

# OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

February 2003

For United States of America

km-E Us 2/03 Vol. 46, No. 2

## Be Sound in Mind as the End Draws Close

<sup>1</sup> God's Word repeatedly describes Jehovah's day as coming "as a thief"—that is, suddenly, instantly, stealthily. (1 Thess. 5:2; Matt. 24:43; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3; 16:15) "On this account," Jesus said, "prove yourselves ready, because at an hour that you do not think to be it, the Son of man is coming." (Matt. 24:44) How can we maintain our spiritual readiness as the end draws close? A key is found in the inspired admonition: "Be sound in mind." —1 Pet. 4:7.

<sup>2</sup> Soundness of mind involves looking at things from Jehovah's standpoint. (Eph. 5:17) It helps us to see ourselves as "aliens and temporary residents" amid the present system

of things. (1 Pet. 2:11) It enables us to discern what is truly important, to set priorities, and to make good decisions.—Phil. 1:10.

<sup>3</sup> **Set Spiritual Goals:** Setting and attaining spiritual goals helps us to be sound in mind. Do you have spiritual goals that you are currently pursuing? Are you striving to read the Bible every day, attend all Christian meetings, read each issue of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, or perhaps increase your share in the ministry? If you set goals that are right for you, persist in pursuing them, and ask Jehovah to bless your efforts, you may be amazed at the results.

<sup>4</sup> An elder asked a young couple about their spiritual goals. The question made them realize that if they simplified their life and eliminated burdensome debt, they could pioneer. They decided to make that their goal. They diligently paid off the debt and found ways to prune away unnecessary activities that were sapping their time and energy. Exactly one year later, they had reached their goal. With what result? The husband says: "Without goals we would not be where we are now. We are happier. Our life is calmer and better. It has real meaning and purpose."

<sup>5</sup> As we await Jehovah's day, may we maintain our spiritual readiness by living with soundness of mind, keeping focused on doing God's will.—Titus 2:11-13.

## Can You Open Your Home?

<sup>1</sup> In the first century, many Christians made their homes available to be used for congregation meetings. (1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philem. 1, 2) In some congregations today, there are not enough locations for Congregation Book Study groups and meetings for field service. This may result in some book study groups having 30 or more in attendance, far more than the preferred number of about 15.

<sup>2</sup> **A Fine Privilege:** Have you considered opening your home for a Congregation Book Study? A room of sufficient size that is clean, well lit, and well ventilated is ideal for this purpose. Since the book study is a congregation meeting and part of

Jehovah's arrangement to instruct his people, having a book study in your home is a fine privilege. Many report that they have benefited spiritually by opening their home in this way.

<sup>3</sup> If you think that your home is suitable, by all means make this known to the elders. They may be looking for additional locations. If it is not possible to have a book study in your home, could meetings for field service be held there? Even if there is not a need at the present time, the elders will appreciate knowing that your home is available. You may enjoy the privilege in the future.

<sup>4</sup> **Showing Good Manners:** When gathering in a private

home, all in attendance need to be respectful of the host's property. Parents should make sure that their children remain in the area designated for the study, not venturing into private areas of the home. Consideration should also be shown for the neighbors, being careful to avoid unduly inconveniencing them.—2 Cor. 6:3, 4; 1 Pet. 2:12.

<sup>5</sup> Hebrews 13:16 encourages us not to forget "the doing of good and the sharing of things with others, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Opening your home for a congregation meeting is a fine way to share good things with others and to "honor Jehovah with your valuable things." —Prov. 3:9.

## SERVICE MEETING SCHEDULE

### Week Starting February 10

Song 4

**10 min:** Local announcements. Selected Announcements from *Our Kingdom Ministry*. Encourage everyone to view the video *Faithful Under Trials—Jehovah's Witnesses in the Soviet Union* in preparation for the discussion at the Service Meeting the week of February 24. Using the suggestions on page 8, have two separate demonstrations of how to present the February 15 *Watchtower* and the February 22 *Awake!* In each case, both magazines should be offered as a set, even though only one is featured.

**35 min:** "Preach and Give a Thorough Witness."\* To be handled by the service overseer. Encourage all who can to auxiliary pioneer in March and April. Invite comments from those who pioneered last Memorial season. How did they arrange to pioneer? What effort and adjustments did this require? What joys and blessings did they experience? Review the sample schedules in the box on page 4. Announce that applications for auxiliary pioneering will be available after the meeting.

Song 30 and concluding prayer.

### Week Starting February 17

Song 48

**10 min:** Local announcements. Accounts report. Review literature offer for March. Mention one or two suggestions for presenting the *Knowledge* book,

using points from the January 2002 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert. Emphasize the goal of starting home Bible studies.

**15 min:** "Can You Open Your Home?" Talk by a book study overseer. Include comments on the April 2001 and February 1990 *Our Kingdom Ministry* Question Boxes. Mention the number of book study groups in the congregation and the average attendance. Have one or two publishers relate how they and their families have benefited by having a book study in the home. Any who would like to make their home available should make this known to the presiding overseer.

**20 min:** "What Is Your Priority?"\* Arrange in advance for one or two publishers to comment on how they have been able to adjust their circumstances to do more in the ministry.

Song 57 and concluding prayer.

### Week Starting February 24

Song 74

**10 min:** Local announcements. Remind publishers to turn in field service reports for February. Using the suggestions on page 8, have two separate demonstrations of how to present the March 1 *Watchtower* and the March 8 *Awake!* In each case, both magazines should be offered as a set, even though only one is featured.

**10 min:** "Help at the Right Time." Talk by an elder. Highlight that the special effort be-

ing made to assist those who are inactive reflects Jehovah's loving concern for his people.

**25 min:** "A Video That Will Enlighten and Inspire You!" Get right into an audience discussion of the *Faithful Under Trials* video, using the questions that are provided. Carefully apportion the time so as to allow for several comments on the last question. Conclude by reading the box on page 192 of the 2002 Yearbook.

Song 56 and concluding prayer.

### Week Starting March 3

Song 14

**10 min:** Local announcements. Briefly discuss "New Arrangement for Kingdom Hall Libraries." Mention who will be serving as librarian for the Kingdom Hall library.

**15 min:** Local needs.

**20 min:** "Be Sound in Mind as the End Draws Close."\* When discussing paragraphs 3-4, invite publishers to relate what spiritual goals they are currently pursuing. Include comments on page 176 of the *Worship God* book.

Song 127 and concluding prayer.

\* Limit introductory comments to less than a minute, and follow with a question-and-answer discussion.

### NOVEMBER SERVICE REPORT

Number of:	Av. Hrs.	Av. Mags.	Av. R.V.	Av. Bi.St.
Sp'l Pios.	<b>193</b>	<b>105.5</b>	<b>90.7</b>	<b>46.7</b>
Pios.	<b>89,083</b>	<b>64.7</b>	<b>43.0</b>	<b>20.9</b>
Aux. Pios.	<b>20,443</b>	<b>49.2</b>	<b>35.5</b>	<b>13.3</b>
Publs.	<b>863,348</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>3.5</b>
TOTAL	<b>973,067</b>			Baptized: <b>2,395</b>

## Preach and Give a Thorough Witness

<sup>1</sup> As “a leader and commander,” Jesus prepared his disciples for the vast preaching work that lay ahead. (Isa. 55:4; Luke 10:1-12; Acts 1:8) The apostle Peter described the commission Jesus gave them in these words: “He ordered us to preach to the people and to give a thorough witness that this is the One decreed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.” (Acts 10:42) What is involved in giving a thorough witness?

<sup>2</sup> We can learn much from considering the example of the apostle Paul. When meeting with the older men from the congregation in Ephesus, he reminded them: “I did not hold back from telling you any of the things that were profitable nor from teaching you publicly and from house to house. But I *thoroughly bore witness* both to Jews and to Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus.” Despite facing trials himself, Paul sought to reach as many as possible with the good news. He was not content to share just basic truths with his listeners, but he sought to impart “all the counsel of God.” To accomplish this, he was willing to exert himself and make sacrifices. He further stated: “I do not make my soul of any account as dear to me, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received of the Lord Jesus, to bear *thorough witness* to the good news of the undeserved kindness of God.”—Acts 20:20, 21, 24, 27.

<sup>3</sup> How can we imitate Paul’s example today? (1 Cor. 11:1) By searching for deserving households even when we ourselves are facing trials, by striving to reach people of all ethnic groups and languages with the good news, and by diligently cultivating the interest we find. (Matt. 10:12, 13) This requires time, effort, and love for people.

### **4 Can You Serve as an Auxiliary Pioneer?**

March and April could be a fine opportunity for you to give a thorough witness by auxiliary pioneering. How encouraging it was last year to see so many make a special effort to auxiliary pioneer!

<sup>5</sup> An 80-year-old sister with many health problems was stirred by the encouragement provided by Jehovah’s organization. She wrote: “It set on fire the spark I’ve had in my heart for

a long time, and it made me feel that I just had to auxiliary pioneer at least one more time.” She decided to aim for March. “The first thing I did,” she said, “was to sit down and count the cost. I talked it over with my daughter because I would need her help. She surprised me by getting an application for herself.” During the month, the elderly sister spent 52 hours in the ministry. “Many times I prayed to Jehovah to renew my strength when I felt it was giving out. At the end of the month, I was very happy and satisfied, and I have thanked Jehovah many times for helping me. I would like to try it again.” Her happy experience may encourage others who really want to auxiliary pioneer in spite of serious health concerns.

<sup>6</sup> A brother who was unexpectedly laid off from his secular employment took advantage of the situation to auxiliary pioneer. As the month progressed, he became infused with zeal for the preaching work, and by the end of the month, he had started a new Bible study. Reflecting on the experience, he said: “What a month!” How elated he was for having Jehovah’s help! Yes, Jehovah emptied out a rich blessing upon him for the extra effort the brother put forth in the ministry, and he will do the same for you.—Mal. 3:10.

<sup>7</sup> For many, auxiliary pioneering is not easy. Nevertheless, despite secular and family responsibilities as well as personal challenges, a good number of brothers and sisters have been able to do so. Giving a thorough witness often involves a sacrifice of our precious time and energy, but the blessings are without equal.—Prov. 10:22.

<sup>8</sup> March and April are ideal times to auxiliary pioneer. There are five weekends during March. Taking advantage of these and making good use of the evening hours may allow some who work full-time to auxiliary pioneer. In addition, you may be able to take advantage of the holidays during the month of April. Some may have time off from school and secular work, which can help them to meet the 50-hour requirement. In order to schedule 50 hours in the ministry during March or April, can you use one of the sample auxiliary pioneer schedules included with this article? Discuss your schedule with others; some will no doubt be encouraged to join you in the

ministry. If you are not able to auxiliary pioneer, set a specific goal for these months, and support those who are able to pioneer. Make your plans now for increased service during March and April.

**<sup>9</sup> Show Appreciation for the Memorial:** Each year during the Memorial season, gratitude for the ransom moves thousands to 'buy out the time' to be auxiliary pioneers. (Eph. 5: 15, 16) In the United States last year, there were 126,378 auxiliary pioneers in March and 51,217 in April. That makes an average of 88,797 for each of these two months. Compare that with the average number of 21,505 who auxiliary pioneered during each of the previous months of the service year. This Memorial season is another fine opportunity to show our sincere appreciation for Christ's ransom sacrifice by increasing our activity in the field ministry.

**<sup>10</sup>** As April 16 approaches, contemplate what the Memorial means to you. Think about the events leading up to Christ's death and the thoughts that weighed heavily on his mind and heart. Reflect, too, on the joy that was set before Jesus and how it helped him to endure such mistreatment. Ponder over his present position as Head of the congregation, overseeing the preaching and disciple-making work. (1 Cor. 11:3; Heb. 12:2; Rev. 14:14-16) Then demonstrate your appreciation for all that Christ has done by having as full a share in the preaching work as your circumstances allow.

**<sup>11</sup> Encourage Others to Be Thorough:** By participating in the auxiliary pioneer service, elders and ministerial servants are in a good position to encourage others. When working with publishers in the field ministry and when making shepherding calls, they have fine opportunities personally to help others to have a full share in this special activity. May all of us

make this a matter of prayer, thus adding force to our united efforts in giving a thorough witness.

**<sup>12</sup>** While all elders and ministerial servants will cooperate with congregation arrangements for increased activity during the months of March and April, the service overseer in particular should be concerned with coordinating the evangelizing work. He should organize field service locations, days, and times that are convenient for the majority of the publishers and have these announced regularly. Arrangements may be made to meet at a number of different times during the day, giving all in the congregation an opportunity to share in various forms of witnessing. These might include working business territory, witnessing on the street, calling from house to house, making return visits, and witnessing by telephone. In addition, he should arrange for an ample supply of literature, magazines, and territory to be available during those months.

**<sup>13</sup>** The offer for March will be the *Knowledge* book, with the goal of starting Bible studies. Fine suggestions for offering the *Knowledge* book appeared in the January 2002 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert.

April's offer will be the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. Try to utilize the suggested presentations appearing in "What to Say About the Magazines." All should take time to prepare well so as to give a thorough witness.

**<sup>14</sup>** How blessed we are to work under the direction of the Head of the congregation, Christ Jesus, and have the privilege of sharing the good news with others! As the months of March and April approach, let us once again strive to make them our best months ever as we obey Christ's order to preach and give a thorough witness.

### Various Ways to Auxiliary Pioneer in March and April 2003

Day	Hours					
Monday	1	2	—	—	2	—
Tuesday	1	—	3	—	—	—
Wednesday	1	2	—	5	—	—
Thursday	1	—	3	—	—	—
Friday	1	2	—	—	—	—
Saturday	5	4	3	5	6	7
Sunday	2	2	3	2	2	3
<b>March</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>April</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>53</b>	—	—

Will one of these schedules work for you?

## Help at the Right Time

<sup>1</sup> When the apostle Peter saw a need to strengthen fellow believers, concern moved him to give them loving reminders and encouragement. (2 Pet. 1:12, 13; 3:1) He urged ‘those who had obtained a faith’ to keep growing in spiritual qualities so as not to become “either inactive or unfruitful regarding the accurate knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Pet. 1: 1, 5-8) Peter’s purpose was to help them make the calling and choosing they had received from Jehovah, sure, so that they might “be found finally by him spotless and unblemished and in peace.” (2 Pet. 1:10, 11; 3:14) For many, his encouragement proved to be help at the right time.

<sup>2</sup> Today, Christian overseers have similar concern for God’s people. In these “critical times hard to deal with,” many ser-

vants of Jehovah must contend with trying circumstances. (2 Tim. 3:1) Because of ongoing financial, family, or personal problems, some may feel as did David: “Calamities encircled me until there was no numbering of them. More errors of mine overtook me than I was able to see; they became more numerous than the hairs of my head, and my own heart left me.” (Ps. 40:12) These pressures can become so great that such ones may neglect vital spiritual matters and stop having an active share in the Christian ministry. Yet, despite their difficulties, ‘they have not forgotten Jehovah’s own commandments.’ (Ps. 119:176) Now is the right time for elders to provide such ones with needed help.—Isa. 32:1, 2.

<sup>3</sup> To meet this need, the elders have been encouraged to make a special effort to assist those

who are not currently having a share in the preaching work. A concerted effort to accomplish this is now in progress and will extend through the month of March. Book study overseers are being asked to visit inactive ones to offer spiritual assistance with a view to helping them renew their activity with the congregation. Where there is a need, a personal Bible study may be arranged. Others may be asked to assist. If you are invited to do so, your efforts could be very beneficial, especially if you give encouragement in a kind, understanding way.

<sup>4</sup> There is reason for all to rejoice when someone resumes his activity with the congregation. (Luke 15:6) Our efforts to encourage inactive ones may truly result in “a word spoken at the right time for it.” —Prov. 25:11.

## New Arrangement for Kingdom Hall Libraries

For many years now, congregations throughout the world have benefited from the use of their Kingdom Hall library, formerly called Theocratic Ministry School library. In the past, it was deemed necessary that each congregation acquire its own library. However, with many Kingdom Halls now being used by more than one congregation, some of which are foreign-language congregations, it seems best to have only one well-equipped, up-to-date Kingdom Hall library per language group in each Kingdom Hall. In Kingdom Halls that have more than one auditorium, each auditorium should have a library for

each language group meeting there.

It is expected that this arrangement will help conserve space and expense. Moreover, merging the libraries of two or more congregations will most likely bring about better libraries. As these are combined, duplicate copies of books may be stored and later used when new Kingdom Halls are built. If the Kingdom Hall is equipped with a computer with *Watchtower Library* on CD-ROM, some may find this tool very beneficial.

For each Kingdom Hall library, one brother, preferably one of the Theocratic Ministry School overseers, will serve as the librarian. He should pro-

gressively add appropriate publications to the collection, neatly marking the inside cover of each one to show that it belongs to the Kingdom Hall library. At least once a year, he should check the library for completeness and ensure that the publications are in good condition. Publications from these libraries should not be taken out of the Kingdom Hall.

The Kingdom Hall library continues to be greatly appreciated by all those associated with the congregation. May we show that we personally value this provision by taking care of it and by using it to search out “the very knowledge of God.” —Prov. 2:5.

## THEOCRATIC MINISTRY SCHOOL REVIEW

The following questions will be considered orally at the Theocratic Ministry School during the week beginning February 24, 2003. The school overseer will conduct a 30-minute review based on material covered in assignments for the weeks of January 6 through February 24, 2003. [Note: Where there are no references after the question, you will need to do your own research to find the answers.—See *Ministry School*, pp. 36-7.]

### SPEECH QUALITIES

1. *True or False:* The key to accurate reading is making sure that what is read sounds right, even if it differs slightly from what is written. Explain. [be p. 83]
2. *Fill in the Blanks:* In order to read accurately, one must \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and do so out loud. [be p. 85]
3. Why is it important to speak clearly? (1 Cor. 14:8, 9) [be p. 86]
4. What are some things that can make speech indistinct, and what can we do in order to speak more clearly? [be pp. 87-8]
5. What are some words used in the Theocratic Ministry School during the preceding two months that you feel you need to practice pronouncing correctly? [be p. 92]

### ASSIGNMENT NO. 1

6. *True or False:* Our eyes can help us to listen. Explain. [be p. 14]
7. *Fill in the Blanks:* The \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_ all serve as divinely provided time indicators. [si p. 279 par. 7]
8. *Fill in the Blanks:* In Biblical usage, the term "day" can refer to a period of \_\_\_\_\_ hours, \_\_\_\_\_ hours, \_\_\_\_\_ years, or \_\_\_\_\_, the context indicating the sense in which it applies. [si p. 279 par. 8]
9. How can the examples of Hannah, Mark, and Elijah help us to cope with discouragement? How can we use these examples to help others? [w01 2/1 pp. 20-3]

10. How does an understanding of ancient athletic games shed light on certain Bible verses? How should this information affect our lives? [w01 1/1 pp. 28-31]

### WEEKLY BIBLE READING

11. *True or False:* Since God's Kingdom was established in heaven in 1914, it is no longer proper to pray, "Let your kingdom come." (Matt. 6:10) Explain. [be p. 279; w96 6/1 p. 31]
12. *True or False:* Jesus' words recorded at Matthew 11:24 mean that those whom Jehovah destroyed by fire in Sodom and Gomorrah will be resurrected. Explain.
13. *Multiple Choice:* The faithful and discreet slave mentioned by Jesus at Matthew 24:45-47 is (a) the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses; (b) all anointed Christians as a group on earth at any given time; (c) Jesus Christ himself. This slave supplies spiritual food at the proper time to the "domestics," who represent (a) anointed ones as individuals; (b) the other sheep; (c) all readers of Christian publications. The Master appointed the slave over all his belongings in the year (a) 1914; (b) 33 C.E.; (c) 1919.
14. *Multiple Choice:* The dragnet spoken of in Jesus' illustration at Matthew 13:47-50 has included both the congregation of anointed Christians and (a) God's Messianic Kingdom; (b) their other sheep companions; (c) Christendom.
15. According to Jesus' words recorded at Matthew 5:24, what should you do if you sense that you have offended a fellow worshiper? [g96 2/8 pp. 26-7]

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Literature offer for **February**: The new book *Draw Close to Jehovah* will be featured. **March**: Feature the *Knowledge* book, with an effort to start home Bible studies. **April and May**: Feature individual copies of both *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* When making return visits on interested people, which may include calling on those who attended the Memorial or other theocratic events but who are not actively associated with the congregation, concentrate on placing *Worship the Only True God*. Every effort should be made to start a home Bible study, especially if some individuals have already studied the *Knowledge* book and the *Require* brochure.

■ The presiding overseer or someone designated by him should audit the congregation's accounts on March 1 or as soon as possible thereafter. When this has been done, make an announcement to the congregation after the next accounts report is read. Read any acknowledgment of contri-

butions the congregation has made to the worldwide work and to any other fund sponsored by the organization.

■ The secretary and the service overseer should review the activity of all regular pioneers. If any are having difficulty meeting the hour requirement, the elders should arrange for assistance to be given. For suggestions, review the annual S-201 letters.

■ The special public talk for the 2003 Memorial season will be "Has Babylon's Judgment Hour Arrived?" See related announcement in the September 2002 *Our Kingdom Ministry*.

■ Since the arrangement for personal subscriptions through the mail was discontinued, it is important for congregations to release the latest issues of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* as soon as they are received. That will allow the publishers to become familiar with the content before offering the magazines in field service.

■ U.S. Selective Service regulations require that all men register at the post office within 30 days after reaching 18 years of age. A male noncitizen

under the age of 26 who takes up residency in the United States must also register with Selective Service within 30 days of becoming a resident. All of those required to do so should comply with this law, viewing it as a Christian's obligation to the superior authorities. From the time he registers until the year he turns 26, a brother must notify Selective Service of any change of address within ten days of the change. Elders should be aware of young brothers nearing the age of 18 and new alien residents between the ages of 18 and 26 and remind them of their duty to register with the Selective Service System.

■ When working unassigned territory, publishers may offer the *Require* brochure or the *Knowledge* book. Any other publication may be offered if the householder already has these two publications. All should carry a variety of tracts for not-at-homes or individuals who do not accept literature. Efforts should be made to follow up interest, especially where unassigned territories are accessible to nearby congregations.

## A Video That Will Enlighten and Inspire You!

It was April 1951. Thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses in the former Soviet Union—entire families—were rounded up, loaded into boxcars, and exiled to Siberia. Why was the mighty Soviet government bent on stamping them out? How did our brothers survive and even prosper despite decades of unrelenting persecution? You will find the answers in the video *Faithful Under Trials—Jehovah's Witnesses in the Soviet Union*. Watch it, and let its enlightening message inspire you to maintain your faithfulness to Jehovah, no matter what!

Can you answer these questions? **(1)** When did Jehovah's Witnesses first get official recognition in Russia? **(2)** Before and after World War II, how did

the Soviet Union come to have thousands more Witness families? **(3)** How were their beliefs in direct conflict with Lenin's philosophy? **(4)** What was Operation North, and what did Stalin hope to accomplish by means of it? **(5)** What did exile mean for the Witnesses, and what were they told to do in order to avoid being exiled? **(6)** On the long train trip to Siberia, how did our brothers and sisters encourage one another and surprise their captors? **(7)** What miseries did the Witnesses endure in Siberia? **(8)** What spiritual provision did Jehovah's people highly value, and why? **(9)** Why were our brothers willing to risk their lives for the sake of their literature, and how did they prevail over the relent-

less efforts of the authorities to prevent their receiving it?

**(10)** How did Khrushchev continue the attack on God's people? **(11)** How did the authorities try to destroy the faith of Witness children? **(12)** What clear understanding did our brothers have of the reason why they were persecuted? (*2002 Yearbook*, pages 203-4) **(13)** How did the all-out attack on God's organization backfire on the persecutors? (*2002 Yearbook*, pages 220-1) **(14)** What things were realized that were once only dreams for Witnesses in the former Soviet Union? **(15)** What was it that brought our brothers through their trials, and how does the last scene of the video depict the truthfulness of Jeremiah 1:19? **(16)** Relate one of the true-life experiences of faithfulness under trial that especially inspires you.

## What Is Your Priority?

<sup>1</sup> Many religious organizations place emphasis on doing charitable works, such as providing facilities for secular education or medical needs. Jehovah's Witnesses, however, while not forgetting "the doing of good and the sharing of things with others," give priority to helping people spiritually.—Heb. 13:16.

<sup>2</sup> **The First-Century Pattern:** Jesus did many good works during his earthly ministry, but his primary work was that of bearing witness to the truth. (Luke 4:43; John 18:37; Acts 10:38) He commanded his followers to "go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . teaching them." (Matt. 28:19, 20) And he indicated that those exercising faith in him would carry out on a much larger scale the work that he had initiated. (John 14:12) Jesus gave priority to the preaching work because it helps people to learn the way of salvation.—John 17:3.

<sup>3</sup> The apostle Paul viewed his preaching activity as a "necessity," a requirement that he could not ignore. (1 Cor. 9:16, 17) He was willing to make any sacrifice, endure any trial, or suffer any hardship necessary in order to accomplish his ministry. (Acts 20:22-24) The apostle Peter and his associates showed a like spirit. Even in the face of imprisonment and beatings, "they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ, Jesus."—Acts 5:40-42.

<sup>4</sup> What about us? Do we give priority to the work of proclaiming the Kingdom good news and making disciples? Like Jesus, do we have real concern for those who are "skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd"? (Matt. 9:36) Current world events and Bi-

ble prophecy clearly establish that time is running out for this wicked system! Having in focus the importance of the preaching work will move us to continue preaching zealously.

<sup>5</sup> **Evaluate Your Circumstances:** Since personal circumstances often change, it is good periodically to consider if we can make adjustments so as to have a fuller share in the preaching work. One sister had been a regular pioneer during the '50's, '60's, and '70's but found it necessary to stop because of poor health. In time, however, her health improved. She recently reevaluated her circumstances and determined that she could pioneer again. How happy she was to attend the Pioneer Service School at the age of 90! How about you? Are you nearing retirement or graduation? Might your changed circumstances allow you to pioneer?

<sup>6</sup> When Jesus observed that Martha "was distracted with attending to many duties," he kindly suggested that she would reap greater blessings if she kept things simple. (Luke 10:40-42) Can you simplify your lifestyle? Is it really necessary for both husband and wife to be secularly employed? If adjustments are made, can the family live on just one income? Many have benefited spiritually by making adjustments so as to have a greater share in the ministry.

<sup>7</sup> May all of us follow the pattern set by Jesus and the apostles! We can be certain of Jehovah's blessing on our genuine endeavors to have a full share in the vital work of preaching the good news of the Kingdom.—Luke 9:57-62.

## What to Say About the Magazines

THE WATCHTOWER Feb. 15  
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

"Some people wonder if there is a personal God. Others say he exists but feel that he is far off from them. Have you noted this? [Allow for response.] Notice why coming to know God personally is so important. [Read John 17:3.] In this regard, you will find the opening articles in this issue interesting."

AWAKE! Feb. 22

"Do you think that God meant for humans, including children, to suffer from malnutrition? [Allow for response.] Note this comforting promise found in the Bible. [Read Psalm 72:16.] This issue of *Awake!* discusses the causes of malnutrition and, more important, God's promise to end it soon."

THE WATCHTOWER Mar. 1  
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

"We would like your opinion on this interesting scripture. [Read Matthew 5:10.] How can a person be happy when he is being persecuted? [Allow for response.] The first two articles in this magazine tell of some who maintained happiness in spite of their suffering. You will be interested to read how they did so."

AWAKE! Mar. 8

"Wouldn't you agree that despite life's problems we still have reason to be thankful? [Allow for response.] One reason to be thankful is the way we are made. [Read Psalm 139:14.] How grateful we can be to have the senses needed to appreciate life, as this issue of *Awake!* illustrates!"