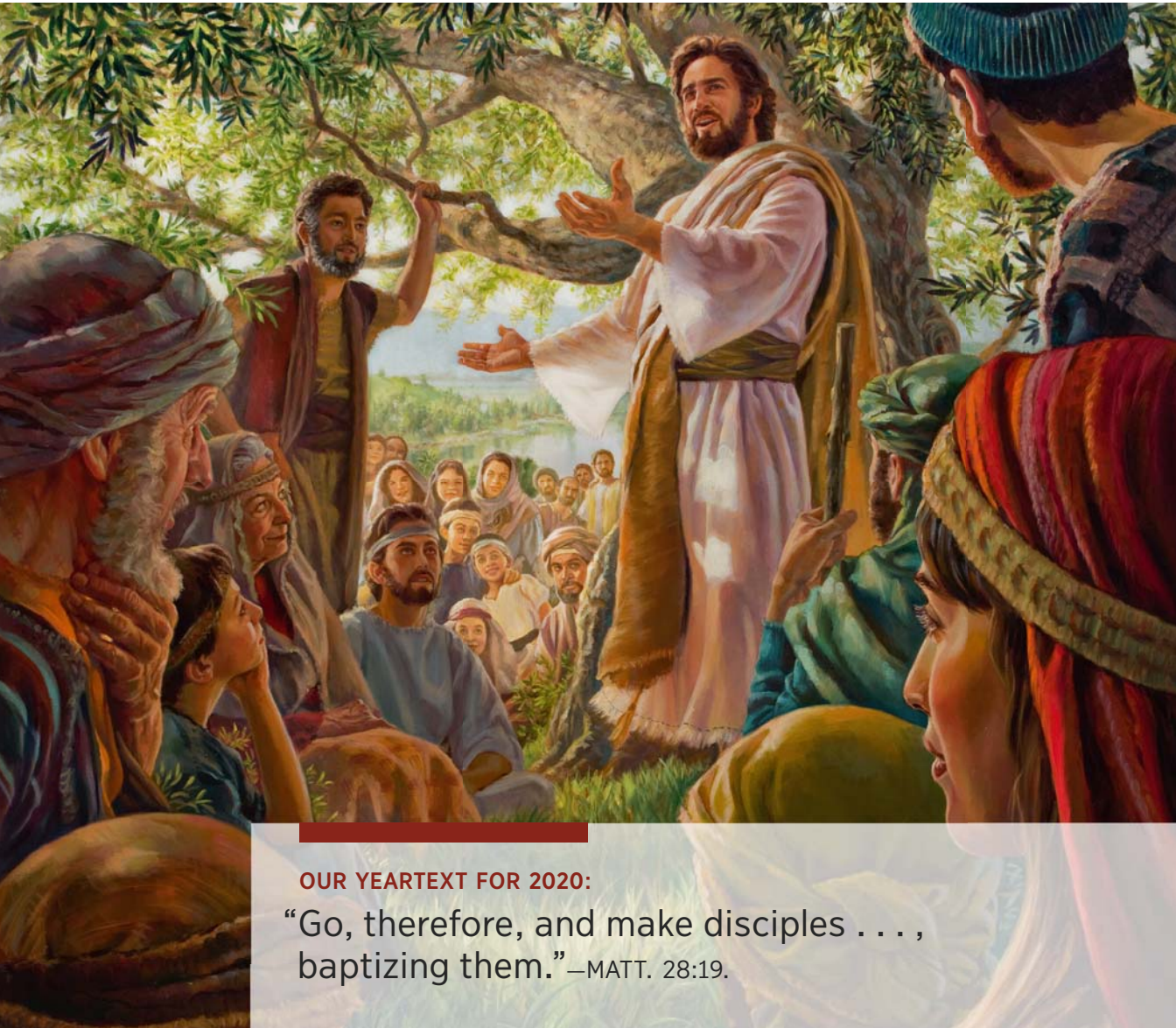


JANUARY 2020

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



OUR YEARETEXT FOR 2020:

“Go, therefore, and make disciples . . . ,
baptizing them.”—MATT. 28:19.



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
MARCH 2–APRIL 5, 2020

SONG 79

Teach Them to Stand Firm

PREVIEW

Our yeartext for 2020 encourages us to “make disciples.” That command applies to all of Jehovah’s servants. How can we reach the hearts of our Bible students so that they become disciples of Christ? This article will show how we can help our Bible students to draw closer to Jehovah. We will also consider how to decide whether we should continue the study or not.

“Go, Therefore, and Make Disciples”

OUR YEARTEXT FOR 2020:

“Go, therefore, and make disciples . . . , baptizing them.”

—MATT. 28:19.

IT IS daybreak, Nisan 16, 33 C.E. With heavy hearts, a group of God-fearing women make their way to the tomb where more than 36 hours earlier the body of the Lord Jesus Christ was laid to rest. When they arrive at the burial site, intending to apply spices and perfumed oils to the body, they are astonished to find that the tomb is empty! An angel tells the disciples that Jesus has risen from the dead, adding: “He is going ahead of you into Galilee. You will see him there.”—Matt. 28:1-7; Luke 23:56; 24:10.

² After the women leave the tomb, Jesus himself approaches them and gives the following direction: “Go, report to my brothers so that they may go to Galilee, and there they will see me.” (Matt. 28:10) Jesus must have some very important instructions to give his disciples, for this meeting is the first thing he arranges after his resurrection!

A COMMAND GIVEN TO WHOM?

³ **Read Matthew 28:16-20.** At the meeting that Jesus organized, he outlined the vital work that his disciples would accomplish throughout the first century—the same work that we are accomplishing today. Jesus said: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you.”

1-2. What does an angel tell the women at Jesus’ tomb, and what direction does Jesus himself give them?

3-4. Why can we say that the commission recorded at Matthew 28:19, 20 was not directed only to the apostles? (See cover picture.)

⁴ Jesus wants all his followers to preach. He did not limit this command to the 11 faithful apostles. How can we be so sure? Well, were only the apostles present when the command to make disciples was given on that mountain in Galilee? Recall that the angel said to the women: “**You** will see him [in Galilee].” So faithful women must also have been present on that occasion. But that is not all. The apostle Paul reveals that Jesus “appeared to more than 500 brothers at one time.” (1 Cor. 15:6) Where?

⁵ We have good reasons for thinking that Paul had in mind the very meeting in Galilee described in Matthew chapter 28. What reasons? First, most of Jesus’ disciples were Galileans. So a mountain in Galilee—rather than a private home in Jerusalem—would be a reasonable place to gather with a large number of people. Second, the resurrected Jesus had already met with his 11 apostles in a private home in Jerusalem. If Jesus wanted to instruct only the apostles to preach and make disciples, he could have done that in Jerusalem instead of asking them and the women and others to meet him in Galilee.—Luke 24:33, 36.

⁶ Note a third important reason. Jesus’ command to make disciples was not limited to Christians living in the first century. How do we know? Jesus concluded his instructions to his followers with the words: “I am with you all the days **until the conclusion of the system of things.**” (Matt. 28:20) True to Jesus’ words, to—

day the disciple-making work is in full swing. Think of it! Nearly 300,000 people each year get baptized as Jehovah’s Witnesses and become disciples of Jesus Christ!

⁷ Many who study the Bible progress to baptism. However, some who regularly study the Bible with us seem reluctant to become disciples. They enjoy their studies, but they are not progressing to baptism. If you are conducting a Bible study, we are sure that you want to help your student to apply what he learns and to become a disciple of Christ. This article will discuss how we can reach the student’s heart and how we can help him grow spiritually. Why do we need to discuss this topic? Because at some point we might have to decide whether to continue the study or not.

TRY TO REACH THE HEART

⁸ Jehovah wants people to serve him because they love him. So our goal is to help our students to understand that Jehovah cares deeply about them as individuals and that he loves them very much. We want to help them to see Jehovah as “a father of the fatherless and a protector of widows.” (Ps. 68:5) As your students come to appreciate God’s love for them, their heart will likely be touched and their own love for him will grow. Some students may find it difficult to view Jehovah as a loving Father because their own father did not show them love and affection. (2 Tim. 3:1, 3) As you conduct the study, then, emphasize Jehovah’s appealing qualities. Help your

5. What do we learn from 1 Corinthians 15:6?

6. How does Matthew 28:20 show that the command to make disciples applies today, and to what extent is this command being obeyed?

7. What will we now discuss, and why?

8. Why can it be challenging to reach the heart?

We want to help our students to become disciples of Christ

How could we make our disciple-making work more productive?



Do not spend time conducting an unproductive study
(See paragraph 20)



Start the study session with prayer
(See paragraph 11)



Invite your Bible student to attend the meetings
(See paragraph 13)



Teach your student what to do when problems arise
(See paragraph 15)



There may be others in your territory who are praying for help
(See paragraph 20)

students to understand that our loving God *wants* them to gain everlasting life, and he is ready to help them to achieve that goal. What else can we do?

⁹ Use the books *“What Can the Bible Teach Us?”* and *“How to Remain in God’s Love.”* Those publications are specially designed to help us reach the heart of our students. For example, chapter 1 of the *Teach Us* book answers the ques-

9-10. What publications should we use when conducting Bible studies, and why those books?

tions: Does God care about us or is he cruel?, How does God feel when people suffer?, and Can you be Jehovah’s friend? What about the *Remain in God’s Love* book? That publication will help the student to understand how applying Bible principles can improve his life and draw him closer to Jehovah. Even if you have already studied these publications with others, prepare well for each study, and keep the specific needs of the student in mind.

¹⁰ Suppose, however, that the student is interested in a subject that is discussed in a publication that is not included in our Teaching Toolbox. Perhaps you can encourage him to read that publication on his own so that you can continue to conduct the study in one of our recommended Bible study aids that were just mentioned.

¹¹ ***Start the study session with prayer.*** Generally speaking, it is best to begin opening and closing the study with prayer as soon as possible, usually within the first few weeks after starting a regular study. We must help the student to realize that we can understand God's Word only with the help of God's spirit. Some Bible teachers raise the subject of prayer by reading James 1:5, which states: "If any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep asking God." The conductor then asks the student, "How can we ask God for wisdom?" The student will likely agree that we should pray to God.

¹² ***Teach your student how to pray.*** Reassure him that Jehovah wants to hear his heartfelt prayers. Explain that in our private prayers, we can really open our heart to Jehovah—expressing feelings that we might hesitate to share with any human. After all, Jehovah already knows our innermost thoughts. **(Read Psalm 139:2-4.)** We can also encourage our student to ask for God's help to change wrong thinking and overcome bad habits. Suppose, for example, that someone

who has been studying for some time is fond of a certain holiday with pagan origins. He knows it is wrong, but the truth is that he enjoys certain aspects of it. Encourage him to tell Jehovah precisely how he feels and to beg for help to love only what God loves.—Ps. 97:10.

¹³ ***Invite your Bible student to attend the meetings as soon as possible.*** What your student hears and observes at Christian meetings can touch his heart and help him to progress. Show the video *What Happens at a Kingdom Hall?* and warmly invite him to accompany you. Offer to provide transportation if possible. It is a good idea to invite a variety of publishers to accompany you on the study. In that way, your student will get acquainted with others in the congregation, and he will likely feel more at home when he attends our meetings.

HELP THE STUDENT TO GROW SPIRITUALLY

¹⁴ Our goal is to help our Bible student to grow spiritually. (Eph. 4:13) When someone agrees to a study of the Bible, he may mainly be interested in how the study will benefit him personally. As his love for Jehovah grows, however, he will likely begin to think about how he can help others, including those who are already part of the congregation. (Matt. 22:37-39) When the time is right, do not hold back from mentioning the privilege of supporting the Kingdom work financially.

11. When should we begin opening and closing the study with prayer, and how might you raise the subject?

12. How would you use Psalm 139:2-4 to help a student to improve the quality of his prayers?

13. (a) Why should we invite our students to attend the meetings as soon as possible? (b) How can we make a student feel more at home in the Kingdom Hall?

14. What can motivate a student to grow spiritually?



May it be our determination to focus on improving the quality of our disciple-making work and on helping our students to get baptized

(See paragraph 21)

15 Teach your Bible student what to do when problems arise. Suppose, for example, that your student, an unbaptized publisher, tells you that he has been offended by someone in the congregation. Rather than take sides, why not explain what his Scriptural options are? He can either forgive the brother or, if he cannot let the matter go, approach the person kindly and lovingly with the goal of ‘gaining the brother.’ (Compare Matthew 18:15.) Help your student to prepare what he is going to say. Show him how to use the *JW Library*® app, the *Research Guide for Jehovah’s Witnesses*, and *jw.org*® to learn practical ways to deal with the situation. The more training he receives before he gets baptized, the better he will get along with others in the congregation afterward.

16 Invite others from the congregation

15. How can we help a Bible student to respond well when problems arise?

16. What advantages do you see in inviting another publisher to sit in on the study?

—and the circuit overseer when he visits the congregation—to sit in on the study. Why? In addition to the reasons mentioned earlier, other publishers may be able to give your student help that you are not in the best position to provide. Suppose, for example, that the student has tried to quit smoking but has failed several times. Invite a Witness who overcame the habit, perhaps after experiencing several setbacks, to join you on the study. Your fellow Witness may be able to provide practical advice that the student needs to hear. If you are not comfortable conducting the study in the presence of an experienced brother, invite him to conduct the study on that occasion. In any event, take advantage of the experience of others. Remember, our goal is to help the student to grow spiritually.

SHOULD I STOP THE STUDY?

17 If your Bible student is not making steady progress, at some point you will have to ask yourself, ‘Should I stop the study?’ In analyzing the situation, you should consider the person’s aptitude. It takes longer for some people to progress than it does others. Ask yourself: ‘Is my student progressing at a reasonable pace for his situation?’ ‘Is he beginning “to observe,” or apply, the things he is learning?’ (Matt. 28:20) A student may progress slowly, but he should grow at a steady pace.

18 What, though, if someone who has studied for some time gives little or no indication that he appreciates the study?

17-18. What should you consider when deciding whether you should stop a study?

Consider this scenario: Your student has completed a study of the *Teach Us* book and has perhaps even started the *Remain in God's Love* book, but he has not yet attended a single congregation meeting—not even the Memorial! And he often cancels the study for trivial reasons. In such a case, you would do well to have a frank talk with the student.*

¹⁹ You might begin by asking him, ‘What do you think will be your biggest challenge in becoming one of Jehovah’s Witnesses?’ The student might answer, ‘I do not mind studying the Bible, but I will never become one of Jehovah’s Witnesses!’ If that is his attitude after he has studied for some time, is there any point in continuing the study? On the other hand, your student may for the first time reveal what is holding him back. For example, he may feel that he could never preach from house to house. Now, knowing how he feels, you will be in a better position to help him.

* Watch the video *Discontinuing Unproductive Bible Studies* on JW Broadcasting®.

19. What might you say to someone who does not seem to appreciate his Bible study, and what will you need to consider?

²⁰ Sad to say, some students are like the Israelites of Ezekiel’s day. Of them, Jehovah told Ezekiel: “Look! You are to them like a romantic love song, sung with a beautiful voice and skillfully played on a stringed instrument. They will hear your words, but no one will act on them.” (Ezek. 33:32) We may find it hard to tell a person that we will stop studying with him. However, “the time left is reduced.” (1 Cor. 7:29) Rather than spend more time conducting an unproductive study, we need to find someone who gives evidence that he is “rightly disposed for everlasting life.”—**Read Acts 13:48.**

²¹ During 2020, our yeartext will help us to focus on improving the quality of our disciple-making work. It features some of the words Jesus spoke during that momentous meeting on a mountain in Galilee: “**Go, therefore, and make disciples . . . , baptizing them.**”—Matt. 28:19.

20. How can understanding Acts 13:48 help us to discern whether to continue conducting a study or not?

21. What is our yeartext for 2020, and why is it appropriate?

DO YOU REMEMBER?

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ■ Why is it important for us to reach the heart of our Bible students, and how can we do this? | ■ How can we help our students to progress spiritually? | ■ What factors might we consider when deciding whether to discontinue a Bible study? |
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SONG 90

Encourage One Another

PREVIEW

The apostle Paul experienced many difficulties in his life. During hard times, certain fellow workers were of great comfort to him. We will identify three specific qualities that made these fellow workers so good at comforting others. We will also consider how we can follow their example in practical ways.

You Can Be “a Source of Great Comfort”

“These are my fellow workers for the Kingdom of God, and they have become a source of great comfort to me.”

—COL. 4:11.

AROUND the world, many servants of Jehovah are facing stressful, even painful, situations. Have you noticed this in your congregation? Some Christians are dealing with a serious illness or with the death of a loved one. Others are enduring the intense pain of seeing a family member or close friend leave the truth. Still others are coping with the effects of natural disasters. All such brothers and sisters need comfort. How can we help them?

² The apostle Paul faced one life-threatening situation after another. (2 Cor. 11:23-28) He also had to endure “a thorn in the flesh,” possibly some sort of health problem. (2 Cor. 12:7) And he had to cope with disappointment when Demas, his onetime fellow worker, abandoned him “because [Demas] loved the present system of things.” (2 Tim. 4:10) Paul was a courageous spirit-anointed Christian who unselfishly helped others, but at times even he felt discouraged.—Rom. 9:1, 2.

³ Paul received the comfort and support he needed. How? Jehovah certainly used His holy spirit to strengthen him. (2 Cor. 4:7; Phil. 4:13) Jehovah also comforted him through fellow Christians. Paul described some of his fellow workers as “a source of great comfort.”

1. What stressful situations are many faithful servants of Jehovah facing?
2. Why did the apostle Paul at times need to be comforted?
3. From whom did Paul receive comfort and support?



Like Aristarchus, we can be a loyal friend by sticking to our brothers and sisters during “times of distress” (See paragraphs 4-5)

(Col. 4:11) Among the ones he mentioned by name were Aristarchus, Tychicus, and Mark. They strengthened Paul, helping him to endure. What qualities allowed these three Christians to be so comforting? How can we follow their fine example as we try to comfort and encourage one another?

LOYAL LIKE ARISTARCHUS

⁴ Aristarchus, a Macedonian Christian from Thessalonica, proved to be a loyal friend to Paul. We first read about Aristarchus when Paul visited Ephesus on his third missionary tour. While accompanying Paul, Aristarchus was captured by a mob. (Acts 19:29) When he was finally set free, he did not seek his own safety but loyally stayed with Paul. Some months later, in Greece, Aristarchus was still at Paul’s side even though opposers continued to threaten Paul’s life. (Acts 20:2-4) In about 58 C.E. when Paul

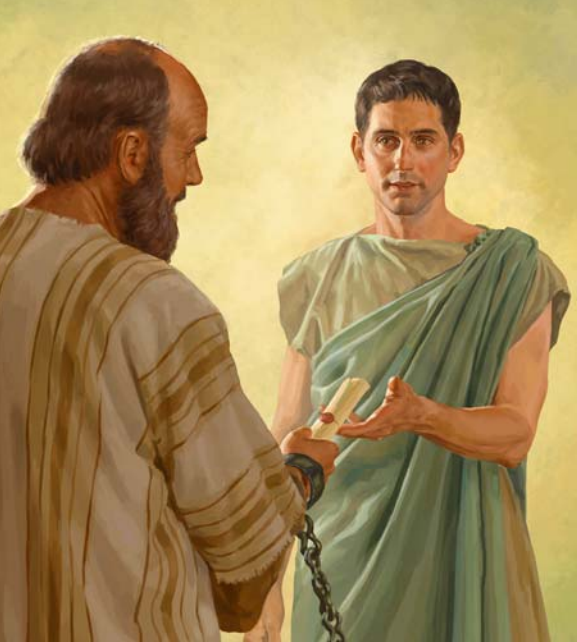
was sent to Rome as a prisoner, Aristarchus accompanied him on the long journey, and together they endured shipwreck along the way. (Acts 27:1, 2, 41) Once in Rome, he apparently spent some time in prison with Paul. (Col. 4:10) Little wonder that Paul felt encouraged and comforted by such a loyal companion!

⁵ Like Aristarchus, we can be a loyal friend by sticking to our brothers and sisters not only in good times but also during “times of distress.” (**Read Proverbs 17:17.**) Even after a trial ends, our brother or sister may still need to be comforted. Frances,* who lost both her parents to cancer within a three-month period, says: “I think that difficult trials affect us for a long time. And I appreciate loyal friends who remember that I am still in pain, even though some time has passed since my parents died.”

* Some of the names in this article have been changed.

4. How did Aristarchus prove to be a loyal friend to Paul?

5. According to Proverbs 17:17, how can we be a loyal friend?



Like Tychicus, we can be a trustworthy friend when others are struggling with problems
(See paragraphs 7-9)

⁶ Loyal friends make sacrifices in order to support their brothers and sisters. For example, a brother named Peter was diagnosed with a very aggressive terminal illness. His wife, Kathryn, says: “A couple in our congregation took us to the appointment where we found out about Peter’s illness. They decided then and there that they would not let us go on this painful journey alone, and they have been by our side whenever we have needed them.” How comforting it is to have true friends, who can help us to endure our trials!

TRUSTWORTHY LIKE TYCHICUS

⁷ Tychicus, a Christian from the Roman district of Asia, stands out as a loyal companion to Paul. (Acts 20:4) About 55 C.E., Paul organized the collection of relief funds for Judean Christians, and he may have let Tychicus help with

this important assignment. (2 Cor. 8:18-20) Later when Paul was imprisoned in Rome for the first time, Tychicus served as his personal messenger. He delivered Paul’s letters and messages of encouragement to the congregations in Asia. —Col. 4:7-9.

⁸ Tychicus remained Paul’s trustworthy friend. (Titus 3:12) Not all Christians back then were as dependable as Tychicus. About 65 C.E., during his second imprisonment, Paul wrote that many Christian men in the province of Asia avoided associating with him, possibly because they were afraid of opposers. (2 Tim. 1:15) In contrast, Paul could rely on Tychicus and gave him yet another assignment. (2 Tim. 4:12) Paul surely appreciated having a good friend like Tychicus.

⁹ We can imitate Tychicus by being a trustworthy friend. For example, we not only promise to help our brothers

6. What will loyalty move us to do?

7-8. According to Colossians 4:7-9, how did Tychicus prove trustworthy?

9. How can we imitate Tychicus?

and sisters in need but also do practical things to assist them. (Matt. 5:37; Luke 16:10) When those who need help know that they can depend on us, they are genuinely comforted. One sister explains why. She says, “You do not have the added stress of wondering whether the person who offered to help will be there on time to do what he promised.”

¹⁰ Those coping with a trial or disappointment often find comfort by confiding in a trusted friend. (**Read Proverbs 18:24.**) After the disappointment of seeing his son disfellowshipped, Bijay said, “I needed to share my feelings with someone I could trust.” Carlos lost a cherished congregation privilege as the result of a personal failing. He says, “I needed a ‘safe place’ where I could freely express myself without fear of being judged.” Carlos found that safe place with the elders, who helped him get through his problem. He was also comforted in knowing that the elders were discreet and would keep what he said confidential.

¹¹ To be a trusted friend and confidant, we need to cultivate patience. When Zhanna’s husband left her, she found comfort in sharing her feelings with close friends. “They patiently listened to me,” she says, “although I probably said the same things over and over again.” You too can prove to be a good friend by being a good listener.

10. As stated at Proverbs 18:24, from whom can those coping with a trial or disappointment find comfort?

11. How can we be a trusted friend and confidant?

WILLING TO SERVE LIKE MARK

¹² Mark was a Jewish Christian from Jerusalem. His cousin Barnabas was a well-known missionary. (Col. 4:10) Mark’s family appears to have been materially well-off, yet Mark did not put material things first in his life. Throughout his life, Mark showed a willing spirit. He was happy to serve others. For example, at various times he served alongside both the apostle Paul and the apostle Peter as they fulfilled their responsibilities, with Mark possibly attending to their physical needs. (Acts 13:2-5; 1 Pet. 5:13) Paul described Mark as one of his “fellow workers for the Kingdom of God” and as “a strengthening aid” to him. —Col. 4:10, 11, fn.

¹³ Mark became one of Paul’s close friends. For example, when Paul was imprisoned for the last time in Rome, about 65 C.E., he wrote his second letter to Timothy. In that letter, Paul asked Timothy to come to Rome and to bring Mark along. (2 Tim. 4:11) Paul no doubt appreciated Mark’s past faithful service, so he asked for Mark’s presence at that crucial time. Mark helped Paul in practical ways, perhaps supplying him with food or items for his writing. The support and encouragement that Paul received likely helped him to endure the final days leading up to his execution.

¹⁴ **Read Matthew 7:12.** When we are

12. Who was Mark, and how did he show a willing spirit?

13. How does 2 Timothy 4:11 show that Paul appreciated Mark’s faithful service?

14-15. What can Matthew 7:12 teach us about assisting others in practical ways?



Mark's acts of kindness helped Paul to endure, and we can help our brothers during times of tragedy (See paragraphs 12-14)

going through a hard time, how we appreciate those who offer support in practical ways! “There are so many routine things that seem to be impossible to do when you are suffering,” says Ryan, whose father died unexpectedly in a tragic accident. “Practical assistance—even when it seems very little—goes a long way.”

¹⁵ By being attentive and observant, we can likely find practical ways to help others. For example, one sister took the initiative to help Peter and Kathryn, mentioned earlier, get to all their medical appointments. Neither Peter nor Kathryn could drive anymore, so the sister made a schedule that enabled volunteers from the congregation to take turns providing transportation. Did this arrangement help? Kathryn says, “We felt as if a burden had been lifted off our shoulders.” Never underestimate how comforting your practical yet simple acts of kindness can be.

¹⁶ The first-century disciple Mark certainly was a busy Christian. He had weighty theocratic assignments, including writing the Gospel that bears his name. Yet, Mark made time to comfort Paul, and Paul felt free to ask for Mark's assistance. Angela, who had to cope with the violent death of a family member, appreciated the similar willingness of those who comforted her. “When friends genuinely want to help, they are approachable,” she says. “They don't seem reluctant or hesitant.” We can ask ourselves, ‘Am I known for being willing to comfort fellow worshippers in practical ways?’

DETERMINED TO COMFORT OTHERS

¹⁷ We do not have to look far to find brothers and sisters who need comfort. We may even be able to share the

16. What important lesson about providing comfort do we learn from Mark's example?

17. How can meditating on 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4 motivate us to offer comfort?

same encouraging thoughts that others have used to comfort us. Nino, a sister who lost her grandmother in death, says: “Jehovah can comfort others through us if we allow ourselves to be used by him.” **(Read 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.)** Says Frances, quoted earlier: “There is real truth to 2 Corinthians 1:4. We can pass on to others the comfort we receive.”

¹⁸ We need to take the initiative to act despite our fears. For instance, we may fear not knowing what to say or what to do for someone who is in a distressing situation. An elder named Paul remembers the efforts some made after his father died. “I could tell that it was not easy for them to approach me,” he says. “They struggled with their words. But I still appreciated their desire to offer comfort and support.” Similarly, after experiencing a powerful earthquake, a brother named Tajon said: “I honestly don’t remember every message that people sent me in the days following the earthquake, but I do remember that they

18. (a) Why may some be afraid to offer comfort?
(b) How can we genuinely comfort others? Give an example.

cared enough to check on me.” We can be effective comforters if we show that we care.

¹⁹ As we get closer to the end of this system of things, world conditions will deteriorate and life will become more challenging. (2 Tim. 3:13) And the problems that we bring on ourselves because of inherited sin and imperfection mean that we will continue to need comfort. The apostle Paul was able to endure faithfully to the end of his life, thanks, in part, to the comfort he received from fellow Christians. May we be loyal like Aristarchus, trustworthy like Tychicus, and willing to serve like Mark. By doing so, we can help our brothers and sisters to remain firm in the faith.—1 Thess. 3: 2, 3.

19. Why are you determined to be “a source of great comfort”?

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS **Page 9:** Aristarchus and Paul endured a shipwreck together. **Page 10:** Tychicus was entrusted with delivering Paul’s letters to the congregations. **Page 12:** Mark assisted Paul in practical ways.

HOW CAN YOU COMFORT OTHERS BY IMITATING . . .

- Aristarchus’ loyalty?
- Tychicus’ trustworthiness?
- Mark’s willingness to help in practical ways?

SONG 33

Throw Your Burden
on Jehovah

PREVIEW

Have you faced situations that made you feel worthless? This article will remind you of just how much Jehovah values you. It will discuss how you can keep your self-respect no matter what happens in your life.

Jehovah Your God Values You!

“He remembered us when we were low.”—PS. 136:23.

CONSIDER the following three scenarios: A young brother is diagnosed with a debilitating disease. A hard-working middle-aged brother loses his job and, despite his earnest efforts, cannot find another. A faithful elderly sister becomes increasingly limited in what she is able to do in Jehovah’s service.

² If you are experiencing something like one of the scenarios just described, you may feel that you are not useful anymore. Those situations can rob you of joy, destroy your self-respect, and interfere with your relationships with other people.

³ This world reflects Satan’s view of human life. Satan has always treated humans as if they were of little value. He heartlessly offered Eve a path to freedom, knowing full well that the penalty for disobeying God was death. Satan has always controlled the commercial, political, and religious systems of this world. So it is not surprising that many businessmen, politicians, and religious leaders reflect his lack of respect for human life and dignity.

⁴ Jehovah, on the other hand, wants us to feel good

1-2. What situations do many of Jehovah’s people face, and what effect could that have on them?

3. How do Satan and those influenced by him regard human life?

4. What will we discuss in this article?

about ourselves, and he supports us when we face situations that could make us feel worthless. (Ps. 136:23; Rom. 12:3) This article will discuss how Jehovah helps us in the following situations: (1) When we suffer illness, (2) when we experience economic hardship, and (3) when old age makes us feel as though we had nothing useful to offer in Jehovah's service. First, however, let us see why we can be confident that each of us is valuable to Jehovah.

JEHOVAH VALUES US

⁵ Even though we are made from the dust of the earth, we are worth far more than a handful of dirt. (Gen. 2:7) Consider just some of the reasons why we know that we are valuable to Jehovah. He created humans with the ability to reflect his qualities. (Gen. 1:27) In doing so, he elevated us above the rest of physical creation, putting us in charge of the earth and the animals.—Ps. 8:4-8.

⁶ Even after Adam sinned, Jehovah continued to value humans. He values us so highly that he gave his beloved Son, Jesus, as a ransom for our sins. (1 John 4:9, 10) Applying the benefits of the ransom, Jehovah will resurrect those who have died as a result of Adam's sin, "both the righteous and the unrighteous." (Acts 24:15) His Word shows that we are precious to him no matter what our health condition, financial situation, or age may be.—Acts 10:34, 35.

5. What proves to you that humans are valuable to Jehovah?

6. What other proof do we have that Jehovah values imperfect humans?

⁷ We have added reasons for believing that Jehovah values us. He has drawn us to him and taken notice of how we responded to the good news. (John 6:44) As we began to draw close to Jehovah, he drew closer to us. (Jas. 4:8) Jehovah also invests time and effort in educating us, showing that we are precious to him. He knows the kind of individuals we are now and the kind we can become. And he disciplines us because he loves us. (Prov. 3:11, 12) What powerful evidence that Jehovah values us!

⁸ Some considered King David to be worthless, but he knew that Jehovah loved and supported him. That thought affected David's view of his situation. (2 Sam. 16:5-7) When we feel low or face challenges, Jehovah can help us see things differently and he can help us climb over any obstacle. **(Read Psalm 18:27-29.)** When we have Jehovah's backing, nothing can stop us from serving him with joy. (Rom. 8:31) Let us now consider those three specific situations when we especially need to remember that Jehovah loves and values us.

WHEN DEALING WITH ILLNESS

⁹ Illness can take an emotional toll on us, making us feel as if we were no longer useful to anyone. We may feel embarrassed when people notice our limitations or when we must rely on others for help. Even when others are not aware

7. What added reasons do God's servants have for believing that Jehovah values them?

8. How can the words recorded at Psalm 18:27-29 affect the way we view our challenges?

9. How might illness affect the way we view ourselves?



Reading Jehovah's inspired words will help us deal with the negative emotions that an illness brings

(See paragraphs 9-12)

of our illness, we may fight feelings of shame because of how limited we have become. At such distressing times, Jehovah lifts us up. How?

¹⁰ When we are sick, “a good word” can lift our spirits. (**Read Proverbs 12: 25.**) In the Bible, Jehovah has stored up good words that remind us that we matter to him despite our sickness. (Ps. 31: 19; 41:3) If we read and even reread those inspired words, Jehovah will help us to deal with the negative emotions that our illness brings.

¹¹ Consider Jorge's experience. As a young man, Jorge contracted a debilitating disease that progressed rapidly and made him feel worthless. “I was not prepared for how my illness made me feel or the shame I felt because of the attention it attracted,” says Jorge. “As my condition declined, I thought of how my life would change. I was devastated, and I pleaded with Jehovah for help.” How did Jehovah sustain him? “Because I had trouble concentrating, I was encouraged to read short passages from Psalms that express Jehovah's care for his servants. I reread those few scriptures each day, and I found them to be comforting and reassuring. In time, other people began to see that I was smiling more. They even said that my positive attitude encouraged them. I realized that Jehovah had answered my prayers! He had helped me to change the way I looked at myself. I began to focus

10. According to Proverbs 12:25, what can help us when we are sick?

11. How did one brother experience Jehovah's help?

on what his Word says about how he views me despite my illness.”

¹² If you are dealing with an illness, be assured that Jehovah knows what you are going through. Beg him for help so that you can develop a wholesome view of your situation. Then use the Bible to retrieve the good words Jehovah has stored up for you. Focus on passages that show how much Jehovah values his servants. As you do, you will see that Jehovah is good to all those who serve him faithfully.—Ps. 84:11.

WHEN DEALING WITH ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

¹³ Every family head wants to be able to provide the necessities of life for his family. But suppose that, through no fault of his own, a brother loses his job. He diligently tries to find another one but has no success. Faced with those circumstances, he may feel worthless. How can focusing on Jehovah’s promises help him?

¹⁴ Jehovah always keeps his promises. (Josh. 21:45; 23:14) He does so for a number of reasons. First, his name, or reputation, is at stake. Jehovah has given his word that he will care for his loyal servants, and he feels obligated to fulfill that promise. (Ps. 31:1-3) In addition, Jehovah knows that we would be devastated if he did not care for those who are part of his family. He promises to provide

12. When dealing with an illness, how can you experience Jehovah’s support?

13. How could the loss of a job make a family head feel?

14. For what reasons does Jehovah keep his promises?



Remembering that Jehovah promises to provide for us will help us when we have difficulty finding a job
(See paragraphs 13-15)



for us both materially and spiritually, and nothing will stop him from fulfilling that promise!—Matt. 6:30-33; 24:45.

¹⁵ When we remember why Jehovah keeps his promises, we can face economic challenges with confidence. Consider the example of the first-century Christians. When great persecution arose against the congregation in Jerusalem, “all except the apostles were scattered.” (Acts 8:1) Think what that would have meant. Economic hardship! Christians likely lost their homes and businesses. Yet, Jehovah did not abandon them; neither did they lose their joy. (Acts 8:4; Heb. 13:5, 6; Jas. 1:2, 3) Jehovah supported those faithful Christians, and he will support us.—**Read Psalm 37: 18, 19.**

WHEN COPING WITH THE LIMITATIONS OF OLD AGE

¹⁶ As we get older, we might begin to feel that we have little to give to Jehovah. King David may have been plagued by similar feelings as he grew older. (Ps. 71:9) How can Jehovah help us?

¹⁷ Consider the experience of a sister named Jheri. She was invited to attend a maintenance training session at the Kingdom Hall, but she did not want to go. She said: “I’m old, I’m a widow, and I don’t have a single skill Jehovah can use. I’m useless.” The night before the

15. (a) What challenge did the first-century Christians face? (b) What confidence does Psalm 37:18, 19 provide?

16. What circumstance could make us wonder if Jehovah values our worship?

17. What can we learn from the experience of a sister named Jheri?

Focusing on what we can do, even in old age, will assure us that Jehovah values us and our faithful service

(See paragraphs 16-18)

training session, she poured her heart out to Jehovah in prayer. When she arrived at the Kingdom Hall the next day, she still wondered whether she should really be there. During the program, one of the speakers emphasized that our most important skill is our willingness to be taught by Jehovah. Jheri recalls: “I thought, ‘I have that skill!’ I started crying as I realized that Jehovah was answering my prayer. He was assuring me that I do have something of value to give and that he was willing to teach me!” Looking back, Jheri says: “I walked into that session feeling nervous, discouraged, and low. But I walked out of it feeling confident, encouraged, and valued!”

¹⁸ As we get older, we can be certain that Jehovah still has work for us to do. (Ps. 92:12-15) Jesus taught us that no matter how limited our abilities or how

18. How does the Bible show that Jehovah continues to value our worship as we get older?

small our efforts seem to us, Jehovah treasures whatever we can do in his service. (Luke 21:2-4) So focus on what you can do. You can, for example, speak about Jehovah, pray for your brothers, and encourage others to stay faithful. Jehovah considers you to be his fellow worker, not because of what you accomplish, but because of your willing obedience to him.—1 Cor. 3:5-9.

¹⁹ How grateful we are to worship Jehovah, a God who truly values those who serve him! He created us to do his will, and it is true worship that adds real meaning to our lives. (Rev. 4:11) Though the world may view us as worthless, Jehovah is not ashamed of us. (Heb. 11:16, 38) When we feel weighed down by illness, economic hardship, or old age, let us remember that nothing can separate us from the love of our heavenly Father. —**Read Romans 8:38, 39.**

19. What assurance does Romans 8:38, 39 give us?

HOW DOES JEHOVAH SHOW THAT HE VALUES US WHEN WE . . .

- deal with illness?
- endure economic hardship?
- feel limited by old age?

SONG 25

A Special Possession

PREVIEW

Ever since Pentecost 33 C.E., Jehovah has given some Christians an amazing hope—the hope of ruling with his Son in heaven. How, though, do these Christians know that they have been selected for this wonderful privilege? What happens when someone receives this invitation? This article is based on one that appeared in the January 2016 *Watchtower*. It will answer those intriguing questions.

“The Spirit Itself Bears Witness”

“The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are God’s children.” —ROM. 8:16.

IT IS Sunday morning in Jerusalem. The year is 33 C.E., and it is the day of Pentecost. A group of about 120 disciples are gathered together in the upper room of a house. (Acts 1:13-15; 2:1) A few days earlier, Jesus had instructed them to remain in Jerusalem because they were to receive a special gift. (Acts 1:4, 5) What happens next?

² “Suddenly there [is] a noise from heaven, just like that of a rushing, stiff breeze.” The sound fills the whole house. Then, “tongues as if of fire” appear above the disciples’ heads, and they all become “filled with holy spirit.” (Acts 2:2-4) In this spectacular way, Jehovah pours out his holy spirit on that group. (Acts 1:8) They become the first to be anointed by holy spirit* and given the hope of ruling with Jesus in heaven.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOMEONE IS ANOINTED?

³ If you were one of those disciples gathered in the upper room that day, you would never forget it. Something that looked like a tongue of fire came to rest on your head, and you began to speak in tongues! (Acts 2:5-12)

* **EXPRESSION EXPLAINED: Anointed by holy spirit:** Jehovah uses his holy spirit to select a person to rule with Jesus in heaven. By means of his spirit, God gives that person a promise for the future, or “a token in advance.” (Eph. 1:13, 14) These Christians can say that the holy spirit “bears witness,” or makes clear, to them that their reward is in heaven.—Rom. 8:16.

- 1-2. What spectacular event occurs on the day of Pentecost in 33 C.E.?
3. Why did those at Pentecost have no doubt that they were anointed by holy spirit?



Jehovah poured out his holy spirit in a spectacular way at Pentecost on a group of about 120 Christians (See paragraphs 1-2)

There would be no question in your mind that you were anointed by holy spirit. But do all those who are anointed by holy spirit receive their anointing in some spectacular manner and at the same time in their life? No. How do we know?

⁴ Let us consider the matter of **timing**. That group of about 120 Christians were not the only ones anointed by holy spirit at Pentecost, 33 C.E. Later that day, about 3,000 others also received the promised holy spirit. Their anointing occurred when they got baptized. (Acts 2: 37, 38, 41) But in the years that followed, not all anointed Christians received their anointing at their baptism. The Samaritans received their anointing sometime after their baptism. (Acts 8:14-17) And in what certainly was an exceptional instance, Cornelius and his household were anointed even before they got baptized.—Acts 10:44-48.

4. Did all anointed ones in the first century receive their calling at the same time in their life? Explain.

⁵ Let us also consider **what happens** when a person is anointed by holy spirit. Some who are anointed may at first find it hard to accept that Jehovah has chosen them. They may wonder, ‘Why did God choose me?’ Others may not have that reaction. Whatever the case, the apostle Paul explains what happens to all who are anointed: “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; ftn.) So Jehovah uses his holy spirit to make it absolutely clear to these Christians that he has chosen them. In this way, the holy spirit is “a token [a pledge or promise]” given to assure them that in the future they will live forever in heaven

* **EXPRESSION EXPLAINED: Seal.** This sealing is not made permanent until sometime before the person dies faithful or sometime before the outbreak of the great tribulation.—Eph. 4:30; Rev. 7:2-4; see “Questions From Readers” in the April 2016 *Watchtower*.

5. According to 2 Corinthians 1:21, 22, what happens when someone is anointed by holy spirit?

and not on earth.—**Read 2 Corinthians 1:21, 22.**

⁶ If a Christian is anointed, will he automatically receive his heavenly reward? No. He is sure that he has been chosen to go to heaven. However, he must remember this admonition: “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.” (2 Pet. 1:10) So even though an anointed Christian has been chosen, or called, to go to heaven, he will get his reward only if he remains faithful.—Phil. 3:12-14; Heb. 3:1; Rev. 2:10.

HOW DOES SOMEONE KNOW IF HE IS ANOINTED?

⁷ But how does a person know that he or she has the heavenly calling? The answer is clearly seen in Paul’s words to those 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) So by means of his holy spirit, God makes it clear to anointed ones that they have this heavenly calling.—1 Thess. 2:12.

⁸ Jehovah leaves no doubt whatsoever in the minds and hearts of those who

receive his invitation to go to heaven. (**Read 1 John 2:20, 27.**) Of course, anointed Christians need to be taught by Jehovah through the congregation just like everyone else. But they do not need anyone to confirm that they are anointed. Jehovah has used the most powerful force in the universe, his holy spirit, to make it absolutely clear to them that they are anointed!

THEY ARE “BORN AGAIN”

⁹ Most of God’s servants today may find it difficult to understand what happens to someone when God anoints him. This is normal because they themselves have not been anointed. God created humans to live forever on earth, not in heaven. (Gen. 1:28; Ps. 37:29) But Jehovah has chosen some to live in heaven. So when he anoints them, he changes their hope and way of thinking drastically, so that they look forward to life in heaven.—**Read Ephesians 1:18.**

¹⁰ When Christians are anointed by holy spirit, they are “born again,” or “born from above.”* Jesus also indicated that it is impossible to explain exactly to someone who has not been anointed how it feels to be “born again,” or to be “born from the spirit.”—John 3:3-8; ftn.

¹¹ What change in thinking takes place

* For further explanation of what it means to be “born again,” see *The Watchtower*, April 1, 2009, pp. 3-12.

6. What must an anointed Christian do to receive his heavenly reward?

7. How do anointed ones know that they have the heavenly calling?

8. How does 1 John 2:20, 27 show that anointed Christians do not need confirmation from others about their anointing?

9. When someone is anointed, what change does that person experience, as described at Ephesians 1:18?

10. What does it mean to be “born again”? (See also footnote.)

11. Explain the change in thinking that occurs when someone is anointed.

when Christians are anointed? Before Jehovah anointed these Christians, they treasured the hope of living forever on earth. They looked forward with great eagerness to the time when Jehovah would remove all wickedness and make the earth a paradise. Perhaps they imagined themselves welcoming back a family member or a friend who had died. But after they were anointed, they started to think differently. Why is that? They did not become dissatisfied with that earthly hope. They did not change their mind because of emotional stress or turmoil. They did not suddenly feel that they would find living forever on earth to be boring. Instead, Jehovah used his holy spirit to change the way that they think and the hope that they cherish.

¹² Someone who has been anointed may feel unworthy of this precious privilege. But he does not for one minute doubt that Jehovah has chosen him. His heart bursts with joy and appreciation when he thinks of his future prospects. —**Read 1 Peter 1:3, 4.**

¹³ So does this mean that anointed ones want to die? The apostle Paul answers that question. He compared their human body to a tent and said: “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) These Christians have not lost interest in this life, wanting it to end quickly. On the

contrary, they enjoy life and want to use each day to serve Jehovah with their family and friends. Yet, no matter what they are doing, they always 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.

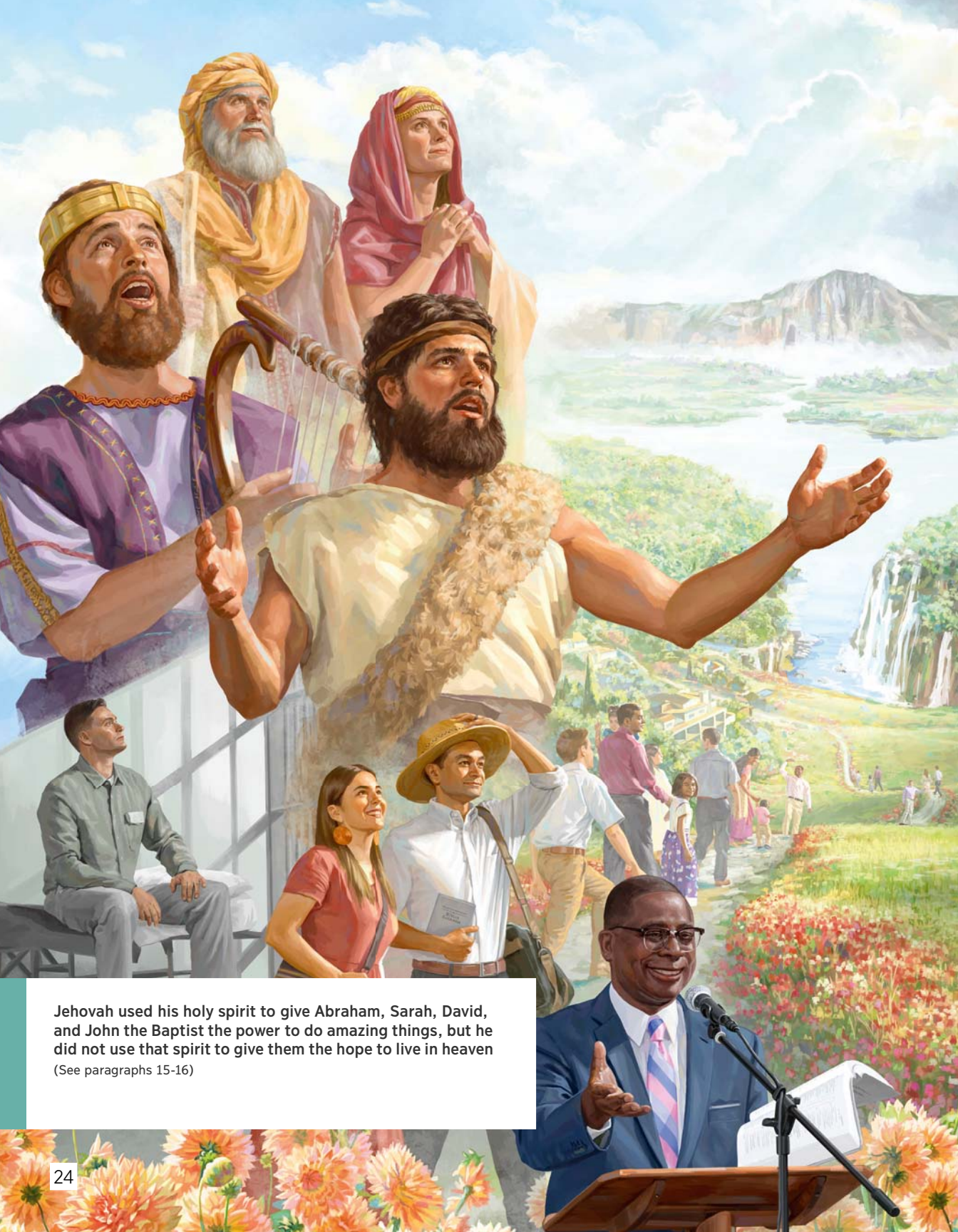
HAS JEHOVAH ANOINTED YOU?

¹⁴ Perhaps you are wondering if you have been anointed by holy spirit. If so, think about these important questions: Do you have a burning desire to do Jehovah’s will? Do you feel that you are especially zealous in the preaching work? Are you a keen student of God’s Word who loves to learn about “the deep things of God”? (1 Cor. 2:10) Do you feel that Jehovah has given you wonderful results in the preaching work? Do you have a deep inner feeling of responsibility to help others spiritually? Have you seen proof that Jehovah has helped you in many specific ways in your life? If you answer these questions with a resounding yes, does this prove that you now have the heavenly calling? No, it does not. Why not? Because ***all*** of God’s servants can feel this way, whether they are anointed or not. And by means of his holy spirit, Jehovah can give the same power to any of his servants, no matter what their hope is. In fact, if you are wondering whether you have been anointed by holy spirit, such doubt in itself would mean that you have ***not*** been. Those called by Jehovah do not wonder whether they have been anointed or not! They know!

12. According to 1 Peter 1:3, 4, how do anointed Christians feel about their hope?

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

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



Jehovah used his holy spirit to give Abraham, Sarah, David, and John the Baptist the power to do amazing things, but he did not use that spirit to give them the hope to live in heaven (See paragraphs 15-16)

¹⁵ Throughout the Bible, there are many examples of men of faith who received holy spirit; yet, they did not have the hope of living in heaven. David was guided by holy spirit. (1 Sam. 16:13) Holy spirit helped him to understand the deep things about Jehovah and also directed him to write parts of the Bible. (Mark 12:36) Even so, the apostle Peter said that David “did not ascend to the heavens.” (Acts 2:34) John the Baptist was “filled with holy spirit.” (Luke 1:13-16) Jesus said that there was no man greater than John, but then he said that John would not be included in the heavenly Kingdom. (Matt. 11:10, 11) Jehovah used his holy spirit to give these men the power to do amazing things, but he did not use that spirit to choose them to live in heaven. Does this mean that they were less faithful than those chosen to rule in heaven? No. It simply means that Jehovah will bring them back to life in Paradise on earth.—John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15.

15. How do we know that not all those who have received God’s spirit have been chosen to go to heaven?

¹⁶ The vast majority of God’s servants on earth today do not have the hope of living in heaven. Like Abraham, Sarah, David, John the Baptist, and many other men and women in Bible times, they look forward to living on earth when God’s Kingdom will rule over them.—Heb. 11:10.

¹⁷ Because some anointed ones are still among God’s people today, certain questions naturally arise. (Rev. 12:17) For example, how should anointed ones view themselves? If someone in your congregation starts to partake of the emblems at the Memorial, how should you treat that person? And what if the number of those who say that they are anointed keeps on growing? Should you be concerned about it? We will answer these questions in the next article.

16. What reward do most of God’s servants look forward to today?

17. What questions will we consider in the next article?

PICTURE DESCRIPTION Page 24: Whether we are imprisoned for our faith or we are free to preach and to teach the truth, we can look forward to living on earth when God’s Kingdom will rule over us.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- How does someone know that he or she is anointed?
- What changes take place when a person is anointed?
- How do anointed ones feel about life here on earth?

SONG 26

You Did It for Me

PREVIEW

This year, the Memorial of Christ's death will be observed on Tuesday, April 7. How should we view those who partake of the emblems that evening? Should we be concerned if the number of partakers continues to increase? We will find the answers to these questions in this article, which is based on one that appeared in the January 2016 *Watchtower*.

We Will Go With You

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

JEHOVAH foretold about our time: “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) The “Jew” here represents those whom God has anointed by holy spirit. They are also called “the Israel of God.” (Gal. 6:16) The “ten men” represent those who have the hope of living forever on earth. They know that Jehovah has blessed this group of anointed ones and feel that it is an honor to worship him along with them.

² Even though it is not possible to know the name of each individual member of the anointed on earth today,* those who hope to live on earth can “go with” the anointed. How? The Bible says that the “ten men” 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*.’” The Bible verse mentions one Jew. But “you” and “you people” refer to more than one person. This means that this Jew is not just one person but represents

* According to Psalm 87:5, 6, God may in the future reveal the names of all those who are ruling with Jesus in heaven.—Rom. 8:19.

1. What did Jehovah say would happen in our time?
2. How do the “ten men” “go with” the anointed?



The other sheep (“ten men”) are honored to worship Jehovah along with the anointed (“a Jew”)

(See paragraphs 1-2)

the whole group of anointed ones. Those who are not anointed serve Jehovah along with the anointed. However, they do not view the anointed as their leaders, realizing that Jesus fills the role of Leader.—Matt. 23:10.

³ Since there are still anointed Christians among God’s people today, some may wonder: (1) How should anointed ones view themselves? (2) How should those who partake of the emblems at the Memorial be treated? (3) Should we be worried if the number of partakers in-

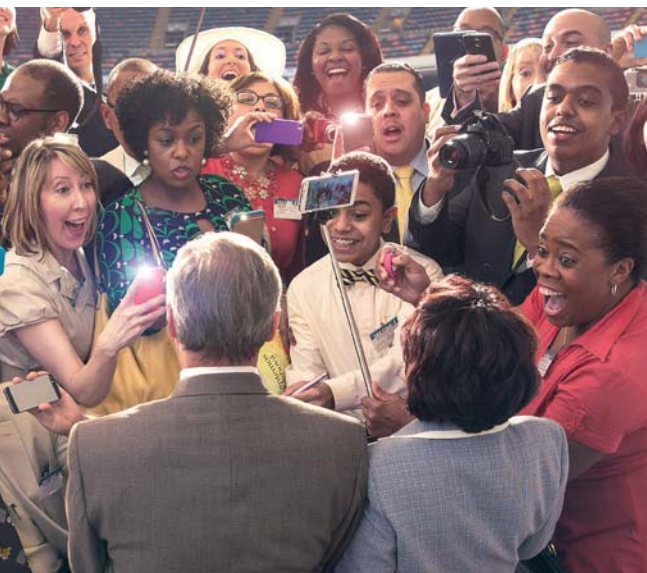
3. What questions will be answered in this article?

creases? This article will answer those questions.

HOW SHOULD ANOINTED ONES VIEW THEMSELVES?

⁴ Anointed ones should think seriously about the warning found at **1 Corinthians 11:27-29. (Read.)** How might an anointed one partake “unworthily” at the Memorial? He would do so if he ate and drank the emblems but was not living up to Jehovah’s righteous standards.

4. What warning found at 1 Corinthians 11:27-29 should anointed ones think seriously about, and why?



We should not treat anointed ones
or any others who take the lead
as though they were celebrities

(See paragraph 8)

(Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-29) Anointed ones realize that they must stay faithful if they want to receive “the prize of the upward call of God by means of Christ Jesus.”—Phil. 3:13-16.

⁵ Jehovah’s holy spirit helps his servants to be humble, not proud. (Eph. 4:1-3; Col. 3:10, 12) So anointed ones do not feel that they are better than others. They know that Jehovah does not necessarily give anointed ones more holy spirit than he gives his other servants. They do not feel that they have a deeper understanding of Bible truths than anyone else. And they would never tell someone else that he too has been anointed and should start partaking at the Memorial. Instead, they humbly acknowledge that only Jehovah invites people to go to heaven.

5. How should anointed Christians feel about themselves?

⁶ Although anointed ones feel that it is an honor to be invited to go to heaven, they do not expect others to treat them in a special way. (Phil. 2:2, 3) They also know that when Jehovah anointed them, he did not let everyone else know about it. So an anointed person is not surprised if some do not believe right away that he has been anointed. He realizes that the Bible tells us not to be quick to believe someone who says that God has given him a special responsibility. (Rev. 2:2) Not wanting to draw attention to himself, an anointed Christian would not tell those whom he meets for the first time that he is anointed. And he would certainly not boast about it to others.—**Read 1 Corinthians 4:7, 8.**

⁷ Anointed Christians do not feel that they should spend time only with other anointed ones, as if they were members of an exclusive club. They do not search out other anointed ones, hoping to discuss their anointing with them or to form private groups for Bible study. (Gal. 1:15-17) The congregation would not be united if anointed ones did those things. They would be working against the holy spirit, which helps God’s people to have peace and unity.—Rom. 16:17, 18.

6. According to 1 Corinthians 4:7, 8, how should anointed Christians conduct themselves?

7. What will those who are anointed avoid doing, and why?

HOW SHOULD THE ANOINTED BE TREATED?

⁸ How should we treat anointed brothers and sisters? It would be wrong to admire a person too much, even if he is an anointed brother of Christ. (Matt. 23:8-12) When the Bible speaks of the elders, it encourages us to “imitate their *faith*,” but it does not tell us that we can make any *human* our leader. (Heb. 13:7) It is true that the Bible says that some are “worthy of double honor.” But this is because they “preside in a fine way” and “work hard in speaking and teaching,” not because they are anointed. (1 Tim. 5:17) If we give anointed ones too much praise and attention, we could embarrass them.* Or even worse, we could cause them to become proud. (Rom. 12:3) None of us would want to do anything that might cause one of Christ’s anointed brothers to make such a serious mistake!—Luke 17:2.

⁹ How can we show that we respect those who are anointed by Jehovah? We would not ask them how they became anointed. This is a personal matter, which we do not have the right to know about. (1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:11) And we should not assume that their husband or wife, their parents, or other family members are also anointed. A person does not inherit his heavenly hope from his family. He receives it

* See the box “Love ‘Does Not Behave Indecently’” in *The Watchtower*, January 2016.

8. Why do you need to be careful about the way you treat those who partake of the Memorial emblems? (See also footnote.)

9. How can we show that we respect anointed Christians?

from God. (1 Thess. 2:12) We should also avoid asking questions that could hurt others. For example, we would not ask the wife of an anointed brother how she feels about the prospect of living forever on earth without her husband. After all, we can be absolutely sure that in the new world, Jehovah will “satisfy the desire of every living thing.”—Ps. 145:16.

¹⁰ If we do not treat anointed ones as more important than others, we also protect ourselves. How? The Bible tells us that some anointed ones might not remain faithful. (Matt. 25:10-12; 2 Pet. 2:20, 21) But if we avoid “admiring personalities,” we will never follow others, even those who are anointed or well-known or those who have served Jehovah for a long time. (Jude 16, fn.) Then, if they become unfaithful or leave the congregation, we will not lose our faith in Jehovah or stop serving him.

DO WE NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THE NUMBER OF THOSE PARTAKING?

¹¹ For many years, the number of those partaking at the Memorial kept going down. But in recent years, that number has been going up every year. Do we need to worry about this? No. Let us consider some key factors to keep in mind.

¹² “*Jehovah knows those who belong to him.*” (2 Tim. 2:19) Unlike Jehovah, the

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

11. What has been happening to the number of those who partake at the Memorial?

12. Why should we not worry about the number of those who partake of the emblems at the Memorial?

brothers who count the number of those partaking at the Memorial do not know who truly is anointed. So the number includes those who think that they are anointed but are not. For example, some who used to partake later stopped. Others may have mental or emotional problems that make them believe that they will rule with Christ in heaven. Clearly, we do not know exactly how many anointed ones are left on earth.

¹³ ***There will be anointed ones in many parts of the earth when Jesus comes to take them to heaven.*** (Matt. 24:31) The Bible does say that during the last days, there will be a small number of anointed ones left on earth. (Rev. 12:17) But it

13. Does the Bible say how many anointed ones will be on earth when the great tribulation starts?

does not say how many of them will be left when the great tribulation begins.

¹⁴ ***Jehovah decides when he will choose anointed ones.*** (Rom. 8:28-30) Jehovah began choosing anointed ones after Jesus was resurrected. It seems that in the first century, all true Christians were anointed. In the centuries that followed, most of those who claimed that they were Christians did not really follow Christ. Even so, during those years, Jehovah anointed the few who were true Christians. They were like the wheat that Jesus said would grow among the weeds. (Matt. 13:24-30) During the last days, Jehovah has continued to choose peo-

14. As shown at Romans 9:11, 16, what do we need to understand about the choosing of anointed ones?

How should we react if someone partakes of the Memorial emblems?

(See paragraph 14)



ple who will be part of the 144,000.* So if God decides to choose some of these just before the end, surely we should not question his wisdom. **(Read Romans 9:11, 16.)**[#] We must be careful not to react like the workers whom Jesus described in one of his illustrations. They complained about the way their master treated those who started working in the last hour.—Matt. 20:8-15.

¹⁵ ***Not all who have the hope of living in heaven are part of “the faithful and discreet slave.” (Read Matthew 24:45-47.)*** Just as in the first century, Jehovah and Jesus today are using a few brothers to feed, or teach, many. Only a few anointed Christians in the first century were used to write the Christian Greek Scriptures. Today, only a few

* Although Acts 2:33 shows that holy spirit is poured out through Jesus, it is Jehovah who invites each person.

[#] For more information, see “Questions From Readers” in *The Watchtower*, May 1, 2007.

15. Are all the anointed part of “the faithful and discreet slave,” mentioned at Matthew 24:45-47? Explain.

anointed Christians have the responsibility to give God’s people “food at the proper time.”

¹⁶ What has this article taught us? Jehovah has decided to give everlasting life on earth to the vast majority of his people and life in heaven to those few who will rule with Jesus. Jehovah rewards all his servants—the “Jew” as well as the “ten men”—and he requires them to obey the same laws and remain faithful. All must stay humble. All must serve him together and be united. And all must work to keep the peace in the congregation. As we get closer to the end, let us all keep serving Jehovah and following Christ as “one flock.”—John 10:16.

16. What have you learned from this article?

PICTURE DESCRIPTION Page 28: Imagine if a headquarters representative and his wife were mobbed by picture takers at a convention. How disrespectful!

HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN?

- How should anointed ones view themselves?
- How should others view anointed ones?
- Why should we not be troubled by the increase in the number of those partaking at the Memorial?

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My Life Was Spiraling Out of Control

Solomone moved to the United States, hoping to find a better life. Instead, he began abusing drugs and ended up in prison. What helped him to straighten out his life?

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What if I Don't Fit In?

Is it more important to fit in with people who have questionable values or to stay true to who you are?

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COVER PICTURE:

When Jesus met with the apostles and others in Galilee after his resurrection, he instructed them to “go . . . and make disciples” (See study article 1, paragraphs 3-4)

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