

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

March 1997

For United States of America

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"Build Up Your Household"

¹ Without question, in every culture around the world, family life is disintegrating. Satan's world wallows in deceit and immorality. (1 John 5:19) This underscores the urgency for us to 'build up our household' and to teach others how they can do the same for theirs.—Prov. 24:3, 27.

² **Bible Principles Are a Safe-guard:** The secret of true family happiness is found in the application of Bible principles. These powerful truths benefit every member of the household in all aspects of life. The family that applies them will be happy and will enjoy godly peace.—Compare Isaiah 32:17, 18.

³ The principles that can help us build up our household are outlined in compact form in the new book, *The Secret of Family Happiness*. Each chapter concludes with a helpful teaching box that emphasizes principles that family members need to re-

member. Most of these boxes begin with the question, "How can these Bible principles help . . . ?" This draws attention to God's thoughts so that we get his thinking on the subject under discussion.—Isa. 48:17.

⁴ Become familiar with the book. Learn to locate the principles that can be of assistance when various problems arise. The book discusses such matters as these: what one should look for when considering a prospective marriage mate (chapter 2), what vital keys unlock the door to lasting marital happiness (chapter 3), how parents can raise their teenagers to be responsible, God-fearing adults (chapter 6), how to protect the family from destructive influences (chapter 8), principles to help single-parent families succeed (chapter 9), spiritual help for families troubled by alcoholism and violence (chapter 12), what to do

when marriage ties are at the breaking point (chapter 13), what can be done to honor elderly parents (chapter 15), and how to secure a lasting future for one's family (chapter 16).

⁵ **Make Full Use of the New Book:** If you have not already done so, why not study the *Family Happiness* book together as a family? Also, whenever your family is confronted with new problems or challenges, review the chapters in the book that deal with these, and prayerfully consider how to apply the counsel. Additionally, during March, be generous in scheduling time for the field ministry so that you can endeavor to place *The Secret of Family Happiness* in the hands of as many people as possible.

⁶ Families that practice godly devotion will be spiritually strengthened and united and will be well prepared to cope with the attacks of Satan. (1 Tim. 4:7, 8; 1 Pet. 5:8, 9) How thankful we are that we have divine instruction from the Originator of the family!

"Show Yourselfs Thankful"

¹ Most of us were trained in childhood to say "please" and "thank you" when someone showed us courtesy or kindness. Paul admonishes us always to 'show ourselves thankful,' and we should especially be grateful to Jehovah. (Col. 3:15, 16) But how can we express thankfulness to our Grand Creator? And what special reasons do we have to be thankful to him?

² The apostle Paul wrote: "Thanks to God, for he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" (1 Cor. 15:57) At Memorial time each year, we are reminded of the boundless love both God and Christ showed in providing the ransom that gives us the hope of eternal life. (John 3:16) Since almost all of us have lost loved ones in death, how thankful we are for Jesus' promise of the resurrection! Our hearts overflow with gratitude when we contemplate the prospect of surviving the end of this system without ever dying at all. (John 11:25, 26) It is difficult to find words to express thanks for all the

marvelous blessings we will yet experience at Jehovah's hand in the coming earthly Paradise. (Rev. 21:4) What better reasons could anyone have to 'show himself thankful' to God?

³ **How to Express Thanks to God:** It is always appropriate to express our thanks in prayer to Jehovah for his goodness. (Ps. 136:1-3) We are moved, also, to demonstrate our thanks to him in other positive ways. For example, we will certainly be in attendance on Sunday, March 23, for the Memorial of Christ's death. To help meet the material needs of the local congregation and of the worldwide work, we gladly 'honor Jehovah with our valuable things.' (Prov. 3:9) We fully support the elders and co-operate with them, thus showing our gratitude to Jehovah for the help he provides through them. (1 Thess. 5:12, 13) Every day, we strive to maintain upright conduct that glorifies God's name. (1 Pet. 2:12) Jehovah is pleased with all these evidences of our gratitude.—1 Thess. 5:18.

⁴ **Our Finest Expression of Thanks:** Having a whole-souled share in the Kingdom-preaching work, honoring Jehovah's name, expressing gratitude in prayer, and loyally defending the truth are among the finest expressions of heartfelt thanks that we can make to our Creator for all that he has done in our behalf. Jehovah delights to see us render him acts of sacred service in support of his will "that all sorts of men should be saved." (1 Tim. 2:3, 4) That is why so many publishers who can arrange for it are answering the call that appeared in February's *Our Kingdom Ministry* to enroll as auxiliary pioneers during one or more of the months of March, April, and May. Putting forth an extra effort in the ministry is a fine way to 'show ourselves thankful' to God. Will you be able to join the ranks of the pioneers in April? in May?

⁵ We have been given a sure hope of living forever. When we see it come to pass, we will have further bountiful reasons every day to continue giving joyful thanks to Jehovah.—Ps. 79:13.

SERVICE MEETINGS FOR MARCH

Week Starting March 3

Song 53

10 min: Local announcements. Selected Announcements from *Our Kingdom Ministry*. Encourage all to begin inviting interested ones to the Memorial on March 23. Display a copy of the Memorial invitation, and urge all to obtain a supply and to begin distributing them this week.

15 min: "Build Up Your Household." Questions and answers. Include experiences from 1995 *Yearbook*, page 228.

20 min: "Helping Families to Secure a Lasting Future." (Paragraphs 1-5) Make brief comments on paragraph 1, and then discuss how interest can be cultivated in the *Family Happiness* book by using the chapter titles, colorful illustrations, and review boxes. Have capable publishers demonstrate the presentations in paragraphs 2-5. Encourage all to make a special effort to place the book with families who have previously shown interest. Remember to mention the donation arrangement.

Song 71 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting March 10

Song 56

10 min: Local announcements. Accounts report. Remind all to be sure to follow the Memorial Bible reading scheduled for March 18-23, as outlined in *Examining the Scriptures Daily*.

20 min: "Show Yourselves Thankful." Questions and answers. All should put forth an earnest effort to invite Bible students, interested persons, favorable family members, and any of the brothers and sisters who are not actively associating with the congregation to attend the Memorial. Brief demonstration of publisher inviting interested person to the Memorial, using the Memorial invitation. Make additional comments on July 1, 1988, *Watchtower*, page 11, paragraphs 16-17. Encourage all who can to auxiliary pioneer in April and May.

15 min: "Helping Families to Secure a Lasting Future." (Paragraphs 6-8) Offer some suggestions showing how to offer the *Family Happiness* book when doing informal witnessing on the job, at school, in the park, or on public transportation, as well as when visiting relatives. Have a capable publisher demonstrate the presentations in paragraphs 6 and 7. The discussion on the return visit should help the person appreciate how a study of the Bible

can strengthen family ties. Studies are to be conducted in the brochure *What Does God Require of Us?*, with the goal of transferring to the *Knowledge* book, or the study may be started in the *Knowledge* book itself.

Song 72 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting March 17

Song 63

15 min: Local announcements. Review "Memorial Reminders," and outline local Memorial arrangements. All should make final plans to help Bible students and interested ones to attend.

15 min: Local needs. Or a talk by an elder on the article "Do You Really Need to Apologize?" from the September 15, 1996, *Watchtower*, pages 22-4. If your congregation is planning to share in working unassigned territory during July and August, this time can be used to review the letter of January 1, 1997, that outlines the arrangements being made for this activity.

15 min: Make Good Use of the 1997 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*. Father reviews highlights covered in pages 3-9 with his family. Shows why we rejoice to see theocratic progress all around the world. Father explains how, during the coming year, they can take a few minutes each day at mealtime to read progressively through the *Yearbook* as well as to consider the daily text.

Song 75 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting March 24

Song 67

9 min: Local announcements. Explain that it is not too late to submit an application for auxiliary pioneering in April. Outline the additional arrangements that are being made locally for meetings for service during the month.

14 min: "Muster Up Boldness to Make Return Visits." (Paragraphs 1-20) Questions and answers. Briefly demonstrate paragraph 16.

12 min: Helping a New Publisher Get Started. Review paragraph 19 in the June 1996 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert. Demonstrate how a capable publisher prepares a Bible student who has just been approved by the elders to be an unbaptized publisher. They review together the *Our Ministry* book, page 111, paragraph 2. The experienced publisher points out what will likely be encountered when sharing in house-to-house witnessing and that there is no need to be discouraged if most do not respond. Publisher relates an encouraging experience showing the joy

that comes when we find a sincere person who will listen. Together they prepare a brief, simple magazine presentation and then practice it. Encouraging commendation is given and definite arrangements are made to share in field service together this week.

Song 89 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting March 31

Song 70

15 min: Local announcements. Invite all interested ones to attend special public talk on April 6. Remind all to turn in their field service reports for March. Announce the names of all who are auxiliary pioneering in April. Review Question Box.

20 min: "Muster Up Boldness to Make Return Visits." (Paragraphs 21-35) Questions and answers. Review the box on page 3. Encourage all to count every return visit they have made during the month when reporting their field service.

10 min: Review Literature Offer for April. Offer individual copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* Briefly relate the suggestions on how to prepare magazine presentations that appear in paragraphs 3, 4, and 8 on page 8 of the October 1996 *Our Kingdom Ministry*. Have two publishers demonstrate one or two short presentations and mention the donation arrangement. Publishers should keep a record of those who accept magazines and add them to their magazine route.

Song 92 and concluding prayer.

CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY

Schedule for congregation studies in the book *The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived*.

March 3: Chapters 70-72

March 10: Chapters 73-75

March 17: Chapters 76-78

March 24: Chapters 79-81

March 31: Chapters 82-84

DECEMBER SERVICE REPORT

| Number of: | Av. Hrs. | Av. Mags. | Av. R.V. | Av. Bi.St. | |
|------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-----|
| Sp'l Pios. | 182 | 120.4 | 97.8 | 50.1 | 4.3 |
| Pios. | 72,654 | 74.8 | 45.8 | 23.4 | 1.9 |
| Aux. Pios. | 19,207 | 56.5 | 35.9 | 14.5 | 1.1 |
| Pubs. | 836,656 | 8.9 | 6.8 | 3.4 | 0.3 |
| TOTAL | 928,699 | Baptized: 3,249 | | | |

Muster Up Boldness to Make Return Visits

¹ Do you enjoy making return visits? Many publishers do. You may have been apprehensive at first, especially when calling back on householders who showed only limited interest when they were initially contacted. But as you 'muster up boldness by means of our God to speak the good news' in making return visits, you may be surprised to find how easy and rewarding this work can be. (1 Thess. 2:2) How so?

² For one thing, there is an important difference between a return visit and the initial call. The return visit is being made on an acquaintance, not on a stranger, and it is generally easier to converse with an acquaintance than with a stranger. As for the rich rewards that result from sharing in this work, return visits may lead to productive home Bible studies.

³ When we work from house to house, we call repeatedly on people who were not interested when we previously visited them. Why, then, do we keep calling? We realize that people's circumstances change and that an individual who seemed indifferent or even opposed on a previous visit may be interested the next time we call. With that in mind, we prepare well and pray for Jehovah's blessing so that something we say this time will strike a responsive chord. *How?*

⁴ If, in our house-to-house work, we willingly preach to people who previously showed no interest at all, should we not all the more willingly call back on anyone who shows some interest in the Kingdom message?—Acts 10:34, 35. *Read - G not partial?*

⁵ Many of us are in the truth today because a publisher patiently made return visits on us. If you are one of these, you may ask yourself: 'What initial impression did I make on that publisher? Did I immediately embrace the Kingdom message when I first heard it? Could I have seemed indifferent?' We should be happy that the publisher who called back judged us worthy of a return visit, (mustered up boldness by means of God,) made the call, and pro-

ceeded to teach us the truth. What of those individuals who show some interest at first but later seem to be avoiding us? A positive attitude is vital, as the following experience bears out.

⁶ While engaging in street witnessing early one morning, two publishers met a young lady pushing a child in a stroller. The woman accepted a magazine and invited the sisters to come to her home the following Sunday. They arrived at the appointed time, but the householder told them she had no time to talk. She did promise, however, to be available the following week. The sisters were doubtful that she would keep the appointment, but the lady was waiting for them when they returned. A study

was started, and the woman's progress was amazing. Within a short time, she began attending meetings regularly and sharing in field service. She is now baptized.

⁷ **Lay Groundwork on the Initial Call:** The groundwork for a successful return visit is often laid on the initial call. Listen carefully to the householder's comments. What do they tell you? Is he religiously inclined? Is he concerned about social issues? Is he interested in science? history? the environment? At the conclusion of the call, you may raise a thought-provoking question and

promise to discuss the Bible's answer when you return.

⁸ For example, if the householder responds to the Bible's promise of a paradise earth, a further discussion of the topic may be in order. Just before you leave, you might ask: 'How can we be sure that God will fulfill this promise?' Then add: 'Perhaps I can stop by when the rest of the family is at home, and then I can show you the Bible's answer to this question.'

⁹ If the householder has not shown interest in any particular subject, you could raise one of the questions that are featured in the presentations on the back page of *Our Kingdom Ministry* and use that as the basis for your next discussion.

How to Be Successful in Making Return Visits

- Show a sincere personal interest in people.
- Select an appealing Bible subject to discuss.
- Lay the groundwork for each successive visit.
- Keep thinking about the person after you leave.
- Return in a day or two to follow up the interest.
- Keep in mind your objective is to start a Bible study.
- Pray for help to muster up boldness for this work.

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cf = when someone called on you -

¹⁰ **Keep Accurate Written Records:** Your household-to-house record should be accurate and complete. Write down the name and address of the householder as soon as you leave the call. Do not guess at the house number or the street name. Check the information to be sure that it is accurate. Write a description of the individual. Make note of the topic you discussed, the scriptures you read, any literature you left, and the question you will answer when you return. Include the day and time of the initial call and when you said you would call back. Now that your record is complete, don't lose it! Put it in a safe place so that you can refer to it later. Keep thinking about the individual and how you will handle the call the next time.

¹¹ **Know What Your Objectives Are:** First, by being warm and friendly, do your best to put the householder at ease. Show that you are interested in him as a person, without being unduly familiar. Next, remind him of any question you raised on the previous visit. Listen carefully to his opinion, and express sincere appreciation for his comments. Then, show why the Bible's viewpoint is practical. If possible, direct him to a related thought in the book *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. Keep well in mind that your main objective on return visits is to start a Bible study.

¹² The directness of the *Knowledge* book has inspired many of us to 'muster up boldness' on Bible studies to encourage students to attend meetings and associate with Jehovah's organization. In the past, we tended to wait until individuals had studied for quite some time before inviting them to associate with us. Now, many students are attending meetings as soon as they begin to study, and they are progressing much faster as a result.

¹³ A couple witnessed informally to a coworker. When he expressed interest in the truth, they invited him to have a Bible study in the *Knowledge* book. At the same time, they told him he ought to be attending the meetings, where many of his questions would be answered. The man willingly not only accepted their invitation to study but also studied twice a week and began attending meetings regularly at the Kingdom Hall.

¹⁴ **Use the Brochure (What Does God Require of Us?)** At the "Messengers of Godly Peace" District Conventions, we received the brochure *What Does God Require of Us?* This brochure is useful in starting Bible studies with God-fearing people regardless of their level of education. It contains a well-rounded study course, covering the basic teachings of the Bible. The publication will be a very effective tool for imparting the knowledge of God. It explains the truth so clearly and simply that virtually every one of us will be able to use it to teach others God's re-

quirements. Likely, many publishers will have the privilege of conducting a Bible study in this brochure.

when we Bro?
¹⁵ Some individuals who feel that they do not have the time to study the *Knowledge* book may be willing to have brief sessions studying the *Require* brochure. They will be thrilled at what they learn! In just two or three pages, they will find answers to questions that people have pondered for centuries: Who is God? Who is the Devil? What is God's purpose for the earth? What is the Kingdom of God? How can you find the true religion? Although the brochure presents the truth in simple terms, its message is very powerful. It covers key points that the elders will review with candidates for baptism and can serve as a springboard for a more thorough study in the *Knowledge* book.

¹⁶ **To offer a study on a return visit, you could simply say:** "Did you know that by taking just a few minutes, you can have the answer to an important Bible question?" Then, pose a question that appears at the beginning of one of the lessons in the brochure. For example, if you are calling on an older person, you might say: "We know that in the past Jesus healed people. But in the future, what will Jesus do for the sick? the elderly? the dead?" The answers are found in lesson 5. A religiously inclined person may be intrigued by the question: "Does God listen to all prayers?" It is answered in lesson 7. Family members will want to know: "What does God require of parents and of children?" They will find out as they study lesson 8. Other questions are: "Can the dead harm the living?" explained in lesson 11; "Why are there so many religions that claim to be Christian?" discussed in lesson 13; and "What must you do to become a friend of God?" covered in lesson 16.

¹⁷ **Help Those Who Speak Another Language:** What about householders who speak another language? If possible, they should be taught in the language they know best. (1 Cor. 14:9) The city overseer (or in a rural area, the circuit overseer) may be able to provide information regarding foreign-language congregations and groups in the area. The secretary would then be able to forward any Foreign Language Follow-Up Slips (S-70a) he receives from congregation members to the appropriate foreign-language congregation or group. If there are no congregations or groups nearby and there are no local publishers who can speak the language of the householder, the publisher can try to study with the householder, using the *Require* brochure in the two languages.

¹⁸ An English-speaking publisher started a study with a man who speaks Vietnamese and with his wife, who speaks Thai. Publications and Bibles in English, Vietnamese, and Thai were used during the study. Although the language barrier presented a

challenge at first, the publisher writes: "The couple's spiritual growth has been immediate. They have seen the need to start attending meetings with their two children, and they are reading the Bible nightly as a family. Their six-year-old daughter conducts her own Bible study."

¹⁹ When studying with people who speak another language, speak slowly, articulate clearly, and use simple words and phrases. Bear in mind, however, that people who speak another language should be treated with dignity. They should not be treated as if they were infants.

²⁰ Make good use of the beautiful illustrations in the *Require* brochure. If "a picture is worth a thousand words," the scores of illustrations in the brochure will speak volumes to the householder. Invite him to read the scriptures in his own Bible. If the study can be conducted at a time when a family member who knows English is available to interpret, that will no doubt be beneficial. —See *Our Kingdom Ministry*, October 1990, pages 7-8; March 1984, page 8.

²¹ **Make Return Visits Without Delay:** How long should you wait before making a return visit? Some publishers call back within a day or two of the initial contact. Others return later on the same day! Is that too soon? Generally, householders do not seem to mind. Often it is the publisher making the call who needs to cultivate a more positive attitude along with a little boldness. Consider the following experiences.

²² A 13-year-old publisher was working from house to house one day when he saw two women walking together. Mindful of the encouragement to preach to people wherever we find them, he approached the women on the street. They showed interest in the Kingdom message, and each accepted a *Knowledge* book. The young brother obtained their addresses, returned two days later, and started a Bible study with each of them.

²³ One sister makes arrangements to call back the following week. But a day or two after the original call, she stops by to give the householder a magazine on the subject they discussed previously. She tells the householder: "I saw this article and thought you would like to read it. I can't stop to talk now, but I'll be back on Wednesday afternoon as planned. Is that time still all right with you?"

²⁴ When an individual shows interest in the truth, we can be sure that he will encounter opposition in one form or another. Our calling back soon after the initial contact is made will strengthen him to withstand any pressures he faces from relatives, close friends, and others.

²⁵ **Cultivate Interest of Those Found in Public Places:** Many of us enjoy preaching on the streets,

in parking lots, on public transportation, in shopping centers, in parks, and so forth. In addition to placing literature, we need to cultivate interest. To that end, an effort should be made to obtain the name, the address and, if possible, the telephone number of every interested person we meet. It is not as difficult as you might think to obtain this information. As the conversation is coming to a close, take out your notebook and ask: "Is there any way we can continue this conversation at another time?" Or say: "I would like you to read an article that I am sure will interest you. May I bring it to your home or office?" One brother simply asks: "At what number can you be reached?" He reports that in three months all but three persons were happy to give him their phone number.

²⁶ **Use the Telephone to Find and Develop Interest:** A pioneer sister uses the telephone to reach people living in high-security buildings. She also makes return visits in the same way. On the initial call, she says: "I know you don't know me. I am making a special effort to contact people in your area to share a thought from the Bible. If you have a moment, I would like to read the promise found at . . ." After reading the scripture, she says: "Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could see that time come? I have enjoyed reading this to you. If you have enjoyed it too, I would like to call again and discuss another scripture."

²⁷ On the return phone call, she reminds the householder of their previous conversation and says she would like to read from the Bible what conditions will be like when wickedness is done away with. Then she has a brief Bible discussion with the householder. Over the course of many telephone conversations, 35 people have invited her to their home and seven home Bible studies have been started! Is it sometimes difficult for you to make return visits on interested persons during the cold winter months because of impassable roads, icy conditions, or sickness? If so, why not keep in touch with them by telephone?

²⁸ **Follow Up Interest Found in Business Places:** Much more is involved in working from store to store than simply offering magazines. Many shopkeepers have a sincere interest in the truth, and that interest must be cultivated. In some cases, it may be possible to have a Bible discussion or even a study right on the premises. In other cases, you and the interested person may be able to meet during the noon break or at some other convenient time.

²⁹ A traveling overseer called on the owner of a small grocery store and offered to demonstrate a Bible study. When asked how long the demonstration would take, the traveling overseer said it

would take just 15 minutes. With that, the storekeeper hung a sign on the door: "Back in 20 Minutes," pulled up a couple of chairs, and the two of them discussed the first five paragraphs of the *Knowledge* book. This sincere man was so impressed by what he learned that he attended the Public Meeting and *Watchtower* Study that Sunday and agreed to continue the study the following week.

³⁰ **To offer a study in a business place, you might say this:** "Our Bible study program takes just 15 minutes to demonstrate. If it is convenient, I will be glad to show you how it is done." Then, stick to the time limit. If it is not possible to have a long discussion in a place of business, it may be more appropriate to call on the shopkeeper at his home.

³¹ **Call Back Even When No Literature Has Been Placed:** Every spark of interest deserves a return visit, whether literature has been placed or not. Of course, if it becomes clear that the householder really is not interested in the Kingdom message, it is best to direct your efforts elsewhere.

³² In the door-to-door work, a sister met a lady who was very friendly but who firmly refused the offer of the magazines. The publisher writes: "For days I thought about her and decided I wanted to talk to her again." Finally, the sister prayed, took courage, and knocked at the lady's door. To her delight the householder invited her inside. A Bible study was started, and it was conducted again the

following day. In time, the householder came into the truth.

³³ **Plan Ahead to Get the Most Accomplished:** It is recommended that some time be spent each week in making return visits. Much can be accomplished with good planning. Line up calls in the same area where you will be working from house to house. When working from an automobile, the group should be kept small so that each one will have a full opportunity to make return visits. The driver should know in advance where the return visits will be made so that unnecessary driving can be avoided.

³⁴ Those who are successful in making return visits and in starting home Bible studies say that it is essential to show a sincere personal interest in people and to keep thinking about them even after the call is made. It is also necessary to have an appealing Bible subject to discuss and to lay the groundwork for the return visit before leaving the initial call. Further, it is important to return promptly to follow up the interest. The objective of starting a Bible study must always be kept well in mind.

³⁵ A vital quality for success in the return visit work is boldness. How is it acquired? The apostle Paul answers by saying that we 'muster up boldness' to declare the good news to others "by means of our God." If you need to grow in this area, pray to Jehovah for help. Then, in harmony with your prayers, follow up all interest. Jehovah will surely bless your efforts!

North America to Host International Conventions in 1998

As was announced on Saturday, October 5, 1996, at the annual meeting of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, the Governing Body is planning to hold international conventions during 1998. Along with the usual district conventions, a number of international conventions will be held in North America as well as in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean area, and the South Pacific.

Several of these special conventions will be held in North America, and delegates from around the world will be invited. Also, we can anticipate having missionaries at these international conventions. Missionaries and others in foreign special service who qualify will be invited to attend one of these conventions in or near their home country.

Additional information regarding dates, locations, delegate qualifica-

tions, arrangements for foreign delegates, and other details will be forthcoming. There will be opportunity for a limited number of delegates from the United States to attend international conventions in other countries. Those publishers having in mind filling out applications for delegate selection may wish to start saving some of their funds in anticipation of these special events.

NEW PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

■ New Publications Available:

Enjoy Life on Earth Forever! —Guaymi
Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life —Chichewa
My Book of Bible Stories (Small size) —Laotian

The Secret of Family Happiness

—Estonian, Indonesian, Latvian
What Does God Require of Us?
—Hmong, Indonesian, Quechua, Sindhi
When Someone You Love Dies —Gujarati

■ New Videocassettes Available:

Jehovah's Witnesses—The Organization Behind the Name —Romanian
Purple Triangles —Korean
The Bible—Mankind's Oldest Modern Book —Romanian
The New World Society in Action
—German, Italian, Portuguese
To the Ends of the Earth —Thai

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Literature offer for **March:** *The Secret of Family Happiness*. **April and May:** Individual copies of *The Watchtower and Awake!* For midweek service and in territory that is covered frequently, the brochure *What Does God Require Of Us?* may be used. **June:** *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. Concentrate on starting home Bible studies.
- The presiding overseer or someone designated by him should audit the con-

gregation's accounts on March 1 or as soon as possible thereafter. Make announcement to the congregation when this has been done.

- The special public talk for the Memorial season this year will be presented in most congregations on Sunday, April 6. The talk is entitled "Keep Clean From Worldly Defilements." All of us should attend, and we should assist interested ones who came to the Memorial to be present for the talk.
- In order to get the most out of congregation studies in the *Greatest Man* book,

please consider the excellent guidelines appearing on page 1 of the September 1992 *Our Kingdom Ministry*. The article explains how to prepare each lesson and the format the Congregation Book Study will follow.

- Ever since the Society Kingdom Hall Fund was established in 1983, the brothers have contributed generously, thus enabling loans to be made for Kingdom Hall construction. Already some 2,700 congregations in this country have benefited from this arrangement. Many congregations could not otherwise build new Kingdom Halls or renovate those in need of repair. There is now an urgent need to use some of these contributed funds to provide loans to congregations in economically depressed countries. Your continued support of this arrangement is greatly appreciated by the Society and by those congregations that benefit from your contributions.

QUESTION BOX

- When the congregation is called upon to assist in arranging for a funeral, the following questions may arise:

Who should give the funeral discourse? This is a decision to be made by family members. They may select any baptized brother in good standing. If the body of elders are asked to provide a speaker, they will usually select a capable elder to give a talk based on the Society's outline. Although not eulogizing the deceased, it may be appropriate to call attention to exemplary qualities he or she displayed.

May the Kingdom Hall be used? It can if permission has been granted by the body of elders and if it does not interfere with a regularly scheduled meeting. The hall may be used if the deceased had a clean reputation and was a member of the congregation or the minor child of a member. If the individual had caused public notoriety by unchristian conduct, or if other factors exist that might reflect unfavorably on the congregation, the elders may decide not to allow the use of the hall.—See *Our Ministry* book, pages 62-3.

Ordinarily, Kingdom Halls are not used for funerals of unbelievers. An exception might be made if surviving family members are actively associated as baptized publishers, the deceased was known by a fair number in the congregation to have had a favorable attitude toward the truth and a good reputation for upright conduct in the community, and no worldly customs are incorporated into the program.

When granting use of the Kingdom Hall, the elders will consider whether it is customarily expected

to see the casket present at the funeral. If it is, they might permit it to be brought into the hall.

What about funerals for worldly people? If the deceased had a good reputation in the community, a brother might give a comforting Bible talk at the funeral home or graveside. The congregation will decline to handle a funeral for one who was known for immoral, unlawful conduct or whose life-style grossly conflicted with Bible principles. A brother certainly would not share with a clergyman in conducting an interfaith service nor in any funeral conducted in a church of Babylon the Great.

What if the deceased was disfellowshipped? The congregation would generally not be involved. The Kingdom Hall would not be used. If the person had been giving evidence of repentance and manifesting a desire to be reinstated, a brother's conscience might allow him to give a Bible talk at the funeral home or graveside, to give a witness to unbelievers and to comfort the relatives. Before making this decision, however, it would be wise for the brother to consult with the body of elders and give consideration to what they may recommend. In situations where it would not be wise for that brother to be involved, it may be appropriate for a brother who is a member of the deceased person's family to give a talk to console the relatives.

Further direction can be found in the *Watchtower* issues of October 15, 1990, pages 30-1; September 15, 1981, page 31; March 15, 1980, pages 5-7; June 1, 1978, pages 5-8; June 1, 1977, pages 347-8; March 15, 1970, pages 191-2; and *Awake!* of September 8, 1990, pages 22-3 and March 22, 1977, pages 12-15.

Memorial Reminders

The Memorial observance falls on Sunday, March 23. The elders should give attention to the following matters:

- In setting the time for the meeting, make sure that the emblems will not be passed until after sundown.

- Everyone, including the speaker, should be informed of the exact time and location for the observance.

- The appropriate type of bread and wine should be obtained and made ready.—See the February 15, 1985, *Watchtower*, page 19.

- Plates, glasses, and a suitable table and tablecloth should be brought to the hall and put in place in advance.

- The Kingdom Hall or other place of meeting should be thoroughly cleaned ahead of time.

- Attendants and servers should be selected and instructed in advance about the proper procedure and their duties.

- Arrangements should be made to serve any of the anointed who are infirm and unable to be present.

- When more than one celebration is scheduled in the same Kingdom Hall, there should be good coordination among congregations so as to avoid unnecessary congestion in the lobby, entryway, public sidewalks, and parking lot.

Helping Families to Secure a Lasting Future

¹ "Greed is healthy," a financier told a college graduating class, adding: "You can be greedy and still feel good about yourself." That is typical of how the world promotes self-interest as the way to ensure one's future. In sharp contrast, Jesus taught that a Christian must "disown himself . . . for what benefit will it be to a man if he gains the whole world but forfeits his soul?" (Matt. 16:24-26) To secure a lasting future, a person must center his whole life on doing the will of God

—the most important goal for families today. (Ps. 143:10; 1 Tim. 4:8) That message is conveyed in the concluding chapter of the book *The Secret of Family Happiness*. This new publication helps people see what really matters in life and how they can act beneficially toward their families. As we continue to preach the good news everywhere, what can we say that will encourage those we meet to read the *Family Happiness* book? Here are some suggestions:

² ***Both at the door and on the street, you might try using the tract "Enjoy Family Life" to start conversations. You could ask:***

■ "With all the anxieties that modern living brings upon us, do you feel that it is possible to have a really happy family life? [Allow for response.] This tract assures us that it is possible. Would you like to read it?" If it is accepted, you could continue by saying: "Since you are interested in this subject, you may also enjoy this book that provides detailed advice on how to find happiness in the family circle." Show the table of contents in the *Family Happiness* book. Point out a few eye-catching chapter titles. Turn to page 10, and read from the last sentence of paragraph 17 to the end of paragraph 18. Offer the book, and mention the donation arrangement. Explain that you have more to share, and ask when you could get in touch again.

³ ***You could follow up your initial conversation about happy family life by saying:***

■ "I would like to point out something in the book you obtained that I think you will appreciate. The last chapter focuses on the real secret of family happiness. [Read paragraph 2 on page 183.] Note that working together to do God's will is the key. We recommend that families study the Bible together to learn what God's will is and how to apply it in the household. We offer a free Bible study course that takes only a few months to complete. If you will allow me, I'll show you how it's conducted." Return with the brochure *What Does God Require of Us?* or the *Knowledge* book, whichever would be more appropriate.

⁴ ***When talking to classmates at school or to youths in the territory, you might get a response to this question:***

■ "How important is it for parents and their children to keep open the lines of communication with one another? [Allow for response.] Notice what this handbook on family life says about the subject of 'Honest and Open Communication.' [Read all of paragraph 4 and the first sentence of paragraph 5 on page 65 in the *Family Happiness* book.] The paragraphs that follow provide practical suggestions on how to improve communication within a family. This book is entitled *The Secret of Family Happiness*. If you would like to read it and promise to do so, you may have this copy to keep." Explain that you will follow up later to get his comments on what he reads.

⁵ ***You could build on your initial conversation with a youth about parent-child communication by saying this:***

■ "I appreciated the interest you showed in the importance of having good communication within your family. What would you say is the most important subject that parents and children should discuss?" Allow for response. Then turn to page 68 in the *Family Happiness* book, and read the answer that is found in the first half of paragraph 11. "Having a weekly Bible study is an excellent way to acquire knowledge of God." Present the brochure *What Does God Require of Us?* Explain that its 16 lessons provide a basic outline of the Bible's message. Read the introduction on page 2, and then discuss together the first lesson.

⁶ ***If you meet a parent in the house-to-house work, or perhaps at a park or a playground, you might arouse interest by saying:***

■ "I'm sure you'll agree that rearing children today is a real challenge. What do you think can protect your family from unwholesome influences? [Allow for response.] Here is some sound advice that I have appreciated." Relate the illustration in paragraph 1, and read paragraph 2 on page 90 in the *Family Happiness* book. Explain how it gives balanced direction that really works to protect families from destructive influences. Offer to leave a copy, and make yourself available to answer any questions that arise.

⁷ ***On your second visit with a parent who accepted the "Family Happiness" book, you could continue the conversation in this way:***

■ "When we first met, I could see that you genuinely care about your children and that you want to do all you can to protect them from wrong influences. You may not have read it yet, but there is a very important observation made in the book I left with you that you should see. [Read paragraph 19 on page 59.] Developing a relationship with God requires our getting to know him through the pages of his written Word, the Bible. Would you like to have me demonstrate how we study the Bible as a family?"

⁸ Worldly advisers cannot show families the way to happiness but will surely leave them disappointed. Let us give the *Family Happiness* book wide distribution so that people everywhere can be helped by God's Word to secure a lasting future.—1 Tim. 6:19.