

# References for *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook*

## JULY 1-7

### TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | COLOSSIANS 1-4

#### “Strip Off the Old, and Clothe Yourselves With the New”

**(Colossians 3:5-9)** Deaden, therefore, your body members that are on the earth as respects sexual immorality, uncleanness, uncontrolled sexual passion, hurtful desire, and greediness, which is idolatry. <sup>6</sup> On account of those things the wrath of God is coming. <sup>7</sup> That is how you too used to conduct yourselves in your former way of life. <sup>8</sup> But now you must put them all away from you: wrath, anger, badness, abusive speech, and obscene talk out of your mouth. <sup>9</sup> Do not lie to one another. Strip off the old personality with its practices,

#### w11 3/15 10 ¶12-13

#### Receive God's Spirit, Not the World's

<sup>12</sup> *Which spirit does my personality reflect? (Read Colossians 3:8-10, 13.)* The spirit of the world advances the works of the flesh. (Gal. 5:19-21) A real test as to which spirit influences us comes, not when things are going well, but when they are not, such as if a Christian brother or sister ignores us, offends us, or even sins against us. Additionally, in the privacy of our homes, it may become evident which spirit holds sway. Some self-examination may be in order. Ask yourself, ‘Over the past six months, has my personality become more Christlike or have I slipped back into some bad habits of speech and conduct?’

<sup>13</sup> God's spirit can help us to “strip off the old personality with its practices” and to clothe ourselves with “the new personality.” That will help us to become more loving and kind. We will be inclined to forgive one another freely,

even if there seems to be a legitimate cause for complaint. We will no longer react to perceived injustices with outbursts of “malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech.” Instead, we will put forth effort to become “tenderly compassionate.”—Eph. 4:31, 32.

**(Colossians 3:10-14)** and clothe yourselves with the new personality, which through accurate knowledge is being made new according to the image of the One who created it, <sup>11</sup> where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, foreigner, Scyth'i-an, slave, or freeman; but Christ is all things and in all. <sup>12</sup> Accordingly, as God's chosen ones, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, humility, mildness, and patience. <sup>13</sup> Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely even if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Just as Jehovah freely forgave you, you must also do the same. <sup>14</sup> But besides all these things, clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union.

#### w13 9/15 21 ¶18-19

#### Have You Been Transformed?

<sup>18</sup> For God's Word to produce in us needed transformation, regularly reading and learning from the Bible is but a beginning. Many people read the Bible from time to time and thereby have come to be quite familiar with what it says. Perhaps you have met such ones as you engage in the field ministry. Some are even able to recite Bible passages from memory. Yet, this may have little effect on their thinking and way of life. What is missing? For God's Word to influence and transform a person, he must allow it to be “sounded down” into the heart. (Gal. 6:6, ftn.) Hence, we need to spend time thinking

about what we are learning. It would be good to ask ourselves: ‘Am I convinced that this is more than just some religious teaching? Have I not seen that it is the truth? Moreover, do I see ways to apply in my own life what I am learning and not view it only as something I might teach to others? Do I feel that Jehovah is talking to me personally?’ Thinking and meditating on such questions can help us to deepen the feelings we have for Jehovah in our hearts. Our love for him will grow. When the heart is thus touched, positive changes will follow.—Prov. 4:23; Luke 6:45.

<sup>19</sup> Regularly reading God’s Word and meditating on it will motivate us to continue to do what we likely have already done to some extent: ‘Strip off the old personality with its practices and clothe yourselves with the new personality, which through accurate knowledge is being made new.’ (Col. 3:9, 10) Yes, we can have continued success as we get the real sense and impact of God’s Word. The resulting new Christian personality will help to protect us against Satan’s cunning machinations.

### **Digging for Spiritual Gems**

**(Colossians 1:13, 14)** He rescued us from the authority of the darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> by means of whom we have our release by ransom, the forgiveness of our sins.

*it-2* 169 ¶3-5

#### **Kingdom of God**

**“The Kingdom of the Son of His Love.”** Ten days after Jesus’ ascension to heaven, on Pentecost of 33 C.E., his disciples had evidence that he had been “exalted to the right hand of God” when Jesus poured out holy spirit upon them. (Ac 1:8, 9; 2:1-4, 29-33) The “new covenant” thus became operative toward them, and they became the nucleus of a new “holy nation,” spiritual Israel.—Heb 12:22-24; 1Pe 2:9, 10; Ga 6:16.

Christ was now sitting at his Father’s right hand and was the Head over this congregation. (Eph 5:23; Heb 1:3; Php 2:9-11) The Scriptures show that from Pentecost 33 C.E. onward, a spiritual kingdom was set up over his disciples. When writing to first-century Christians at Colossae, the apostle Paul referred to Jesus Christ as already having a kingdom: “[God] delivered us from the authority of the darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of his love.”—Col 1:13; compare Ac 17:6, 7.

Christ’s kingdom from Pentecost of 33 C.E. onward has been a spiritual one ruling over spiritual Israel, Christians who have been begotten by God’s spirit to become the spiritual children of God. (Joh 3:3, 5, 6) When such spirit-begotten Christians receive their heavenly reward, they will no longer be earthly subjects of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, but they will be kings with Christ in heaven.—Re 5:9, 10.

**(Colossians 2:8)** Look out that no one takes you captive by means of the philosophy and empty deception according to human tradition, according to the elementary things of the world and not according to Christ;

*w08* 8/15 28 ¶9

**Highlights From the Letters to the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, and the Colossians**

**2:8—What are “the elementary things of the world” against which Paul warned?** These are the elements of Satan’s world—basic things or principles that make up, guide, or motivate it. (1 John 2:16) Included among these are the philosophy, materialism, and false religions of this world.

#### **Bible Reading**

**(Colossians 1:1-20)** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through God’s will, and Timothy our brother, <sup>2</sup> to the holy ones and faithful brothers in union with Christ at Co-

los'sae: May you have undeserved kindness and peace from God our Father. <sup>3</sup> We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, <sup>4</sup> since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love you have for all the holy ones <sup>5</sup> because of the hope that is being reserved for you in the heavens. You previously heard about this hope through the message of truth of the good news <sup>6</sup> that has come to you. Just as the good news is bearing fruit and increasing in all the world, so it is also doing among you from the day you heard and accurately knew the undeserved kindness of God in truth. <sup>7</sup> That is what you have learned from our beloved fellow slave Ep'a-phras, who is a faithful minister of the Christ on our behalf. <sup>8</sup> He also made known to us your love in a spiritual way. <sup>9</sup> That is also why from the day we heard of it, we have never stopped praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the accurate knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual comprehension, <sup>10</sup> so as to walk worthily of Jehovah in order to please him fully as you go on bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the accurate knowledge of God; <sup>11</sup> and may you be strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may endure fully with patience and joy, <sup>12</sup> as you thank the Father, who made you qualify to share in the inheritance of the holy ones in the light. <sup>13</sup> He rescued us from the authority of the darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> by means of whom we have our release by ransom, the forgiveness of our sins. <sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; <sup>16</sup> because 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 thrones or lordships or governments or

authorities. All other things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> Also, he is before all other things, and by means of him all other things were made to exist, <sup>18</sup> and he is the head of the body, the congregation. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might become the one who is first in all things; <sup>19</sup> because God was pleased to have all fullness to dwell in him, <sup>20</sup> and through him to reconcile to himself all other things by making peace through the blood he shed on the torture stake, whether the things on the earth or the things in the heavens.

## **JULY 8-14**

### **TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | 1 THESSALONIANS 1-5**

#### **"Keep Encouraging One Another and Building One Another Up"**

**(1 Thessalonians 5:11-13)** Therefore, keep encouraging one another and building one another up, just as you are in fact doing. <sup>12</sup> Now we request you, brothers, to show respect for those who are working hard among you and presiding over you in the Lord and admonishing you; <sup>13</sup> and to give them extraordinary consideration in love because of their work. Be peaceable with one another.

**w11 6/15 26 ¶12**

#### **"Have Regard for Those Who Are Working Hard Among You"**

<sup>12</sup> "Presiding over" the congregation involves more than just teaching. The same expression is used at 1 Timothy 3:4. Paul said that an overseer should be "a man presiding over his own household in a fine manner, having children in subjection with all seriousness." Here the expression "presiding over" obviously includes not only teaching his children but also taking the lead in the family and "having children

in subjection.” Yes, elders take the lead in the congregation, helping all to be in subjection to Jehovah.—1 Tim. 3:5.

**w11 6/15 28 ¶19**

### **“Have Regard for Those Who Are Working Hard Among You”**

<sup>19</sup> What would you do if you received a gift especially made for you? Would you show your appreciation by using it? The “gifts in men” are what Jehovah through Jesus Christ has provided for you. One way you can show your gratitude for these gifts is by listening intently to talks given by the elders and by trying to apply the points they bring out. You can also show your appreciation by making meaningful comments at meetings. Support the work in which the elders are taking the lead, such as the field ministry. If you have benefited from counsel you received from a certain elder, why not tell him so? In addition, why not show your appreciation for the elders’ families? Remember, for an elder to work hard in the congregation, his family is sacrificing time spent with him.

**(1 Thessalonians 5:14)** On the other hand, we urge you, brothers, to warn the disorderly, speak consolingly to those who are depressed, support the weak, be patient toward all.

**w17.10 10 ¶13**

### **“Love . . . in Deed and Truth”**

<sup>13</sup> *Support those who are weak.* The genuineness of our love can be tested by the Bible’s command to “support the weak, be patient toward all.” (1 Thess. 5:14) Although many who are weak later become strong in the faith, others need our patient, ongoing support. This can include sharing upbuilding Scriptural thoughts, inviting them to join us in the ministry, or just taking time to listen to them. In addition, instead of simply thinking that a brother or a sister is either “strong” or “weak,” we should recognize that we all have strengths and weak-

nesses. Even the apostle Paul acknowledged his own weaknesses. (2 Cor. 12:9, 10) Thus, we can all benefit from the support of fellow Christians.

**w15 2/15 9 ¶16**

### **Imitate Jesus’ Humility and Tenderness**

<sup>16</sup> *Our tender words.* Our tender affection for others moves us to “speak consolingly to those who are depressed.” (1 Thess. 5:14) What can we say to encourage such ones? We can lift their spirits by expressing our genuine care and concern for them. We can offer sincere commendation to help them see their positive qualities and abilities. We can remind them that Jehovah drew them to his Son, so they must be precious in his eyes. (John 6:44) We can reassure them that Jehovah deeply cares for his servants who are “brokenhearted” or “crushed in spirit.” (Ps. 34:18) Our tender words can have a healing effect on those who need comfort. —Prov. 16:24.

### **Digging for Spiritual Gems**

**(1 Thessalonians 4:3-6)** For this is the will of God, that you should be holy and abstain from sexual immorality. <sup>4</sup> Each one of you should know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, <sup>5</sup> not with greedy, uncontrolled sexual passion like the nations have that do not know God. <sup>6</sup> No one should go beyond proper limits and take advantage of his brother in this matter, because Jehovah exacts punishment for all these things, just as we told you previously and also strongly warned you.

**it-1 863-864**

### **Fornication**

Fornication is an offense for which an individual may be expelled (disfellowshipped) from the Christian congregation. (1Co 5:9-13; Heb 12:15, 16) The apostle explains that a Christian committing fornication sins against his own body, using reproductive members for a

perverted purpose. He is greatly affected spiritually in an adverse way, brings defilement into God's congregation, and lays himself open to the danger of deadly sexually transmitted diseases. (1Co 6:18, 19) He encroaches on the rights of his Christian brothers (1Th 4:3-7) by (1) bringing uncleanness and disgraceful folly, with reproach, into the congregation (Heb 12:15, 16), (2) depriving the one with whom he commits fornication of a clean moral standing and, if that one is single, of being clean when entering into marriage, (3) depriving his own family of a clean moral record, as well as (4) wronging the parents, husband, or fiancé of the one with whom he commits fornication. He disregards, not man, whose laws may or may not condone fornication, but God, who will exact punishment for his sin.—1Th 4:8.

**(1 Thessalonians 4:15-17)** For this is what we tell you by Jehovah's word, that we the living who survive to the presence of the Lord will in no way precede those who have fallen asleep in death; <sup>16</sup> because the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a commanding call, with an archangel's voice and with God's trumpet, and those who are dead in union with Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Afterward we the living who are surviving will, together with them, be caught away in clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and thus we will always be with the Lord.

w15 7/15 18-19 ¶14-15

**"Your Deliverance Is Getting Near"!**

<sup>14</sup> What will happen after Gog of Magog starts the attack on God's people? Both Matthew and Mark record the same event: "[The Son of man] will send out the angels and will gather his chosen ones together from the four winds, from earth's extremity to heaven's extremity." (Mark 13:27; Matt. 24:31) This gathering work does not refer to the initial ingathering of anointed ones; nor does it refer to the final sealing of

the remaining anointed ones. (Matt. 13:37, 38) That sealing happens before the outbreak of the great tribulation. (Rev. 7:1-4) So, what is this gathering work that Jesus mentions? It is the time when the remaining ones of the 144,000 will receive their heavenly reward. (1 Thess. 4:15-17; Rev. 14:1) This event will take place at some point after the beginning of the attack by Gog of Magog. (Ezek. 38:11) Then these words of Jesus will be fulfilled: "At that time the righteous ones will shine as brightly as the sun *in the Kingdom of their Father.*"—Matt. 13:43.

<sup>15</sup> Does this mean that there will be a "rapture" of the anointed ones? Many in Christendom believe, according to this teaching, that Christians will be bodily caught up from the earth. Then, they expect that Jesus will visibly return to rule the earth. However, the Bible clearly shows that "the sign of the Son of man" will appear in heaven and that Jesus will come "on the clouds of heaven." (Matt. 24:30) Both of these expressions imply invisibility. Additionally, "flesh and blood cannot inherit God's Kingdom." So those who will be taken to heaven will first need to be "changed, in a moment, in the blink of an eye, during the last trumpet." **(Read 1 Corinthians 15:50-53.)** Therefore, while we do not use the term "rapture" here because of its wrong connotation, the remaining faithful anointed will be gathered together in an instant of time.

## **Bible Reading**

**(1 Thessalonians 3:1-13)** So when we could bear it no longer, we thought it best to stay on alone in Athens; <sup>2</sup> and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's minister in the good news about the Christ, to make you firm and comfort you regarding your faith, <sup>3</sup> so that no one might be shaken by these tribulations. For you yourselves know that we cannot avoid suffering such things. <sup>4</sup> For when we were with you, we used to tell you in advance that we would suffer tribulation,

and that is what has happened, just as you know. <sup>5</sup> That is why, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn of your faithfulness, in case somehow the Tempter might have tempted you, and our labor might have turned out to be in vain. <sup>6</sup> But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has given us the good news about your faithfulness and love, that you always continue to remember us fondly and that you long to see us in the same way as we also do you. <sup>7</sup> That is why, brothers, in all our distress and tribulation, we have been comforted because of you and the faithfulness you demonstrate. <sup>8</sup> Because we are revitalized if you are standing firm in the Lord. <sup>9</sup> For how can we show our thanks to God concerning you in return for the great joy we feel before our God on your account? <sup>10</sup> Night and day we make supplications as earnestly as we can to see you in person and to supply what is lacking in your faith. <sup>11</sup> Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus make a way for us to come to you. <sup>12</sup> Moreover, may the Lord cause you to increase, yes, to abound in love for one another and for all, just as we do for you, <sup>13</sup> so that he may make your hearts firm, blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the presence of our Lord Jesus with all his holy ones.

## JULY 15-21

### TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | 2 THESSALONIANS 1-3

#### “The Revealing of the Lawless One”

**(2 Thessalonians 2:6-8)** And now you know what is acting as a restraint, so that he will be revealed in his own due time. <sup>7</sup> True, the mystery of this lawlessness is already at work, but only until the one who is right now acting as a restraint is out of the way. <sup>8</sup> Then, indeed, the lawless one will be revealed, whom

the Lord Jesus will do away with by the spirit of his mouth and bring to nothing by the manifestation of his presence.

#### it-1 972-973

#### Godly Devotion

Herein lies another mystery, diametrically opposed to Jehovah's “sacred secret.” It is “the mystery of this lawlessness.” This was a mystery to true Christians because in the apostle Paul's day the identity of “the man of lawlessness” had not taken form in a definitely established and clearly identifiable class. Even after that “man” would take form, his identity would continue to be mysterious to most persons because his wickedness would be practiced under the guise and in the name of godly devotion. It would, in fact, be an apostasy from true godly devotion. Paul said that “the mystery of this lawlessness” was already at work in his day, because there was a lawless influence in the Christian congregation that would eventually result in producing this apostate class. Finally, this one would be done away with by Jesus Christ at the manifestation of his presence. This apostate, Satan-operated “man” would lift himself up “over everyone who is called ‘god’ or an object of reverence” (Gr., *se'ba-sma*). Thus this great opposer of God as a Satanic instrument would be extremely deceptive and would bring destruction to those following its practices. The effectiveness of “the man of lawlessness” would lie in the fact that his wickedness would be cloaked in a hypocritical godly devotion.—2Th 2: 3-12; compare Mt 7:15, 21-23.

**(2 Thessalonians 2:9-12)** But the lawless one's presence is by the operation of Satan with every powerful work and lying signs and wonders <sup>10</sup> and every unrighteous deception for those who are perishing, as a retribution because they did not accept the love of the truth in order that they might be saved. <sup>11</sup> That is why God lets a deluding influence

mislead them so that they may come to believe the lie, <sup>12</sup> in order that they all may be judged because they did not believe the truth but took pleasure in unrighteousness.

#### **it-2 245 ¶7**

##### **Lie**

Jehovah God allows “an operation of error” to go to persons who prefer falsehood “that they may get to believing the lie” rather than the good news about Jesus Christ. (2Th 2:9-12) This principle is illustrated by what happened centuries earlier in the case of Israelite King Ahab. Lying prophets assured Ahab of success in war against Ramoth-gilead, while Jehovah’s prophet Micaiah foretold disaster. As revealed in vision to Micaiah, Jehovah allowed a spirit creature to become “a deceptive spirit” in the mouth of Ahab’s prophets. That is to say, this spirit creature exercised his power upon them so that they spoke, not truth, but what they themselves wanted to say and what Ahab wanted to hear from them. Though forewarned, Ahab preferred to be fooled by their lies and paid for it with his life.—1Ki 22:1-38; 2Ch 18.

#### **Digging for Spiritual Gems**

**(2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8)** But you who suffer tribulation will be given relief along with us at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his powerful angels <sup>8</sup> in a flaming fire, as he brings vengeance on those who do not know God and those who do not obey the good news about our Lord Jesus.

#### **it-1 834 ¶5**

##### **Fire**

Peter wrote that “the heavens and the earth that are now are stored up for fire.” From the context and in the light of other scriptures, it is evident that this is not a literal fire but signifies everlasting destruction. As the Flood of Noah’s day did not destroy the literal heavens and earth, but only the ungodly persons, so also the revelation of Jesus Christ with his powerful

angels in a flaming fire will result in permanent destruction only for the ungodly and the wicked system of things of which they are a part.—2Pe 3:5-7, 10-13; 2Th 1:6-10; compare Isa 66:15, 16, 22, 24.

**(2 Thessalonians 2:2)** not to be quickly shaken from your reason nor to be alarmed either by an inspired statement or by a spoken message or by a letter appearing to be from us, to the effect that the day of Jehovah is here.

#### **it-1 1206 ¶4**

##### **Inspiration**

**“Inspired Expressions”—True and False.** The Greek word *pneu'ma* (spirit) is used in a special manner in some apostolic writings. At 2 Thessalonians 2:2, for example, the apostle Paul urges his Thessalonian brothers not to get excited or shaken from their reason “either through an inspired expression [literally, “spirit”] or through a verbal message or through a letter as though from us, to the effect that the day of Jehovah is here.” It is clear that Paul uses the word *pneu'ma* (spirit) in connection with means of communication, such as the “verbal message” or “letter.” For this reason Lange’s *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures* (p. 126) says on this text: “By this the Apostle intends a spiritual suggestion, pretended prediction, utterance of a prophet.” (Translated and edited by P. Schaff, 1976) Vincent’s *Word Studies in the New Testament* states: “*By spirit*. By prophetic utterances of individuals in Christian assemblies, claiming the authority of divine revelations.” (1957, Vol. IV, p. 63) Thus, while some translations simply render *pneu'ma* in this and similar cases as “spirit,” other translations read “message of the Spirit” (AT), “prediction” (JB), “inspiration” (D’Ostervald; Segond [French]), “inspired expression” (NW).

#### **Bible Reading**

**(2 Thessalonians 1:1-12)** Paul, Sil-va’nus, and Timothy, to the congregation of the

Thes-sa-lo'ni-ans in union with God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: <sup>2</sup> May you have undeserved kindness and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>3</sup> We are obligated always to give thanks to God for you, brothers. This is fitting, because your faith is growing exceedingly and the love of each and every one of you is increasing toward one another. <sup>4</sup> As a result we ourselves take pride in you among the congregations of God because of your endurance and faith in all your persecutions and the hardships that you are suffering. <sup>5</sup> This is a proof of the righteous judgment of God, leading to your being counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which you are indeed suffering. <sup>6</sup> This takes into account that it is righteous on God's part to repay tribulation to those who make tribulation for you. <sup>7</sup> But you who suffer tribulation will be given relief along with us at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his powerful angels <sup>8</sup> in a flaming fire, as he brings vengeance on those who do not know God and those who do not obey the good news about our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup> These very ones will undergo the judicial punishment of everlasting destruction from before the Lord and from the glory of his strength, <sup>10</sup> at the time when he comes to be glorified in connection with his holy ones and to be regarded in that day with wonder among all those who exercised faith, because the witness we gave met with faith among you. <sup>11</sup> To that very end we always pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling and with his power perform completely all the good that he pleases and every work of faith. <sup>12</sup> This is so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you and you in union with him, according to the undeserved kindness of our God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**JULY 22-28**

## **TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | 1 TIMOTHY 1-3**

### **"Reach Out for a Fine Work"**

**(1 Timothy 3:1)** This statement is trustworthy: If a man is reaching out to be an overseer, he is desirous of a fine work.

**w16.08 21 ¶3**

### **Do You See the Need to Make Spiritual Progress?**

<sup>3</sup> **Read 1 Timothy 3:1.** The Greek verb translated "reaching out" means stretching to grasp something, perhaps something beyond your normal reach. In using that word, the apostle Paul stressed that spiritual progress requires effort. Imagine a brother thinking about his future in the congregation. He may not now be serving as a ministerial servant, but he realizes that he needs to cultivate spiritual qualities. First, he strives to qualify as a ministerial servant. In time, he hopes to be spiritually qualified to serve as an overseer. In each case, he works hard to meet the qualifications needed to care for added responsibility in the congregation.

**(1 Timothy 3:13)** For the men who minister in a fine manner are acquiring for themselves a fine standing and great freeness of speech in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

**km 9/78 4 ¶7**

### **Those 'Acquiring a Fine Standing'**

<sup>7</sup> It is easy to see, then, why Paul said of such men that they "are acquiring . . . a fine standing." This is not, as some suggest, an advancement in a church hierarchy. Rather, ministerial servants who "minister in a fine manner" are assured of a blessing from Jehovah and Jesus, and they have the respect and support of the whole congregation. Rightfully they acquire "great freeness of speech in the



faith in connection with Christ Jesus.” Being true to their position, they are appreciated for their fine service; they have firmness of faith and can declare their faith without cowardice or fear of reproach.

## **Digging for Spiritual Gems**

**(1 Timothy 1:4)** nor to pay attention to false stories and to genealogies. Such things end up in nothing useful but merely give rise to speculations rather than providing anything from God in connection with faith.

### **it-1 914-915**

#### **Genealogy**

To engage in studying and discussing such matters was pointless, and it was even more so at the time Paul wrote to Timothy. It was no longer vital to have the genealogical records maintained to prove one’s ancestry, since God did not now recognize any distinction between Jew and Gentile in the Christian congregation. (Ga 3:28) And the genealogical records had already established the descent of Christ through the line of David. Also, it would not be long after Paul wrote this admonition that Jerusalem would be destroyed, and along with it the Jewish records. God did not preserve them. Accordingly, Paul was anxious that Timothy and the congregations should not be sidetracked into spending time in research and in controversy over matters of personal pedigree, which contributed nothing to Christian faith. The genealogy furnished by the Bible is sufficient to prove Christ’s Messiahship, the genealogical matter of prime importance to Christians. The other Biblical genealogies stand as a testimony to the authenticity of the Scriptural record, manifesting clearly that it is a genuinely historical account.

**(1 Timothy 1:17)** Now to the King of eternity, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

### **c/ 12 ¶15**

#### **“Look! This Is Our God”**

<sup>15</sup> Another title applied exclusively to Jehovah is “King of eternity.” (1 Timothy 1:17; Revelation 15:3) What does this mean? It is difficult for our limited minds to comprehend, but Jehovah is eternal in both directions—past and future. Psalm 90:2 says: “Even from time indefinite to time indefinite you are God.” So Jehovah never began; he has always been. He is rightly called “the Ancient of Days”—he existed for an eternity before anyone or anything else in the universe came into being! (Daniel 7:9, 13, 22) Who can validly question his right to be the Sovereign Lord?

## **Bible Reading**

**(1 Timothy 2:1-15)** First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be made concerning all sorts of men, <sup>2</sup> concerning kings and all those who are in high positions, so that we may go on leading a calm and quiet life with complete godly devotion and seriousness. <sup>3</sup> This is fine and acceptable in the sight of our Savior, God, <sup>4</sup> whose will is that all sorts of people should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth. <sup>5</sup> For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, a man, Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who gave himself a corresponding ransom for all—this is what is to be witnessed to in its own due time. <sup>7</sup> For the purpose of this witness I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—a teacher of nations in the matter of faith and truth. <sup>8</sup> So I desire that in every place the men carry on prayer, lifting up loyal hands, without anger and debates. <sup>9</sup> Likewise, the women should adorn themselves in appropriate dress, with modesty and soundness of mind, not with styles of hair braiding and gold or pearls or very expensive clothing, <sup>10</sup> but in the way that

is proper for women professing devotion to God, namely, through good works. <sup>11</sup> Let a woman learn in silence with full submissiveness. <sup>12</sup> I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man, but she is to remain silent. <sup>13</sup> For Adam was formed first, then Eve. <sup>14</sup> Also, Adam was not deceived, but the woman was thoroughly deceived and became a transgressor. <sup>15</sup> However, she will be kept safe through childbearing, provided she continues in faith and love and holiness along with soundness of mind.

## JULY 29–AUGUST 4

### TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD | 1 TIMOTHY 4-6

#### “Godly Devotion Versus Riches”

**(1 Timothy 6:6-8)** To be sure, there is great gain in godly devotion along with contentment. <sup>7</sup> For we have brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out. <sup>8</sup> So, having food and clothing, we will be content with these things.

w03 6/1 9 ¶1-2

#### Learning the Secret of Self-Sufficiency

A major factor that contributed to Paul’s happiness and satisfaction was his sense of self-sufficiency. What, though, does it mean to be self-sufficient? Simply stated, it means being content with the basic things. Regarding this, Paul told Timothy, his companion in the ministry: “To be sure, it is a means of great gain, this godly devotion along with self-sufficiency. For we have brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out. So, having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things.”—1 Timothy 6:6-8.

Note that Paul associated self-sufficiency with godly devotion. He recognized that true happiness comes from godly devotion, that is, from putting our service to God in first place, and not

from material possessions or wealth. “Sustenance and covering” were but the means to the end that he could continue pursuing godly devotion. So for Paul the secret of self-sufficiency was to rely on Jehovah, no matter what the circumstances might be.

**(1 Timothy 6:9)** But those who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many senseless and harmful desires that plunge men into destruction and ruin.

g 6/07 6 ¶2

#### Determined to Be Rich—How It Can Affect You

Of course, most people do not die as a result of pursuing riches. Yet, life could easily pass them by while they are lost in their quest. Then, too, the quality of their lives may suffer if job stress or financial strain causes panic attacks, sleeplessness, chronic headaches, or ulcers—health problems that can shorten one’s life. And even if a person wakes up to the need to change his priorities, it may be too late. His mate may no longer trust him, his children may already be hampered emotionally, and his health may be ruined. Perhaps some of the damage can be repaired, but it will require a great deal of work. Such ones have indeed “stabbed themselves all over with many pains.”—1 Timothy 6:10.

**(1 Timothy 6:10)** For the love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things, and by reaching out for this love some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains.

g 11/08 6 ¶4-6

#### Six Keys to Personal Success

As we saw in the opening article of this series, people who avidly chase after riches as the key to success are, in fact, pursuing a mirage. Besides inviting disappointment, they invite many pains. For example, while ardently pursuing wealth, people often sacrifice relationships with

family and friends. Others forgo needed sleep—if not because of work, then because of anxiety or worry. “The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not allow him to sleep,” says Ecclesiastes 5:12.—*Hebrew Names Version*.

Money is not just a cruel master but a deceitful one as well. Jesus Christ spoke of “the deceptive power of riches.” (Mark 4:19) In other words, riches promise happiness, but they do not deliver. They just create a craving for more. “The man who loves money can never have enough,” says Ecclesiastes 5:10.—*The New English Bible*.

In short, the love of money is self-defeating and ultimately leads to disappointment, frustration, or even crime. (Proverbs 28:20) More closely linked to happiness and success are generosity, a forgiving attitude, moral cleanness, love, and spirituality.

### **Digging for Spiritual Gems**

**(1 Timothy 4:2)** by means of the hypocrisy of men who speak lies, whose conscience is seared as with a branding iron.

#### **Ivs 23-24 ¶17**

### **A Good Conscience With God**

<sup>17</sup> The apostle Peter wrote: “Maintain a good conscience.” (1 Peter 3:16) Sadly, when people keep ignoring Jehovah’s principles, eventually their conscience does not warn them anymore. Paul said that such a conscience has been “seared as with a branding iron.” (1 Timothy 4:2) Have you ever been badly burned? When that happens, your skin becomes so scarred that you cannot feel anything there. If a person continues to do wrong things, his conscience can become “seared” and, in time, stop working.

**(1 Timothy 4:13)** Until I come, continue applying yourself to public reading, to exhortation, to teaching.

#### **it-2 714 ¶1-2**

### **Public Reading**

**In the Christian Congregation.** In the first century, few possessed copies of the many scrolls of the Bible, making public reading essential. The apostle Paul commanded public reading of his letters at the meetings of the Christian congregations and ordered them to be exchanged with his letters to other congregations so that these also might be read. (Col 4:16; 1Th 5:27) Paul counseled the young Christian overseer Timothy to apply himself to “public reading, to exhortation, to teaching.”—1Ti 4:13.

Public reading should be done with fluency. (Hab 2:2) Since public reading is for the education of others, a public reader must thoroughly discern what he is reading and have a clear understanding of the writer’s intention, being careful in reading to avoid giving the wrong idea or impression to the listeners. According to Revelation 1:3, those who read that prophecy aloud, as well as those who hear the words and observe them, will be happy.

### **Bible Reading**

**(1 Timothy 4:1-16)** However, the inspired word clearly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to misleading inspired statements and teachings of demons, <sup>2</sup> by means of the hypocrisy of men who speak lies, whose conscience is seared as with a branding iron. <sup>3</sup> They forbid marriage and command people to abstain from foods that God created to be partaken of with thanksgiving by those who have faith and accurately know the truth. <sup>4</sup> For every creation of God is fine, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, <sup>5</sup> for it is sanctified through God’s word and prayer over it. <sup>6</sup> By giving this counsel to the brothers, you will be a fine minister of Christ Jesus, one nourished with the words of the faith and of the fine teaching that you

have followed closely. <sup>7</sup> But reject irreverent false stories, like those told by old women. On the other hand, train yourself with godly devotion as your aim. <sup>8</sup> For physical training is beneficial for a little, but godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and the life that is to come. <sup>9</sup> That statement is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance. <sup>10</sup> This is why we are working hard and exerting ourselves, because we have rested our hope on a living God, who is a Savior of all sorts of men, especially of faithful ones. <sup>11</sup> Keep on giving these commands and teaching them. <sup>12</sup> Never let anyone look down on your youth. Instead, become an example to the faithful ones in speaking, in conduct, in love, in faith, in chasteness. <sup>13</sup> Until I come, continue applying yourself to public reading, to exhortation, to teaching. <sup>14</sup> Do not neglect the gift in you that was given you through a prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you. <sup>15</sup> Ponder over these things; be absorbed in them, so that your advancement may be plainly seen by all people. <sup>16</sup> Pay constant attention to yourself and to your teaching. Persevere in these things, for by doing this you will save both yourself and those who listen to you.