

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

June 2000

For United States of America

km-E Us 6/00 Vol. 43, No. 6

“Your Labor Is Not in Vain”

¹ What an encouraging thought! Your labor in Jehovah's service is not in vain. (1 Cor. 15:58) In contrast, think of how people labor long and hard trying to improve their status in life or their financial situation. They may pursue higher education for years or work slavishly to get ahead materially. Yet, because of “time and unforeseen occurrence,” they may never attain the prestige they are seeking, or they may be forced to settle for much less than they want materially. Like “a striving after wind,” their efforts are in vain. (Eccl. 1:14; 9:11) How vital, then, that we have plenty to do in the only work that is

not in vain because it has lasting value!

² **The Work That Really Counts:** Preaching the good news of God's Kingdom is the most important work on earth. It is the work that must be done whether people listen or not. We want to be able to say, as did Paul: “I am clean from the blood of all men, for I have not held back from telling you all the counsel of God.”—Acts 20:26, 27.

³ When people listen and respond to the Kingdom message, what joy there is! A young woman lost her aunt in death. She wondered where her aunt had gone—to heaven or to hell? She prayed to God for help, using the name Jehovah,

as her sister had taught her to do. Soon she was studying the Bible and attending Christian meetings. She gained a whole new outlook on life and broke her ties with street gangs. The young woman quit smoking, taking drugs, and stealing. She admits: “Only love for Jehovah made me leave such a bad way of life. Only Jehovah in his great mercy could give me the hope of everlasting life.” She is no longer spending her life in vain pursuits.

⁴ Even when people refuse to listen, you still accomplish something worthwhile. They know that Jehovah's Witnesses have visited them. Your own integrity, faithfulness, and love are confirmed. So, is your labor in the Lord's work in vain? Never!

“Be Liberal, Ready to Share”

¹ Centuries ago the apostle Paul instructed Timothy to encourage fellow believers “to work at good, to be rich in fine works, to be liberal, ready to share.” (1 Tim. 6:18) Paul also reminded the Hebrew Christians not to forget “the doing of good and the sharing of things with others.” (Heb. 13:16) Why did he write these instructions? Because he knew that there would be “glory and honor and peace for everyone who works what is good.”—Rom. 2:10.

² By reason of his Creatorship, Jehovah God is the Owner of all things. (Rev. 4:11) We certainly appreciate what he is doing in our behalf with his belongings. Despite the thank-

less attitude of many of humankind, the Most High continues to allow all to benefit from his generous provisions for sustaining life. (Matt. 5:45) He even gave his dearest Son as a sacrifice so that we might have life everlasting. Should not the love that we have been shown compel us to prove ourselves thankful by being liberal with fellow humans?—2 Cor. 5:14, 15.

³ **What Can We Share?** It is only right that we use whatever assets we have in a way that is pleasing in God's sight. Surely we want to support the worldwide Kingdom work in a material and spiritual way. Of course, the good news is the

most valuable treasure anyone can possess, for it is “God's power for salvation.” (Rom. 1:16) By liberally using our time and resources every month to participate in the preaching and teaching work, we may be able to share this spiritual treasure with others, leading to their gaining everlasting life.

⁴ Jehovah is very pleased when we assist those of little means. He promises blessings, and he also reminds us: “Valuable things will be of no benefit on the day of fury, but righteousness itself will deliver from death.” (Prov. 11:4; 19:17) Supporting the Kingdom work materially and having a full share in preaching the good news are wonderful ways we can show that we really are liberal, ready to share.

SERVICE MEETING SCHEDULE

Week Starting June 12

Song 136

8 min: Local announcements. Selected Announcements from *Our Kingdom Ministry*.

15 min: "Your Labor Is Not in Vain." Limit introductory comments to less than a minute, and follow with a question-and-answer discussion. Include comments on experience related in the June 15, 1996, *Watchtower*, page 32.

22 min: Starting Studies with the *Require* Brochure. A talk, reviewing article in the January 1999 *Our Kingdom Ministry*, page 6. Demonstrate the suggested presentation in paragraph 6. Have one or two publishers briefly relate the success they have had in starting studies, telling how they introduced the study and what they did to keep the study going week after week. Song 209 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting June 19

Song 14

12 min: Local announcements. Accounts report and announcement of quarterly accounts audit. If the congregation has copies of the *Young People Ask* or *Youth* books in stock, demonstrate how they can be used to good advantage in the ministry during the summer months, when we are more likely to find teenagers at home.

8 min: Question Box. Talk by an elder.

25 min: "How Could I . . . Unless Someone Guided Me?" Question-and-answer discussion conducted by the service

overseer. Have each paragraph read aloud, and read the scriptures in paragraphs 3, 4, and 7. When covering paragraph 6, explain the role of the service overseer in determining whether or not personal Bible studies should be revived with baptized people.—See the November 1998 *Our Kingdom Ministry* Question Box.

Song 89 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting June 26

Song 39

10 min: Local announcements. Remind publishers to turn in field service reports for June. Review literature offer for July. Show the older brochures that are available locally, and briefly point out the purpose of each one. Have a well-prepared demonstration showing how to offer one of them in the ministry.

17 min: "Be Liberal, Ready to Share." Questions and answers. Include the four reasons "Why We Give" that are outlined in the November 1, 1996, *Watchtower*, pages 29-30.

18 min: Know How to Give an Answer. (Col. 4:6) Talk and audience discussion. What do you do when you encounter an individual who raises an unscrip-tural argument? The *Reasoning* book often comes to the rescue by providing practical suggestions on how to give a tactful answer. For example, although we view death as an enemy that will be conquered through Christ's ransom, others are convinced that nothing will eliminate this eventuality, even putting faith in the false idea of reincarnation. Discuss

the responses that are offered in the *Reasoning* book in the feature "If Someone Says—" on pages 103-4 and 321. Encourage everyone to carry the book in the field ministry.

Song 44 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting July 3

Song 213

10 min: Local announcements. Ask publishers who have started studies in the *Require* brochure to relate how this was accomplished.

15 min: Local needs.

20 min: Applying Bible Principles Strengthens Family Life. Discussion between two brothers, based on the eight points covered in the *Reasoning* book, pages 253-4. Explain the importance of helping Bible students learn that the secret of family happiness lies in understanding and applying the principles in God's Word. Using lesson 8 in the *Require* brochure, demonstrate how this can be accomplished. Families who respond to the Bible's counsel are drawn together and find increased joy in close bonds of love and unity. Relate experience in *Family Happiness* book, chapter 13, paragraphs 1, 21-2.

Song 51 and concluding prayer.

MARCH SERVICE REPORT

Number of:		Av. Hrs.	Av. Mags.	Av. R.V.	Av. Bi.St.
Sp'l Pios.	169	124.2	97.5	54.4	4.6
Pios.	93,432	67.4	46.7	21.9	1.7
Aux. Pios.	26,005	50.5	38.0	14.0	0.9
Pubs.	833,257	9.3	8.2	3.5	0.3
TOTAL	952,863			Baptized: 1,952	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Literature offer for **June:** *What Does God Require of Us?* Concentrate on starting home Bible studies. **July and August:** Any of the following 32-page brochures may be used: *Does God Really Care About Us?*, *Enjoy Life on Earth Forever!*, *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, *The Divine Name That Will Endure Forever*, *The Government That Will Bring Paradise*, *What Happens to Us When We Die?*, *What Is the Purpose of Life—How Can You Find It?*, and *When Someone You Love Dies*. The brochures *A Book for All People*, *Our Problems—Who Will Help Us Solve Them?*, *Spirits of the Dead—Can They Help You or Harm You?* *Do They Really Exist?*, and *Will There Ever Be a World Without War?* may be offered where appropriate. **September:** *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?*

■ Since the Gilead graduation will be held on Saturday, September 9, 2000, no tours will be conducted that day at the Society's facilities at Brooklyn, Patterson, and Wallkill, New York. Any who have planned to visit on that Saturday should reschedule their visit to another convenient time. No congregation literature requests will be processed for shipment or for pickup that day.

■ Beginning with the June 1, 2000, issue, *The Watchtower* will be available in the Tatar language as a monthly edition.

■ Beginning with the June 15, 2000, issue, *The Watchtower* will be available in the East Armenian language as a semimonthly edition.

■ New Publications Available: *A Book for All People* —Estonian

Apply Yourself to Reading and Writing —Macedonian

Is There a Creator Who Cares About You? —Dutch

Jehovah—Who Is He? (Tract No. 23) —Chinese (Simplified)

Jehovah's Witnesses and Education —Dutch

Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life —Azerbaijani

Our Problems—Who Will Help Us Solve Them? —Dutch

Sing Praises to Jehovah (Large and Small songbooks) —Dutch

Sing Praises to Jehovah—Large Print (Lyrics only) —Dutch

Watch Tower Publications Index 1996 —Dutch

What Does God Require of Us? —Mongolian

What Happens to Us When We Die? —Estonian

■ New Videocassettes Available: *Purple Triangles* —Dutch

QUESTION BOX

■ Who should offer prayer at congregation meetings?

Congregational prayer is a vital part of our worship. Representing others before Jehovah is a precious privilege and a weighty responsibility. In view of its importance, elders need to use good judgment when deciding which brothers qualify to offer prayer at meetings. Baptized brothers representing the congregation should be mature Christian ministers who are known as good examples and have the respect of the congregation. Their reverent and respectful prayers should reveal a fine relationship with Jehovah God. The article "Praying Before Others With a Humble Heart" in the May 15, 1986, issue of *The Watchtower* outlines important principles that are especially helpful for those who pray publicly on behalf of the congregation.

The elders would not have a brother offer prayer if he is known for questionable or frivolous conduct. A brother who tends to be disgruntled or inclined to use public prayer as a means to air personal differences would not be chosen. (1 Tim. 2:8) Even though a teenage brother may be baptized, the elders will have to determine whether he has the spiritual stature to pray on behalf of the congregation.—Acts 16:1, 2.

Occasionally at meetings for field service, it might be necessary for a baptized sister to offer prayer if there is no qualified brother there to represent the group. She would need to wear an appropriate head covering. If it is likely that a qualified brother will not be present at certain meetings for service, the elders should assign a qualified sister to take the lead.

It is customary for the chairman of the Public Meeting to offer the open-

ing prayer. However, at other congregation meetings, when there are more than a few qualified brothers available, someone other than the brother opening the meeting or the one assigned the final part may be called upon to offer the opening or closing prayers. In any event, the brother who is to be called on to pray at a congregation meeting should be informed beforehand so that he can give thought to what he will say. Then he can offer a coherent, earnest prayer that is appropriate for that particular meeting.

Such prayers need not be long. When a brother offers a public prayer, he will usually be better understood if he stands up, expresses himself with sufficient volume, and speaks distinctly. This will allow all of those assembled to hear the prayer and at the close to say a heartfelt "Amen!"—1 Chron. 16:36; 1 Cor. 14:16.

“How Could I . . . Unless Someone Guided Me?”

¹ When the evangelizer Philip asked the Ethiopian eunuch if he understood what he was reading from God's Word, the man responded: “Really, how could I ever do so, unless someone guided me?” Philip gladly assisted him to understand the good news about Jesus, resulting in the man's immediate baptism. (Acts 8:26-38) Philip was obeying the commission from Christ to ‘make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them and teaching them.’ —Matt. 28:19, 20.

² We must obey the commission to make disciples, just as Philip did. However, the sort of rapid spiritual progress that the Ethiopian eunuch made is not often seen among the people with whom we study the Bible. That man, a Jewish proselyte well versed in the Scriptures, had a receptive heart and only needed to accept that Jesus was the promised Messiah. It is a challenge if those with whom we study are unfamiliar with the Bible, have been misled by false religious teachings, or are burdened by difficult personal problems. What will help us to be successful in guiding Bible students to dedication and baptism?

³ **Discern the Bible Student's Spiritual Needs:** The August 1998 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert discussed the length of time that we might study with people, using the *Require* brochure and the *Knowledge* book. It gave this direction: “It is necessary to gauge the pace of the study according to the circumstances and aptitude of the student. . . . We do not want to sacrifice the student's having a clear understanding for the sake of speed. Every student needs

a solid basis for his newfound faith in God's Word.” Hence, it is advisable not to rush through the material in the *Knowledge* book with the thought of trying to finish the book in six months. It may require much more than six months to help some individuals progress to the point of baptism. As you conduct the study week by week, spend whatever time is necessary to help the student understand and accept what he is learning from God's Word. In some cases, two or three weeks may be needed to cover one chapter in the *Knowledge* book. This will allow time to read and clarify many of the cited scriptures. —Rom. 12:2.

⁴ However, what if upon completion of the *Knowledge* book, you discern that the student's understanding of the truth needs to be rounded out or that he is not yet fully motivated to take a stand for the truth and dedicate his life to God? (1 Cor. 14:20) What more can you do to guide him onto the road leading to life?—Matt. 7:14.

⁵ **Satisfy the Bible Student's Spiritual Needs:** If it is evident that a person is making progress, although slowly, and that he is developing appreciation for what he is learning, then continue the Bible study in a second book after the *Require* brochure and the *Knowledge* book are completed. This may not be necessary in every case, but when it is needed, continue the study in the *True Peace* book, the *United in Worship* book, or the *God's Word* book. Most publishers have personal copies of these books to use if the congregation does not have a supply. The *God's Word* book is the only one that can be ordered from Brooklyn. In all cas-

es, the *Require* brochure and the *Knowledge* book would be studied first. The Bible study, return visits, and time spent to continue the study should be counted and reported, even if the student gets baptized before completing the second book.

⁶ Does this mean that those who were recently baptized but who studied only one book should now receive renewed help to study the second book? Not necessarily. However, they may have become inactive or may not have progressed in the truth, and they may feel that they need personal help to make greater application of the truth in their lives. The service overseer should be consulted before a study is revived with a baptized publisher. However, if you know of some who studied the *Knowledge* book in the past but never progressed to dedication and baptism, you may want to take the initiative to see if they would like to resume their Bible study.

⁷ It is a mark of Christian love to give close, personal attention to each interested person with whom we study. Our objective is to help the student achieve greater insight into the truth of God's Word. Then he can take a definite, knowledgeable stand for the truth and dedicate his life to Jehovah, symbolizing that dedication by water baptism. —Ps. 40:8; Eph. 3:17-19.

⁸ Do you remember what happened after the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized? “He kept going on his way rejoicing” as a new disciple of Jesus Christ. (Acts 8:39, 40) May we and those whom we successfully guide in the way of the truth find great joy in serving Jehovah God—now and forever!