Jim**, and **Jack**, moved to Nhulunbuy, a remote mining

community in the **Northern Territory**. Says Mark: “I love people, so I wanted to be where there was lots to do in the congregation and in the ministry.” Karen, however, was hesitant about moving. “But after Mark and others encouraged me,” she says, “I was willing to give it a try. Now I am glad that I did!”

In 2011, **Benjamin** and **Carolyn** and their two pre-school daughters, **Jade** and **Bria**, moved from Queensland, Australia, back to **Timor-Leste**, a small country on Timor Island in the Indonesian archipelago. “Carolyn and I had previously served in Timor-Leste as special pioneers,” says Ben. “The witnessing was awesome, and the brothers were very supportive. It broke our hearts to leave. We were determined to return. When our children came along, we postponed our plans but did not change them.” Carolyn adds: “We wanted our children to be surrounded by missionaries, Bethelites, and special pioneers and to receive the best possible spiritual experience.”

## PREPARING TO MOVE

Jesus told his followers: “Who of you wanting to build a tower does not first sit down and calculate the expense?” (Luke 14:28) Likewise, when a family contemplates moving to another area, good planning is vital. What needs might be considered?

**SPIRITUAL:** “We wanted to serve others and not be a burden,” says Ben. “So before we moved, we made sure to build up ourselves spiritually. We also increased our share in the ministry and in other congregation activities.”

Jacob, mentioned earlier, relates: “Before moving to Norfolk Island, we read lots of life stories in *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* about families who served where the need was greater. We talked about the challenges they faced and how Jehovah cared for them.” His sister, 11-year-old Skye, adds: “I said lots of prayers—on my own and with Mum and Dad!”

\* See the article “Friends of God in the ‘Friendly Islands,’” in *The Watchtower*, December 15, 2004, pp. 8-11.

† In 2012, the Australia and New Zealand branch offices were consolidated to form the Australasia branch.





- 1 Jacob, Reneé, Skye, and Shane
- 2 Benjamin, Jade, Bria, and Carolyn
- 3 Jim, Jack, Mark, and Karen



**EMOTIONAL:** Reneé relates: “Because we lived near family and close friends in an area I loved, it would have been easy to stay there. But rather than dwell on what I was giving up, I thought about how the move would benefit our family.”

**CULTURAL:** Many families do research to prepare themselves for their new surroundings. “We read as much about Nhulunbuy as we could,” says Mark. “Brothers living there kindly sent copies of the town newspaper, which gave us some insight into the local people and their culture.”

Shane, who moved to Norfolk Island, adds: “Most of all, I focused on displaying Christian qualities. I knew that if I was sincere, mild, honest, and hard-working, I could fit in anywhere in the world.”

## DEALING WITH CHALLENGES

Successful “need greaters” highlight the importance of being flexible and positive when facing unexpected challenges. Consider some examples:

Reneé relates: “I learned to embrace different ways of doing things. For example, when seas are rough at Norfolk Island, supply ships cannot berth and groceries can become scarce and expensive. So when preparing meals, I have learned to be resourceful.” Her husband, Shane, adds: “We also adjust our spending to stay within our weekly budget.”

Their son, Jacob, highlights a different challenge. “Our new congregation had only seven other members—all adults. So I had no friends my age! But when I worked with the older ones in the ministry, we soon became friends.”

Jim, now aged 21, faced a similar situation. “The closest neighboring congregation to Nhulunbuy is over 450 miles (725 km) away, so we make the most of assemblies and conventions. We arrive early and savor our association with the brothers and sisters. We view these occasions as the highlights of our year!”

## “SO GLAD WE CAME HERE!”

The Bible states: “It is the blessing of Jehovah that makes one rich.” (Prov. 10:22) Around the world, countless “need greater” have personally experienced the truth of that inspired statement.

“The greatest blessing has been the effect that our move has had on our children,” says Mark. “The older ones have absolute confidence that Je-

hovah will care for those who put Kingdom interests first. You cannot buy that confidence.”

Shane says: “I am so much closer to my wife and children. When I hear them relate what Jehovah has done for them, I feel truly satisfied.” His son, Jacob, agrees: “I have had such a great time. I am so glad we came here!”



## TRAINING—A Precious Gift

IF YOU are a foreigner in the country where you serve, develop appreciation for the local people and their culture and be willing to adapt yourself so as to win their love and respect. Elders who are “need greater” are able to offer a precious gift to the congregation where they serve—the gift of training others. When such elders help the local brothers to become spiritual shepherds, the entire congregation will continue to benefit from the work of “need greater” even after they move away to another congregation. If you are an elder in that situation, here are a few suggestions you may want to use in training others:



### WHAT TO DO:

“Give people tasks that are within their capabilities. Show them what to do, and express confidence in their ability to succeed.”—**Mark.**

“I eventually translated some instructions into the local language. This made a marked difference because it helped the brothers to understand their roles clearly.”—**Benjamin.**

“If you focus on the good in individuals and in the congregation, you and those around you will be happier.”—**Burnett.**



### WHAT TO AVOID:

“Do not micromanage others. Nothing makes a person feel like giving up faster than having someone looking over his shoulder, criticizing what he does. Also, do not compare your current congregation with the former one. Repeatedly telling others, ‘In my last congregation . . .,’ is usually not well-received.”—**Mark.**

“Avoid drawing attention to yourself, as if you have more insight or a better way of doing things than the local brothers. Instead, refer to God’s Word and the written direction from his organization. This promotes unity and helps all to see that we are being trained by Jehovah.”—**Shane.**

Our yeartext for 2016:  
“Let your brotherly  
love continue.”  
—Hebrews 13:1

## Be Determined to “Let Your Brotherly Love Continue”!

*“Let your brotherly love continue.”—HEB. 13:1.*

THE year was 61 C.E. The Christian congregations throughout Israel were enjoying a period of relative peace. Although the apostle Paul was a prisoner in Rome, he was hoping to be released soon. His companion Timothy had just been released, and they were planning to visit their Christian brothers in Judea. (Heb. 13:23) However, in five years’ time, Jerusalem would be “surrounded by encamped armies,” just as Jesus had prophesied. Christians in Judea, and especially those living in Jerusalem, would have to act decisively. Jesus had warned them that they would need to flee as soon as they saw these events start to unfold.—Luke 21:20-24.

<sup>2</sup> In the 28 years since Jesus had uttered that prophecy, the faithful Jewish Christians living in Israel had already faced much opposition and persecution successfully. (Heb. 10:32-34) Yet, Paul knew that they were about to be confronted with one of the most challenging tests of their faith. (Matt. 24:20, 21; Heb. 12:4) He wanted them to be prepared for whatever might come their way. They would need exceptional endurance and faith—faith strong enough to preserve their lives.

1, 2. Why did Paul write a letter to the Hebrew Christians?

SONGS: 72, 119

### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

What is brotherly love?

Why is it so important to continue to show brotherly love?

How can we show our brotherly love?



**(Read Hebrews 10:36-39.)** So Paul was prompted by Jehovah's spirit to write those dear brothers and sisters a letter designed to meet their special needs. That letter is now known as the book of Hebrews.

<sup>3</sup> All of us today should be interested in what Paul wrote to those first-century Hebrew Christians. Why? Because we find ourselves in a similar situation. During these "critical times hard to deal with," Jehovah's people have faced all types of opposition and persecution. (2 Tim. 3:1, 12) We have proved beyond doubt that our faith and devotion are strong. Many of us, though, are now living in a relatively peaceful time, with no outright persecution. However, like the Christians in Paul's day, none of us should lose sight of this key fact—soon we will face *the* most challenging test of our faith!—**Read Luke 21:34-36.**

<sup>4</sup> What will help us to prepare for the events that lie immediately ahead of us? In the book of Hebrews, Paul outlines many things that will help us to strengthen our faith. One essential thing is highlighted in the first verse of the last chapter of that letter. That verse has been selected to be the yeartext for 2016. It admonishes us: "Let your brotherly love continue."—Heb. 13:1.

### WHAT IS BROTHERLY LOVE?

<sup>5</sup> What does it mean for us to show brotherly love? The Greek term used by Paul, *phi-la-del-phi'a*, literally means "affection for a brother." Brotherly love is the type of affection that involves

a strong, warm, personal attachment, such as to a family member or a close friend. (John 11:36) We do not *pretend* to be brothers and sisters—we *are* brothers and sisters. (Matt. 23:8) Our strong feeling of attachment to one another is summed up nicely in these words: "In brotherly love have tender affection for one another. In showing honor to one another, take the lead." (Rom. 12:10) Combined with principled love, *a-ga'pe*, this type of love promotes close companionship among God's people.

<sup>6</sup> "'Brotherly love,'" according to one scholar, "is a relatively rare term outside of Christian literature." In Judaism, the meaning of the word "brother" sometimes extended beyond those who were literally relatives, but its meaning was still restricted to those within the Jewish nation and did not include Gentiles. However, Christianity embraces all believers, no matter what their nationality. (Rom. 10:12) As brothers, we have been taught by Jehovah to have brotherly affection for one another. (1 Thess. 4:9) But why is it vital that we let our brotherly love continue?

### WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT TO CONTINUE TO SHOW BROTHERLY LOVE?

<sup>7</sup> The simple answer is that Jehovah requires us to show brotherly love to one another. We cannot claim to love God and at the same time refuse to love our brothers. (1 John 4:7, 20, 21) Additionally, we need one another. This is es-

3. Why should we be interested in the book of Hebrews?

4. What is the yeartext for 2016, and why is it appropriate?

5. What is brotherly love?

6. How do true Christians understand the meaning of brotherly love?

7. (a) What is the most important reason for us to show brotherly love? (b) Give another reason why it is important to strengthen our affection for one another.



pecially true in times of trouble. Paul knew that some of the Hebrew Christians to whom he was writing would soon need to leave their homes and material possessions. Jesus had described how difficult that time would be. (Mark 13:14-18; Luke 21:21-23) So more than ever before, those Christians needed to strengthen their affection for one another.—Rom. 12:9.

<sup>8</sup> Soon the destructive winds of the greatest tribulation of all time will be released. (Mark 13:19; Rev. 7:1-3) Then, we will do well to heed this inspired counsel: “Go, my people, enter your inner rooms, and shut your doors behind you. Hide yourself for a brief moment until the wrath has passed by.” (Isa. 26:20) These “inner rooms” may refer to our congregations. That is where we come together as brothers and sisters to worship Jehovah. But it is not enough for us to meet together regularly. Paul reminded the Hebrew Christians that they should use such occasions to incite one another “to love and fine works.” (Heb. 10:24, 25) We need to develop our brotherly love now, for it will help us during whatever tests and trials we may face in the future.

<sup>9</sup> Even now, before the outbreak of the great tribulation, we have a strong need for brotherly love. Many of our brothers have been adversely affected by earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, tsunamis, or other natural disasters. Some brothers are suffering because of opposition and persecution. (Matt. 24:6-9) Added to all of this are the economic woes we ex-

perience daily as a result of living in this corrupt system of things. (Rev. 6:5, 6) As such problems increase, so do our opportunities to demonstrate the depth of our brotherly affection. Even though “the love of the greater number [of people] will grow cold,” we need to prove that our brotherly love continues.—Matt. 24:12.<sup>[1]</sup>

### HOW CAN WE LET OUR BROTHERLY LOVE CONTINUE?

<sup>10</sup> Despite the number of problems we face, how can we make sure that we let our brotherly love continue? In what ways can we prove that we have this type of affection for our brothers? After stating, “let your brotherly love continue,” the apostle Paul lists several ways that Christians can do this. Let us now examine six of them.

<sup>11</sup> “Do not forget hospitality.” (**Read Hebrews 13:2.**) The original-language expression translated “hospitality” means “kindness to strangers.” This phrase may remind us of the examples of Abraham and Lot. Both men showed kindness to visitors whom they did not know. These visitors turned out to be angels. (Gen. 18:2-5; 19:1-3) Paul alludes to these examples in order to encourage the Hebrew Christians to show brotherly love by being hospitable.

<sup>12</sup> Do we extend hospitality to others by inviting them to our home for a meal or for some association and encouragement? We would not need to make elaborate or expensive arrangements to be considered hospitable; nor would we want to invite only those who might

8. What do we need to do now before the start of the great tribulation?

9. (a) What opportunities do we have to show brotherly love today? (b) Give examples of how Jehovah’s people have shown brotherly love.

10. What will we now examine?

11, 12. What does it mean to show hospitality? (See opening picture.)

repay us in some way. (Luke 10:42; 14:12-14) Our goal should be to encourage, not to impress! Even though we may not know our circuit overseer and his wife very well, do we eagerly show them hospitality? (3 John 5-8) With our busy schedules as well as the stresses of daily living, how important it is that we “do not forget hospitality”!

<sup>13</sup> “Keep in mind those in prison.” (**Read Hebrews 13:3.**) Paul was not here referring to just any type of prisoner. He was speaking about those brothers who were imprisoned for their faith. Paul himself had been in prison bonds for some four years by the time he penned those words to the Hebrew Christians. (Phil. 1:12-14) He commended the brothers for having “expressed sympathy for those in prison.” (Heb. 10:34) Unlike the ones who personally assisted Paul while he was in prison, those Hebrew Christians were physically separated from Paul. So how could they keep him in mind? They could do so by their fervent prayers in his behalf.—Heb. 13:18, 19.

<sup>14</sup> Today, we may likewise be separated physically from our brothers who have been thrown into prison. We may not be able to give them the practical help that is provided by the Witnesses who live near the prison. But we can show our sympathy and brotherly affection by constantly remembering these faithful ones and mentioning them in our prayers, pleading to Jehovah in their behalf. For example, do we keep in mind the scores of brothers, sisters, and at times even children who are in prison in Eritrea, including the three brothers—Paulos Eyassu, Isaac

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13, 14. How can we “keep in mind those in prison”?

Mogos, and Negede Teklemariam—who have been imprisoned there for over 20 years?

<sup>15</sup> “Let marriage be honorable among all.” (**Read Hebrews 13:4.**) We can also prove our brotherly love by remaining morally chaste. (1 Tim. 5:1, 2) If someone were to “go beyond proper limits and take advantage” of a brother or a sister by committing sexual immorality with him or her or with members of that one’s own family, this would violate the trust on which brotherly love is based. (1 Thess. 4:3-8) Additionally, imagine how a wife would feel if she discovered that her husband betrayed her by watching pornography. Would such conduct show love for her and respect for the marriage arrangement?—Matt. 5:28.

<sup>16</sup> Be “content with the present things.” (**Read Hebrews 13:5.**) True contentment is based on our trust in Jehovah. It allows us to have a balanced view of material possessions. (1 Tim. 6:6-8) It helps us to realize that our relationship with Jehovah and our Christian brothers is far more important than anything that money can buy. A contented person does not complain, grumble, or find fault; nor does he succumb to feelings of envy and greed—feelings that can stifle the development of brotherly love. Rather, contentment promotes a generous spirit.—1 Tim. 6:17-19.

<sup>17</sup> “Be of good courage.” (**Read Hebrews 13:6.**) Our trust in Jehovah gives us courage, no matter what challenges we may face. This courage, in turn,

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15. How can we honor our marriage?

16. How does contentment help us to show brotherly love?

17. How does being “of good courage” help us to show brotherly love?



Do you appreciate the work  
that elders do for us?  
(See paragraph 18)



allows us to have a positive attitude. Our brotherly love, combined with such a positive attitude, will enable us to build up and comfort our fellow believers. (1 Thess. 5:14, 15) Even when the world faces its darkest moment during the great tribulation, we will be able to “stand up straight and lift up [our] heads,” knowing that our deliverance is near.—Luke 21:25-28.

<sup>18</sup> “Remember those who are taking the lead.” (Read Hebrews 13:7, 17.) When we think about the hard work that our elders do for us—all without financial reward—our brotherly love and feelings of appreciation for them are strengthened. Never would we want them to lose their joy or to sigh because of something we do. Rather, by our obedience and submission, we “give them extraordinary consideration in love because of their work.”—1 Thess. 5:13.

### KEEP ON DOING IT MORE FULLY

<sup>19</sup> There is no doubt that Jehovah’s

18. How can we strengthen our brotherly love for our elders?

19, 20. How can we continue to show brotherly love in a greater way?

people are well-known for their brotherly love. Paul acknowledged that fact back in his day. But then he went on to encourage all “to go on doing so in fuller measure.” (1 Thess. 4:9, 10) There is always room for improvement!

<sup>20</sup> As we look at our yeartext throughout the year, let us also meditate on these questions: Can I be more hospitable? How can I remember our brothers in prison? Do I show proper honor for God’s arrangement of marriage? What will help me to gain true contentment? How can I deepen my trust in Jehovah? How can I cooperate more fully with those who are taking the lead? If we apply ourselves in these six areas, then our yeartext will not be just a sign on the wall in our Kingdom Hall. It will remind us to heed the admonition: “Let your brotherly love continue.”—Heb. 13:1.

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### ENDNOTE:

[1] (paragraph 9) For examples of how Jehovah’s Witnesses show brotherly love in times of disaster, see the July 15, 2002, *Watchtower*, pp. 8-9, and *Jehovah’s Witnesses—Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom*, chap. 19.





## Be Compelled by God's “Indescribable Free Gift”

*“Thanks be to God for his indescribable free gift.”*

—2 COR. 9:15.

SONGS: 121, 63

### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

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What does Christ's love  
motivate us to do?

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How does God's love  
motivate us to love our  
brothers?

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Why should God's forgiveness  
motivate us to forgive our  
brothers?

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WHEN Jehovah sent his only-begotten Son to this earth, He gave what would become the greatest possible gift of love! (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9, 10) The apostle Paul called it God's “indescribable free gift.” (2 Cor. 9:15) Why did he use that expression?

<sup>2</sup> Paul knew that all the magnificent promises of God were guaranteed through the perfect sacrifice of Christ. **(Read 2 Corinthians 1:20.)** Thus, that “indescribable free gift” would include all the goodness and loyal love that Jehovah would extend to us through Jesus. Indeed, that gift is so awe-inspiring that it cannot be fully described in human terms. How should receiving such an extraordinary gift affect us? And in what practical ways should this gift motivate us as we prepare to observe the Memorial of Christ's death on Wednesday, March 23, 2016?

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1, 2. (a) What does God's “indescribable free gift” include? (b) What questions will we consider in this article?

### GOD'S SPECIAL GIFT

<sup>3</sup> When you receive a gift, you are no doubt filled with a range of emotions. However, some gifts may be so special or meaningful that they are truly life-changing. For example, imagine that you were facing execution because you had been implicated in a crime. Suddenly, a person whom you do not know steps out of the crowd and volunteers to accept the penalty for you. He is actually willing to die instead of you! What effect would such an outstanding gift have on you?

<sup>4</sup> Receiving such an unselfish expression of love would no doubt compel you to reconsider your actions and even change the way you had been living your life. It would likely move you to be more generous and loving toward others and even to forgive any who had wronged you. For the rest of your life, you would feel indebted to the person who willingly took your place.

<sup>5</sup> Yet, what Jehovah has given us through Christ is far greater than the gift described in this example. (1 Pet. 3:18) Consider why. Because of inherited sin, we are all facing the death penalty. (Rom. 5:12) Lovingly, Jehovah arranged for Jesus to come to the earth and “taste death for everyone.” (Heb. 2:9) Not only did Jehovah save our present life but he laid the basis for wiping out the cause of death forever. (Isa. 25:7, 8; 1 Cor. 15:22, 26) All who exercise faith in Jesus will receive everlasting life in peace and happiness as earthly subjects of God’s King-

dom by Christ or, for the anointed, as corulers in that Kingdom. (Rom. 6:23; Rev. 5:9, 10) What other blessings are included in this gift from Jehovah?

<sup>6</sup> Jehovah’s gift includes the curing of all our sicknesses, the transformation of our earth into a paradise, and the resurrection of the dead. (Isa. 33:24; 35:5, 6; John 5:28, 29) We surely love Jehovah and his dear Son for giving us what is an “indescribable free gift.” Yet, the question remains, What will God’s love move us to do? Let us consider how God’s love moves us (1) to follow the steps of Christ Jesus closely, (2) to express love for our brothers, and (3) to forgive others from the heart.

### “THE LOVE THE CHRIST HAS COMPELS US”

<sup>7</sup> First, we must be compelled to live our lives for Christ Jesus. The apostle Paul stated: “The love the Christ has compels us.” (**Read 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15.**) Paul realized that we could not accept the extraordinary love of Christ without being compelled, or moved, to live for him. When our minds fully comprehend what Jehovah has done for us and our hearts are moved by his love, we desire to live our lives whole-souled for Christ Jesus. How do we show that desire?

<sup>8</sup> Those who love Jehovah are compelled to imitate Christ’s example, walking as he walked and following his steps closely. (1 Pet. 2:21; 1 John 2:6) Through our obedience, we prove our love for God and Christ. Jesus said:

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3, 4. (a) How do you feel when someone gives you a gift? (b) How might a special gift change your life?

5. How is God’s gift of the ransom much greater than any other gift?

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6. (a) What blessings of Jehovah’s gift do you look forward to? (b) Name three things God’s gift will motivate us to do.

7, 8. How should we feel about the love of Christ, and what should it motivate us to do?

“Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. In turn, whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will clearly show myself to him.”—John 14:21; 1 John 5:3.

<sup>9</sup> During the Memorial season, we do well to meditate on our life course. Ask yourself: ‘In what areas am I doing well in following in the steps of Christ Jesus? In what areas could I improve?’ This self-examination is vital, as we are constantly being pressured to follow the ways of this world. (Rom. 12:2) If we are not careful, we could become disciples of this world’s philosophers or even of its celebrities and sports heroes. (Col. 2:8; 1 John 2:15-17) How can we resist those pressures?

<sup>10</sup> We can use the Memorial season as an opportunity to look through our wardrobe, our movie and music collections, perhaps even the material stored on our computers, smartphones, and tablets. As you look through your wardrobe, ask yourself: ‘If I were going to a place where Jesus would be present, would I feel uncomfortable wearing this clothing?’ (**Read 1 Timothy 2:9, 10.**) ‘If I did wear it, would it be obvious to all that I am a follower of Christ Jesus?’ We could ask ourselves similar questions about our choice of movies and music. ‘Would Jesus be entertained by watching this movie or by listening to this music? If he borrowed my cell phone or tablet, would I be embarrassed by what he saw there?’ As you consider the subject

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9. What pressures do we have?

10. What questions can we ask ourselves during this Memorial season, and what may the answers motivate us to do? (See opening picture.)

matter of a video game, ask yourself: ‘Would I find it difficult to explain to Jesus why I enjoy playing it?’ Our love for Jehovah should compel us to get rid of anything that would be inappropriate for a disciple of Christ, regardless of the cost involved. (Acts 19:19, 20) We promised at the time of our dedication that we would live no longer for ourselves but for Christ. Therefore, we should not cling to anything that could hinder us from following Christ’s steps closely.—Matt. 5:29, 30; Phil. 4:8.

<sup>11</sup> Our love for Jesus also moves us to work whole-souled in the preaching and disciple-making work. (Matt. 28:19, 20; Luke 4:43) During the Memorial season, we will have the opportunity to serve as an auxiliary pioneer and spend 30 or 50 hours in the preaching work. Could you arrange your circumstances to do so? One 84-year-old widower did not feel that he could auxiliary pioneer because of his age and poor health. Nonetheless, the pioneers in his area rallied to his aid. They provided transportation and carefully chose territory that he could work, so that he could meet his 30-hour goal. Could you reach out and help someone in your congregation so that he or she could share in the joy of auxiliary pioneering during the Memorial season? Of course, not all of us may be able to auxiliary pioneer. Even so, we can use whatever time and energy we have to increase our sacrifice of praise to Jehovah. By doing this, we show that we, like Paul, are motivated by the love of Christ. What else will God’s love move us to do?

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11. (a) How does our love for Jehovah and Jesus motivate us in the preaching work? (b) How can our love motivate us to help others in the congregation?



## WE ARE OBLIGATED TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER

<sup>12</sup> Second, God's love would compel us to express love for our brothers. The apostle John recognized this. He wrote: "Beloved ones, if this is how God loved us, then we are also under obligation to love one another." (1 John 4:7-11) Yes, we cannot properly accept God's love without recognizing our obligation to love our brothers. (1 John 3:16) How can we demonstrate our love in practical ways?

<sup>13</sup> Consider the example of Jesus. During his earthly ministry, he gave special attention to lowly ones. He reached out to those with physical infirmities—the lame, the blind, the deaf, and the speechless. (Matt. 11:4, 5) Jesus took pleasure in teaching spiritually hungry ones, those who were viewed by the Jewish religious leaders as "accursed people." (John 7:49) He loved these lowly ones and worked hard to minister to them. —Matt. 20:28.

12. God's love motivates us to do what?

13. What example did Jesus set in loving others?

<sup>14</sup> The Memorial season provides an opportunity to imitate Jesus by taking time to consider the brothers and sisters in your own congregation. As you do so, you will no doubt see some who could benefit from your love. Perhaps there are elderly brothers and sisters who need help. Could you visit these dear ones? Could you bring them a meal, help them with a household chore, offer them a ride to the meeting, or invite them to share with you in the ministry? (**Read Luke 14:12-14.**) We must let God's love move us to reach out and express our love for our brothers.

## SHOW MERCY TO OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS

<sup>15</sup> Third, Jehovah's love must compel us to forgive our brothers and sisters. As children of the first man, Adam, we have all inherited sin and its penalty, death. Not one of us can say, "I do not need the ransom." Even the most faithful servant of God is completely dependent on Jehovah's undeserved

14. What can you do to show love for your brothers?

15. What must we recognize?

Can you help an older brother or sister in the ministry?  
(See paragraph 14)



kindness through Christ. Each of us must recognize that we have been forgiven an enormous debt. Why is this important? The answer is found in one of Jesus' parables.

<sup>16</sup> Jesus related how a king had forgiven his slave a huge debt of 10,000 talents, or 60,000,000 denarii. Yet, that slave who was forgiven so much was not willing to forgive the much smaller debt of his fellow slave, 100 denarii. The king was furious when he learned of the hard-heartedness of the slave he had mercifully forgiven. The king said: "Wicked slave, I canceled all that debt for you when you pleaded with me. Should you not also have shown mercy to your fellow slave as I showed mercy to you?" (Matt. 18:23-35, ftn.) Yes, the extraordinary mercy of the king should have compelled that slave to forgive his fellow slave. Similarly, what should Jehovah's love and mercy compel us to do?

<sup>17</sup> The Memorial season provides us with an opportunity to consider if we are harboring some resentment against any of our brothers or sisters. If so, what a fine time this would be to imitate Jehovah, who is "ready to forgive." (Neh. 9:17; Ps. 86:5) If we appreciate what Jehovah has done for us in canceling our own enormous debt, then we will want to forgive others from our heart. We simply cannot receive the love and forgiveness of God unless we love and forgive others. (Matt. 6:14, 15) While it is true that forgiving will not change the past, it will certainly change our future for the good.

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16, 17. (a) What should we learn from Jesus' illustration of the king and the slaves? (b) After meditating on Jesus' illustration, what are you determined to do?

<sup>18</sup> For many of us, daily "putting up with" our brothers and sisters may be a challenge. **(Read Colossians 3:13, 14; Ephesians 4:32.)** For example, Lily is a single sister in the congregation who willingly helped a widow named Carol.<sup>[1]</sup> Lily provided Carol with transportation, ran errands for her, and demonstrated kindness in many other practical ways. In spite of all that Lily did, Carol was consistently critical and hard to deal with. Nonetheless, Lily focused on Carol's good qualities. She continued to assist her for several years until Carol became seriously ill and died. "Even so," Lily says, "I look forward to seeing Carol in the resurrection. I want to know her when she is perfect." Yes, God's love can compel us to put up with our brothers and sisters and to look forward to the time when human imperfection will be gone forever.

<sup>19</sup> We have truly received an "in-describable free gift" from Jehovah. May we never take this precious gift for granted. Instead, especially during this Memorial season, may we meditate appreciatively on all that Jehovah and Jesus have done for us. Yes, may their love compel us to follow the steps of Jesus closely, to reach out and express our love for our brothers, and to forgive our brothers from the heart.

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18. How did God's love help one sister to put up with the imperfections of another sister?

19. How will God's "in-describable free gift" motivate you?

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**ENDNOTE:**

[1] (paragraph 18) Some names in this article have been changed.



## The Spirit Bears Witness With Our Spirit

*“The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are God’s children.”*

—ROM. 8:16.

IT WAS early Sunday morning, about nine o’clock. This particular Sunday was special for those in Jerusalem. It was a festival day; it was also a sabbath. The regular morning sacrifices had no doubt already been offered at the temple. Now excitement filled the air as the high priest prepared to present the wave offering of two leavened loaves of new grain. (Lev. 23:15-20) This offering marked the start of the wheat harvest. The year was 33 C.E., and it was the day of Pentecost.

<sup>2</sup> While all these things were taking place in the temple area, something of far greater importance was about to occur, not at the temple, but in an upper room in the city. A group of about 120 Christians were gathered together, “persisting in prayer.” (Acts 1:13-15) What was about to happen to them was closely related to the actions of the high priest every Pentecost, and it also fulfilled a prophecy uttered by the prophet Joel about 800 years prior to that day. (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-21) What

1-3. What events made Pentecost a special day, and how did those events fulfill what the Scriptures had foretold? (See opening picture.)

SONGS: 109, 108

**WHAT DO THESE  
SCRIPTURES TEACH US  
ABOUT HOW SOMEONE  
BECOMES ANOINTED?**

2 Cor. 1:21, 22;  
2 Pet. 1:10, 11

Rom. 8:15, 16;  
1 John 2:20, 27



could possibly happen that would be of such great importance?

<sup>3</sup> **Read Acts 2:2-4.** God's holy spirit was poured out on that group of Christians who were gathered in the upper room. (Acts 1:8) They started to prophesy, or bear witness, concerning the wonderful things they had seen and heard. To a multitude that soon gathered, the apostle Peter explained the significance of what had happened. Then he told his audience: "Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of your sins, and *you will receive the free gift of the holy spirit.*" Altogether about 3,000 accepted the invitation that day, were baptized, and received the promised holy spirit.—Acts 2: 37, 38, 41.

<sup>4</sup> Why is Pentecost 33 C.E. so important to us? Certainly not because of what happened at the temple in Jerusalem. Rather, because Jesus Christ, as the great High Priest, fulfilled that prophetic pattern.<sup>[1]</sup> The high priest offered two symbolic loaves to Jehovah on that day. The leavened loaves offered at the temple represented the anointed disciples who were taken from sinful mankind to become God's adopted sons. Thus the way was opened up for some "firstfruits" from mankind eventually to go to heaven and be included in the Kingdom that will bring countless blessings to the rest of obedient mankind. (Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 2:9) So whether it is our hope to make our home in heaven with Jesus or to live forever on a paradise earth, our lives are deeply affected by the events of that day!

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4. (a) Why should we be interested in what happened at Pentecost? (b) What other important event may have happened on the same day many years earlier? (See endnote.)

## HOW THE ANOINTING PROCESS WORKS

<sup>5</sup> If you were one of the disciples who had what appeared to be a tongue of fire rest on his head, you would never forget that day. There would be no question in your mind that you were anointed by holy spirit, especially if you also received the miraculous gift of speaking in a foreign language. (Acts 2:6-12) But do all those who are anointed by holy spirit receive their anointing in the same spectacular manner as that first group of about 120 disciples did? No. The rest of those who were present in Jerusalem that day received their anointing at their baptism. (Acts 2:38) There was no tongue as if of fire above their heads. Furthermore, not all anointed Christians receive their anointing at their baptism. The Samaritans received their anointing by holy spirit sometime after their baptism. (Acts 8: 14-17) On the other hand, in an exceptional instance, Cornelius and his household were anointed by holy spirit even before they were baptized.—Acts 10:44-48.

<sup>6</sup> So not all are anointed in exactly the same manner. Some may have had a rather sudden realization of their calling, while others experienced a more gradual realization. However, no matter how this anointing takes place, each one has what the apostle Paul described: "After you believed, you were sealed by means of him with the promised holy spirit, *which is a token in advance* of our inheritance." (Eph. 1:13, 14) This special operation of holy spirit becomes like a down payment, a guarantee (or, a pledge) of what is to come. An anointed Christian gains an in-

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5. How do we know that not all those who are anointed receive their anointing in exactly the same way?

6. What do all anointed ones receive, and how does this affect them?

ner conviction because of this token that he or she has received.—**Read 2 Corinthians 1:21, 22; 5:5.**

<sup>7</sup> Does the Christian who receives this token have a guaranteed future in heaven? No. That person is sure of his invitation. But whether he finally receives his reward in heaven or not depends on his proving faithful to his calling. Peter explained it this way: “Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and choosing sure for yourselves, for *if you keep on doing these things, you will by no means ever fail. In fact, in this way you will be richly granted entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*” (2 Pet. 1:10, 11) Each anointed Christian must, therefore, struggle to remain faithful. If he does not, his heavenly calling, or invitation, will be of no value to him.—Heb. 3:1; Rev. 2:10.

### HOW DOES SOMEONE KNOW?

<sup>8</sup> The vast majority of God’s servants today may find this anointing process difficult to comprehend, and rightly so. It is not something that they experience. God’s original purpose was for mankind to live forever here on earth. (Gen. 1:28; Ps. 37:29) The selection of some to go to heaven to rule as kings and priests is not the norm. It is an exceptional arrangement. This calling causes a profound change in the thinking, outlook, and hope of a person when he is anointed.—**Read Ephesians 1:18.**

<sup>9</sup> But how does a person know that he has the heavenly calling, that he has, in

fact, received this special token? The answer is clearly seen in Paul’s words to the anointed brothers in Rome, who were “called to be holy ones.” He told them: “You did not receive a spirit of slavery causing fear again, but you received a spirit of adoption as sons, by which spirit we cry out: ‘*Abba, Father!*’ *The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are God’s children.*” (Rom. 1:7; 8:15, 16) Simply put, by means of his holy spirit, God makes it clear to that person that he is invited to become a future heir in the Kingdom arrangement.—1 Thess. 2:12.

<sup>10</sup> Those who have received this special invitation from God do not need another witness from any other source. They do not need someone else to verify what has happened to them. Jehovah leaves no doubt whatsoever in their minds and hearts. The apostle John tells such anointed Christians: “You have an anointing from the holy one, and all of you have knowledge.” He further states: “As for you, the anointing that you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to be teaching you; but the anointing from him is teaching you about all things and is true and is no lie. Just as it has taught you, remain in union with him.” (1 John 2:20, 27) These ones need spiritual instruction just like everyone else. But they do not need anyone to validate their anointing. The most powerful force in the universe has given them this conviction!

### EXPERIENCING THE “NEW BIRTH”

<sup>11</sup> When the holy spirit imparts this

7. What must each anointed Christian do to receive his reward in heaven?

8, 9. (a) Why is it difficult for most people to understand what happens when someone is anointed? (b) How does a person know that he has been invited to go to heaven?

10. What does 1 John 2:27 mean when it says that an anointed Christian does not need someone else to teach him?

11, 12. What might an anointed Christian wonder, but what does he never doubt?

conviction, the Christian who is anointed undergoes tremendous changes. Jesus referred to this inner process as being “born again,” or being “born from above.”<sup>[2]</sup> (John 3:3, 5; ftn.) He explained further: “Do not be amazed because I told you: You people must be born again. The wind blows where it wants to, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from and where it is going. So it is with everyone who has been born from the spirit.” (John 3:7, 8) Clearly, it is impossible to explain fully this personal calling to those who have not experienced it.

<sup>12</sup> Those who have been invited in such a manner may wonder: ‘Why have I been selected? Why me and not someone else?’ They may even question their own worthiness. But they do not question the fact that they have been invited. Their hearts are bursting with joy and appreciation. They feel much as did Peter when he said under inspiration: “Praised be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for according to his great mercy he gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an incorruptible and undefiled and unfading inheritance. It is reserved in the heavens for you.” (1 Pet. 1:3, 4) When anointed ones read those words, they know without any doubt whatsoever that their heavenly Father is speaking to them personally.

<sup>13</sup> Before receiving this personal witness from God’s spirit, these Christians cherished an earthly hope. They longed for the time when Jehovah would cleanse this earth, and they wanted to be part of

13. How does the way a person thinks change when he is anointed by holy spirit, and what causes this change?

that blessed future. Perhaps they even pictured themselves welcoming back their loved ones from the grave. They looked forward to living in the homes that they built and eating the fruitage of trees that they planted. (Isa. 65:21-23) Why did their thinking change? They did not become dissatisfied with that hope. They did not change their mind because of emotional stress or turmoil. They did not give up on this earth, as if they suddenly felt that they would find living forever on earth to be tiresome or boring; nor did they merely want to explore some new frontier in heaven. Rather, they changed because of the operation of God’s spirit that not only called, or invited, them but also changed their thinking and hope.

<sup>14</sup> Should we conclude, then, that these anointed ones want to die? Paul was inspired to answer this way: “In fact, we who are in this tent groan, being weighed down, because *we do not want to put this one off*, but we want to put the other on, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.” (2 Cor. 5:4) They have not lost interest in this life, wanting it to end quickly. On the contrary, they are eager to use each day in Jehovah’s service together with friends and relatives. Yet, no matter what they are doing, they cannot help but remember the glorious hope that they have for the future.—1 Cor. 15: 53; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 3:2, 3; Rev. 20:6.

### HAVE YOU BEEN CALLED?

<sup>15</sup> Perhaps you are wondering if you have received this wonderful invitation. If you think that you might have, ponder

14. How do anointed ones feel about their life here on earth?

15. What does not prove that a person has been anointed by holy spirit?

some important questions. Do you feel that you have more than average zeal in the ministry? Are you a keen student of God's Word who loves to delve into "the deep things of God"? (1 Cor. 2:10) Have you seen Jehovah's special blessing on your ministry? Do you have a burning desire to do Jehovah's will? Do you have a deep inner feeling of responsibility to help others spiritually? Have you seen proof that Jehovah has personally intervened in your life? If you answer these questions with a resounding yes, does this mean that you now have the heavenly calling? No, it does not. Why not? Because these are not unique feelings experienced only by those who have the heavenly calling. Jehovah's spirit works with equal force in those who have the hope of living forever on earth. In fact, if you are wondering whether you have received the heavenly calling, that would in itself indicate that you have *not* received it. Those called by Jehovah do not wonder whether they have been invited or not! They know!

<sup>16</sup> Throughout the Scriptures, we see many examples of men of faith who were deeply moved by holy spirit; yet they did not have the hope of living in heaven. John the Baptist was one such person. Jesus highly praised him but stated that John would not be included in the heavenly Kingdom. (Matt. 11:10, 11) David was likewise moved by holy spirit. (1 Sam. 16:13) He was a man of great spiritual depth and was even inspired to write sections of the Bible. (Mark 12:36) Still, at Pentecost, Peter said of David that he "did not ascend to the heavens." (Acts 2:

16. How do we know that not all those who have received God's spirit have been invited to go to heaven?

34) Holy spirit worked mightily in such ones, but it did not give them the special witness that they had been selected for heavenly life. That did not mean that they were in some way unworthy or deficient. It simply meant that Jehovah would resurrect them to life on a paradise earth.—John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15.

<sup>17</sup> The vast majority of God's servants today do not have this heavenly calling. They entertain the same hope as did David, John the Baptist, and other faithful men and women of old. Like Abraham, they look forward to living as subjects under the Kingdom arrangement. (Heb. 11:10) Only a remnant of those selected for heavenly life remains here on earth in this time of the end. (Rev. 12:17) This means that the majority of the 144,000 chosen ones have already died faithfully.

<sup>18</sup> So, then, how should those with an earthly hope view anyone who claims to have the heavenly hope? If someone in your congregation starts to partake of the emblems at the Lord's Evening Meal, how should you react? Should you be concerned with any increase in the number of those who claim to have the heavenly calling? These questions will be answered in the next article.

17, 18. (a) What reward do most of God's servants look forward to today? (b) What questions will we consider in the next article?

#### ENDNOTES:

[1] (paragraph 4) Pentecost possibly corresponded to the time when the Law was given at Sinai. (Ex. 19:1) If that is the case, then just as Moses was used to bring Israel into the Law covenant on that day, so Jesus Christ now brought a new nation, spiritual Israel, into the new covenant on the same day.

[2] (paragraph 11) For further explanation of what it means to be born again, see *The Watchtower*, April 1, 2009, pp. 3-11.





## “We Want to Go With You”

*“We want to go with you, for we have heard that God is with you people.”—ZECH. 8:23.*

SONGS: 65, 122

### CAN YOU EXPLAIN?

How is Zechariah 8:23 being fulfilled?

How should anointed Christians feel about themselves?—1 Cor. 4:6-8.

Why should we not be worried about the number of those who eat the bread and drink the wine at the Memorial?—Rom. 9:11, 16.

SPEAKING of the time in which we are living, Jehovah foretold: “In those days ten men out of all the languages of the nations will take hold, yes, they will take firm hold of the robe of a Jew, saying: ‘We want to go with you, for we have heard that God is with you people.’” (Zech. 8:23) Like the figurative ten men, those who have an earthly hope have taken “firm hold of the robe of a Jew.” They are proud to associate with the spirit-anointed “Israel of God,” knowing that Jehovah is blessing his anointed ones.—Gal. 6:16.

<sup>2</sup> As did the prophet Zechariah, Jesus highlighted the refreshing unity that is experienced by God’s people. He spoke of his followers as two groups, a “little flock” and “other sheep,” but he said that they would be “one flock” with “one shepherd.” (Luke 12:32; John 10:16) However, the relationship between these two groups raises some questions: (1) Do those of the other sheep need to know the names of all those who are anointed today? (2) How should anointed ones view themselves? (3) How should you react if someone in your congregation starts to partake of the emblems at the Memo-

1, 2. (a) What did Jehovah say would happen in our time? (b) What questions will be answered in this article? (See opening picture.)

rial? (4) Do you need to be concerned about any increase in the number of those partaking? Let us consider the answers to each of these questions.

### DO WE NEED TO KNOW THE NAMES OF ALL THE ANOINTED TODAY?

<sup>3</sup> Do those of the other sheep need to know the names of all those who are anointed today? The short answer is no. Why not? Because even if someone has received the heavenly calling, that person has received only an invitation, not a final confirmation of the reward. That is why Satan raises up “false prophets . . . to mislead, if possible, even the chosen ones.” (Matt. 24:24) No one can know whether an anointed Christian will receive his heavenly reward until Jehovah judges that person to be worthy of such a prize. Jehovah makes this determination and gives him the final sealing either sometime before he dies faithfully or sometime before the outbreak of “the great tribulation.” (Rev. 2:10; 7:3, 14) It would be pointless, then, for anyone now living on earth to try to ascertain who among God’s servants will eventually be part of the 144,000.<sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>4</sup> If it is not possible to know with certainty the names of all spiritual Israelites on earth today, how can members of the other sheep “go with” them? Notice what the prophecy in Zechariah states concerning the figurative ten men. These ones would “take firm hold of the robe of a Jew, saying: ‘We want to go with *you*, for we have heard that God is with *you people*.’” Although only one Jew is men-

tioned here, in both instances the pronoun “you” refers to more than one person. This spiritual Jew must, then, be a composite person, not just one individual! So it is not necessary to identify every spiritual Jew and then go with him or her. Rather, we need to identify these ones *as a group* and then support them as such. In no way do the Scriptures encourage us to follow an individual. Jesus is our Leader.—Matt. 23:10.

### HOW SHOULD ANOINTED CHRISTIANS VIEW THEMSELVES?

<sup>5</sup> Those who partake of the emblems at the Memorial should carefully consider the warning found at **1 Corinthians 11:27-29. (Read.)** What point is the apostle Paul here making? An anointed Christian would partake unworthily if he did not maintain a good relationship with Jehovah. (Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-29) Such a warning helps anointed Christians to remember that they have not yet taken hold of the reward. They need to continue to press on “toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God by means of Christ Jesus.”—Phil. 3:13-16.

<sup>6</sup> Under inspiration, Paul appealed to anointed Christians “to walk worthily of the calling with which [they] were called.” How should this be done? Paul goes on to say “with all humility and mildness, with patience, putting up with one another in love, earnestly endeavoring to maintain the oneness of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace.” (Eph. 4:1-3) Jehovah’s spirit promotes humility, not pride. (Col. 3:12) Modestly,

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3. Why is it not possible for us to know for sure who will be part of the 144,000?

4. If it is not possible to know the names of all anointed ones on earth today, how can we “go with” them?

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5. What warning should anointed ones think seriously about, and why?

6. How should anointed Christians feel about themselves?

anointed ones acknowledge that they do not necessarily have more holy spirit than those with an earthly hope. They do not claim to have special knowledge or revelations; neither do they try to prove that they are in some way superior. They would also never suggest to others that these too have been anointed and should start partaking; rather, they would humbly acknowledge that it is Jehovah who does the calling of anointed ones.

<sup>7</sup> Although it is a wonderful privilege to have the heavenly calling, anointed Christians do not expect any special honor from others. (Eph. 1:18, 19; **read Philippians 2:2, 3.**) Jehovah's spirit bore witness to them personally. No announcement was made to the world. So they are not surprised if some people do not readily believe that they have truly been anointed by holy spirit. In fact, they realize that the Scriptures advise against quickly believing someone who claims to have a special appointment from God. (Rev. 2:2) In no way, then, would they use their anointing as a "calling card" to introduce themselves to others. For the most part, they would not even mention this personal experience to others, so as to avoid drawing attention to themselves; neither would they want to boast about their future reward.—1 Cor. 1:28, 29; **read 1 Corinthians 4:6-8.**

<sup>8</sup> In addition, anointed Christians do not view themselves as being part of an elite club. They do not seek out others who claim to have the same calling, hoping to bond with them or endeavoring to form private groups for Bible study. (Gal. 1:15-17) Such efforts would cause

7, 8. What do anointed Christians not expect, and why?

divisions within the congregation and work against the holy spirit, which promotes peace and unity.—**Read Romans 16:17, 18.**

### HOW SHOULD YOU REACT?

<sup>9</sup> How should you treat someone who partakes of the Memorial emblems? Jesus told his disciples: "All of you are brothers." He went on to say: "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." (Matt. 23:8-12) Therefore, it would be wrong to exalt individuals, even if they are anointed brothers of Christ. Speaking about Christian elders, the Bible encourages us to imitate the *faith* of those who take the lead, but it never commands us to elevate any *human* as our leader. (Heb. 13:7) True, the Scriptures speak of some as being "considered worthy of double honor." However, such ones are worthy of honor, not because they are anointed, but because they "preside in a fine way" and "work hard in speaking and teaching." (1 Tim. 5:17) Therefore, it would be embarrassing for those with a heavenly calling if others were to give them undue praise or attention. Worse still, if they received special treatment, anointed Christians might find it difficult to remain humble. (Rom. 12:3) None of us would want to cause one of Christ's brothers to stumble!—Luke 17:2.

<sup>10</sup> How can we show appropriate respect for those whom Jehovah chooses to anoint? We would not ask them per-

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9. Why do you need to be careful about the way you treat those who eat the bread and drink the wine at the Memorial? (See the box "Love 'Does Not Behave Indecently.'")

10. How can you show that you respect anointed Christians?

sonal questions about their anointing. We thus avoid meddling with what does not concern us. (1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:11) We should not assume that the parents, spouse, or other relatives of one of the anointed would also be anointed. Genetics or marriage play no part in the process. (1 Thess. 2:12) We should also resist the urge to quiz spouses of anointed ones about how they feel knowing that they will live without their mate in the future earthly Paradise. Rather than raise questions that may cause pain, all of us can have full confidence that Jehovah will open his hand and “satisfy the desire of every living thing.”—Ps. 145:16.

<sup>11</sup> Those who treat anointed Christians in a proper manner protect themselves from an insidious danger. The Scriptures tell us that “false brothers” can slip into the congregation. (Gal. 2:4, 5; 1 John 2:19) These impostors may even claim to be anointed. In addition, some anointed Christians might fall away from the faith. (Matt. 25:10-12; 2 Pet. 2:20, 21) If we avoid the trap of “admiring personal-

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11. How do we protect ourselves if we avoid “admiring personalities”?

ities,” we will not be drawn away from the truth by such ones; nor will our faith suffer a crippling blow if a prominent or long-serving Christian becomes unfaithful.—Jude 16, ftn.

#### WHAT ABOUT THE NUMBER OF THOSE PARTAKING AT THE MEMORIAL?

<sup>12</sup> In recent years, we have seen an increase in the number of those partaking at the Memorial of Christ’s death. That trend contrasts with the decrease in the number of partakers that we saw for many decades. Should this increase trouble us? No. Let us consider some key factors to keep in mind.

<sup>13</sup> “Jehovah knows those who belong to him.” (2 Tim. 2:19) Those taking the count at the Memorial cannot judge who truly have the heavenly hope. The number of partakers includes those who mistakenly think that they are anointed. Some who at one point started to partake of the emblems later stopped. Others may have mental or emotional problems that lead them to believe that

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12, 13. Why should we not worry about the number of those who eat the bread and drink the wine at the Memorial?

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How should you treat someone who partakes of the Memorial emblems?  
(See paragraphs 9-11)





they will rule with Christ in heaven. Therefore, the number of partakers does not accurately indicate the number of anointed ones left on earth.

<sup>14</sup> *Anointed ones will be present in many parts of the earth when Jesus comes to gather them to heaven.* Speaking of that time, the Bible says regarding Jesus: “He will send out his angels with a great trumpet sound, and they will gather his chosen ones together from the four winds, from one extremity of the heavens to their other extremity.” (Matt. 24:31) The Scriptures do indicate that only a remnant of the anointed ones will be left on earth during the last days. (Rev. 12:17) However, the Bible does not state how many will be left at the time that the great tribulation begins.

<sup>15</sup> *Jehovah chooses when in history he will select anointed ones.* (Rom. 8:28-30) Jehovah began choosing anointed ones after Jesus’ death and resurrection, and it seems that all in the first-century Christian congregation were anointed. From the first century until the beginning of the last days, the vast majority of those who claimed to follow Christ were false Christians; Jesus likened them to “weeds.” Even so, Jehovah continued to anoint some faithful ones throughout that time, and they proved to be like the “wheat” Jesus described. (Matt. 13:24-30) During the last days, Jehovah has continued to select those who will make up the 144,000.<sup>[2]</sup> If he chooses to wait until late into that period to select some for that privilege, who are we to ques-

tion his wisdom? (Isa. 45:9; Dan. 4:35; **read Romans 9:11, 16.**)<sup>[3]</sup> We must be careful not to react like the disgruntled workers who complained about the way their master dealt with the 11th-hour workers.—**Read Matthew 20:8-15.**

<sup>16</sup> *Not all who have the heavenly hope are part of “the faithful and discreet slave.”* (Matt. 24:45-47) As in the first century, Jehovah and Jesus today are feeding many through the hands of a few. Only a few anointed Christians in the first century were used to write the Christian Greek Scriptures. Similarly today, only a few anointed Christians have been appointed to provide spiritual “food at the proper time.”

<sup>17</sup> What have we learned from our discussion? Jehovah has chosen to give two separate rewards—heavenly life for spiritual Jews and earthly life for the symbolic ten men. Yet, he requires the same standard of faithfulness from both those with a heavenly calling and those with an earthly hope. Both groups must remain humble. Both groups must be united. Both groups must promote peace in the congregation. As the last days draw to a close, let all of us be determined to serve as one flock under Christ.

17. What have you learned from this article?

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#### ENDNOTES:

<sup>[1]</sup> (paragraph 3) Psalm 87:5, 6 indicates that it is likely that in the future the names of all those who have been raised to rule with Jesus in heaven will be revealed.—Rom. 8:19.

<sup>[2]</sup> (paragraph 15) Although Acts 2:33 shows that Jesus is part of the selection process, Jehovah is the Source of the invitation.

<sup>[3]</sup> (paragraph 15) For more information, see “Questions From Readers” in *The Watchtower*, May 1, 2007, pp. 30-31.

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14. What does the Bible say about the number of anointed ones who will be on earth when the great tribulation starts?

15, 16. What do we need to understand about the 144,000 chosen by Jehovah?



## Love “Does Not Behave Indecently”

When describing Christian love, the apostle Paul wrote: “Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous. It does not brag, does not get puffed up, *does not behave indecently*, does not look for its own interests.” (1 Cor. 13:4, 5) The original-language term translated “behave indecently” means to conduct oneself in such a way as to be rude, to lack good manners, or to act improperly. Christian love, on the other hand, takes into consideration the feelings of others.

We can show Christian love by the way we treat those taking the lead in the congregation. At times, well-known representatives of the Christian congregation—perhaps circuit overseers, Bethelites, members of the Branch Committee, members of the Governing Body as well as their helpers—may attend a convention or theocratic event that we also attend. Naturally, we want to show such brothers and their wives due respect. None of us would want to imitate the attitude of Diotrephes. He refused to welcome the visiting brothers with respect. (3 John 9, 10) But could we, even unintentionally, show a lack of good manners by going to the opposite extreme? How might we do that?

While we appreciate having an opportunity to meet and talk with visiting brothers and their

wives, we would show a lack of respect if we treated such ones as celebrities. For example, would it show good manners to take candid photos of such ones—without permission—while they are eating and engaging in other activities? Would we ask them to autograph our books and Bibles? Would we push in front of others and aggressively demand that our photo be taken with them? Surely, none of these actions display true Christian love. Rather, they could show that we have missed the purpose of the visit and the hard work that such faithful ones do in our behalf. What effect could such behavior have on those attending one of our assemblies for the first time?

What will help us to be balanced? First, remember that praise and glory should go to Jehovah. (Rev. 4:11) Second, realize that there is a big difference between respect and adulation. These brothers and their dear wives want to be treated, not as celebrities, but as our fellow brothers and sisters. (Matt. 23:8) Third, apply the Golden Rule: “All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must do to them.” (Matt. 7:12) If we keep these factors in mind, we will be able to show the type of love that “does not behave indecently.”



## Working Together With God A Cause for Rejoicing

*“Working together with him, we also urge you not to accept the undeserved kindness of God and miss its purpose.”*

—2 COR. 6:1.

SONGS: 75, 74

### WHY CAN IT BE SAID THAT THE PREACHING WORK . . .

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brings us happiness?

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draws us closer to God  
and to others?

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is a protection for us?

JEHOVAH is the Supreme One, the Creator of all things, the One possessing infinite wisdom and power. Job came to understand that. After Jehovah questioned Job about His works of creation, Job replied: “I know that you are able to do all things and that nothing you have in mind to do is impossible for you.” (Job 42:2) Though Jehovah can accomplish whatever he sets out to do—without assistance—he has from the very beginning lovingly invited others to work along with him to achieve his purpose.

<sup>2</sup> God’s first creation was his only-begotten spirit Son. Jehovah allowed his Son to share in all further works of creation, both spirit and material. (John 1:1-3, 18) Concerning Jesus, the apostle Paul wrote: “By means of him all other things were created in the heavens and on the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, whether they are

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1. Even though Jehovah is the Supreme One, what has he invited others to do?
  2. What important work did Jehovah invite Jesus to do?



thrones or lordships or governments or authorities. All other things have been created through him and for him.” (Col. 1:15-17) Thus, Jehovah honored his Son both by including him in the works of creation and by telling others about his Son’s important role.

<sup>3</sup> Jehovah also invited humans to work along with him. For example, he allowed Adam to name the animals. (Gen. 2:19, 20) What pleasure it must have brought Adam to observe these creatures, to study their characteristics, and to decide what name might be appropriate for each one of them! Jehovah could have named the animals himself—he created them. Yet, he lovingly allowed Adam to name them. God also gave Adam the opportunity to expand Paradise beyond the borders of Eden. (Gen. 1:27, 28) Sadly, Adam eventually chose not to work along with God, bringing catastrophe on himself and all his offspring.—Gen. 3:17-19, 23.

<sup>4</sup> Later, God invited other humans to share in the outworking of his purpose. *Noah* built an ark that preserved him and his family alive through the global Deluge. *Moses* delivered the nation of Israel from Egypt. *Joshua* brought that nation into the Promised Land. *Solomon* built the temple in Jerusalem. *Mary* became mother to Jesus. All these faithful ones and many others worked along with Jehovah to accomplish his will.

<sup>5</sup> Today, Jehovah invites us to give our full support to the Messianic Kingdom.

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3. What did Jehovah invite Adam to do, and why?

4. How did others work with God to accomplish his will?

5. In what work can we share, and did Jehovah need to involve us in this work? (See opening picture.)

There are many avenues of sacred service. Some may not be available to all Christians, but all of us can participate in the work of preaching the good news of the Kingdom. Of course, Jehovah did not have to involve us in this work. He could have chosen to speak directly from heaven to people on earth. Jesus said that Jehovah could even have had the stones cry out about the Messianic King. (Luke 19:37-40) Yet, Jehovah allows us to be his “fellow workers.” (1 Cor. 3:9) The apostle Paul wrote: “*Working together with him*, we also urge you not to accept the undeserved kindness of God and miss its purpose.” (2 Cor. 6:1) Working along with God is an undeserved honor, causing us great rejoicing. Let us consider some reasons why.

#### WORKING WITH GOD MAKES US HAPPY

<sup>6</sup> From earliest times, Jehovah’s servants have found joy in working with God. God’s firstborn spirit Son, represented as the personification of wisdom, is depicted as saying: “Jehovah produced me as the beginning of his way . . . I was beside him as a master worker. I was the one he was especially fond of day by day; *I rejoiced before him all the time.*” (Prov. 8:22, 30) Jesus joyfully worked alongside his Father, rejoicing both in what he accomplished and in the knowledge that Jehovah was fond of him. What, though, about us?

<sup>7</sup> Jesus said that there is happiness both in giving and in receiving. (Acts 20:35) It brought us joy to receive the truth, and it brings us joy to share the truth with others. As we share Bible truths

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6. How did God’s firstborn Son describe how he felt about working beside his Father?

7. Why does the preaching work bring us joy?





What could be more satisfying  
than teaching someone the truth?  
(See paragraph 7)

with others, we see spiritually hungry ones filled with delight as they begin to understand and appreciate our God and the precious truths contained in his Word. It touches our heart to see them make changes not just in their thinking but also in their way of life. We realize that the work of sharing the good news is vitally important. It opens the way to everlasting life for those who become reconciled to God. (2 Cor. 5:20) What more joyful, satisfying work could we engage in than that of helping people chart a course that will result in their living forever?

<sup>8</sup> Though we find happiness when people respond to the message we preach, we also delight in knowing that we are pleasing to Jehovah and that he appreciates our efforts to serve him. **(Read 1 Corinthians 15:58.)** Marco, who lives in Italy, observes: “I have the priceless joy of knowing that I am giving my best to Jehovah and not to someone who will soon forget what I’ve done.” Similarly,

8. What have some said about the joy of working with Jehovah?

Franco, who also serves in Italy, says: “By means of his Word and his spiritual provisions, Jehovah reminds us every day that he loves us and that everything we do for him is important, even though our efforts may seem like nothing to us. This is why working along with God makes me happy and gives my life meaning.”

### WORKING WITH GOD DRAWS US CLOSER TO HIM AND TO OTHERS

<sup>9</sup> When we work along with those we love, we draw close to them and come to know their personality and their qualities. We learn not only what they want to accomplish but also how they go about doing it. Jesus worked along with Jehovah for perhaps billions of years, and they forged a strong, unbreakable bond of love and affection for each other. Pointing to the closeness of their relationship, Jesus said: “I and the Father are one.” (John 10:30) They enjoyed a wonderful unity, always working together in full harmony.

<sup>10</sup> In prayer, Jesus asked Jehovah to watch over his disciples. The reason? He prayed: “So that they may be one just as we are one.” (John 17:11) As we conform to God’s standards and share in the work of preaching, we come to understand his appealing qualities. We learn why it is wise to trust in him and to follow his direction. As we draw close to God, he draws close to us. **(Read James 4:8.)** We also draw close to our spiritual brothers and sisters because we face similar challenges and joys and because we

9. What relationship existed between Jehovah and Jesus, and why?

10. Why does preaching draw us closer to God and to others?

share the same goals. Yes, we work together, rejoice together, and endure together. Octavia, who lives in Britain, says: “Working with Jehovah draws me closer to others because my friendships and relationships are no longer based on a superficial affinity but on a common goal and direction.” Do you not feel the same way? Are you not drawn closer to others when you see the efforts they make to please Jehovah?

<sup>11</sup> The bonds of love that we enjoy with God and with fellow humans may be strong now, but they will be even stronger in the righteous new world. Think of the work that lies ahead! There will be resurrected ones to be welcomed back and to be educated in the ways of Jehovah. The earth will need to be transformed into a paradise. These are no small tasks, but how joyful it will be to work shoulder to shoulder and to grow to perfection under the Messianic Kingdom! Those in the human family will draw ever closer to one another and to their God, who will without fail “satisfy the desire of every living thing.”—Ps. 145:16.

### WORKING WITH GOD IS A PROTECTION

<sup>12</sup> We need to safeguard our spirituality. Because we live in a world that is dominated by Satan the Devil and because we are imperfect, it is easy for us to adopt the wrong thinking and conduct of the world. The world’s spirit might be compared to a river current that is pulling us in a direction we do not want to go. To avoid being swept downstream, we must vigorously swim in the other di-

rection. Similarly, effort is required to keep from being swept away by the spirit of Satan’s world. When we are preaching to others, we focus on important and beneficial spiritual matters, not on thoughts that will erode our faith. (Phil. 4:8) Preaching strengthens our convictions, reminding us of God’s promises and loving standards. It also helps keep our spiritual armor intact.—**Read Ephesians 6:14-17.**

<sup>13</sup> If we keep busy in the preaching work and in other spiritual activities, we simply do not have time to become overly concerned with our own problems, and that helps to protect us. Joel, who lives in Australia, says: “The preaching work helps me not to lose touch with reality. It reminds me of the challenges people are facing and of the benefits I have experienced by applying Bible principles in my life. The preaching work helps me to try to stay humble; it gives me an opportunity to rely on Jehovah and on my brothers and sisters.”

<sup>14</sup> Preaching also strengthens our conviction that God’s spirit is with us. Consider: Suppose you were offered a job to distribute nutritious bread to people in your community. You would neither be paid for your work nor be reimbursed for your expenses. What is more, you would soon discover that most people did not want the bread and that some would even hate you for distributing it. How long would you continue to work at such a job? Feeling disheartened by the people’s negative response, you would probably not have the inner strength to

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11. Why will we draw even closer to Jehovah and to our brothers in the new world?

12. How is the preaching work a protection?

13. How does one Witness in Australia feel about preaching?

14. Why does our perseverance in preaching show that God’s spirit is with us?

continue for very long. Yet, many of us have persevered in the ministry year after year at our own expense and despite the scorn and ridicule of thankless ones. Does that not give evidence that God's spirit is at work in us?

### **WORKING WITH GOD SHOWS OUR LOVE FOR HIM AND FOR OTHERS**

<sup>15</sup> Just think about how the preaching of the good news fits in with Jehovah's loving purpose for humankind. He purposed that humans would inhabit the earth without ever dying; though Adam sinned, Jehovah did not change His mind. (Isa. 55:11) Instead, he arranged for humans to be delivered from condemnation to sin and death. Working along with that purpose, Jesus came to earth and sacrificed his life for obedient humans. In order to become obedient, however, they had to understand what God required of them. So Jesus also taught people what God's requirements are, and he commanded his disciples to do the same. By helping others to become reconciled to God, we share directly in his loving arrangement to rescue mankind from sin and death.

<sup>16</sup> Helping others on the road to everlasting life demonstrates our love both for our fellow man and for Jehovah, "whose will is that all sorts of people should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth." (1 Tim. 2:4)

15. How is the preaching of the good news connected with God's purpose for humankind?

16. How is our preaching linked to God's greatest commandments?

When asked what was the greatest of all the laws given to the nation of Israel, Jesus replied: "'You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. The second, like it, is this: 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Matt. 22:37-39) By sharing in the preaching work, we demonstrate our obedience to these commandments. —**Read Acts 10:42.**

<sup>17</sup> How blessed we are! Jehovah has given us a work that brings us joy, that draws us closer to him and to others, and that serves to protect us spiritually. It also gives us the opportunity to show our love for God and for our fellow man. The circumstances of God's people vary greatly throughout the earth, but whether young or old, rich or poor, strong or weak, millions are seeking and finding ways to share their faith with others. Likely, you will agree with Chantel, who lives in France. She says: "The most powerful Person in the universe, the Creator of all things, the happy God, says to me: 'Go! Speak! Speak for me, speak from your heart. I give you my strength, my Word the Bible, heavenly support, earthly companions, progressive training, and precise instructions at the appropriate time.' What an immense privilege it is to do what Jehovah asks of us and to work together with our God!"

17. How do you feel about the honor to preach the good news?



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