

JULY 2021

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
AUGUST 30–SEPTEMBER 26, 2021

## SONG 64

Sharing Joyfully  
in the Harvest

## PREVIEW

Jehovah has given us the privilege not only of **preaching** to others but also of **teaching** them to observe all the things that Jesus commanded. What motivates us to want to teach others? What challenges do we face in the preaching and disciple-making work? And how can we overcome those challenges? This article will answer those questions.

## Can You Help in the Disciple-Making Work?

*“God is . . . giving you both the desire and the power to act.”—PHIL. 2:13.*

HOW did you become one of Jehovah’s Witnesses? First, you heard “the good news”—maybe from your parents, from a workmate or a schoolmate, or by means of the door-to-door preaching work. (Mark 13:10) Then, someone spent a lot of time and effort conducting a Bible study with you. During that study, you came to love Jehovah and you learned that he loves you. Jehovah drew you to the truth, and now, as a disciple of Jesus Christ, you have the prospect of living forever. (John 6:44) You are no doubt grateful to Jehovah that He motivated someone to teach you the truth and that He accepted you as one of His servants.

<sup>2</sup> Now that we know the truth, we have the privilege of helping others join us on the road to life. We may be comfortable preaching from door to door, but we may find it challenging to offer and conduct Bible studies. Is that how you feel? If so, perhaps you will find some of the suggestions in this article helpful. We will discuss what motivates us to help make disciples. We will also consider how we can overcome challenges that might hold us back from conducting a Bible study. First, let us consider why we must be not only **preachers** but also **teachers** of the good news.

### JESUS COMMISSIONED US TO PREACH AND TO TEACH

<sup>3</sup> When Jesus was on the earth, he gave his followers a two-fold commission. First, he told them to **preach**

1. What has Jehovah done for you?
2. What will we discuss in this article?
3. Why do we preach?

the good news of the Kingdom, and he showed them how to go about it. (Matt. 10:7; Luke 8:1) Among other things, Jesus prepared his disciples for both a negative and a positive response to the Kingdom message. (Luke 9:2-5) He also foretold the extent of their preaching activity, telling them that his followers would give “a witness to all the nations.” (Matt. 24:14; Acts 1:8) Regardless of how people responded to the preaching, the disciples were to tell people about God’s Kingdom and what it would accomplish.

<sup>4</sup> What was the second part of the commission that Jesus gave? He told his followers to **teach** potential disciples to observe all the things he had commanded. But would this preaching and teaching work be confined to the first century, as some may claim? No, Jesus indicated that this vital work would continue even down to our day, “until the conclusion of the system of things.” **(Read Matthew 28:18-20.)** Jesus likely gave that commission when he appeared to more than 500 of his disciples. (1 Cor. 15:6) And in the revelation he gave to John, Jesus clearly indicated that all his disciples are expected to help others learn about Jehovah.—Rev. 22:17.

<sup>5</sup> The apostle Paul likened the work of disciple-making to cultivating a crop, showing that we must do more than plant seeds. He reminded the Corinthians: “I planted, Apollos watered . . . You are God’s field under cultivation.”

---

4. According to Matthew 28:18-20, what must we do in addition to preaching about the Kingdom?

5. According to 1 Corinthians 3:6-9, how did Paul illustrate the connection between preaching and teaching?

**(Read 1 Corinthians 3:6-9.)** As workers in “God’s field,” not only do we plant the seeds but we water them and regularly check the progress of our plantings. (John 4:35) At the same time, we recognize that it is God who makes the seed grow.

<sup>6</sup> We are looking for those who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life.” (Acts 13:48) To assist those individuals in becoming disciples, we must help them to (1) understand, (2) accept, and (3) put into practice the things they learn from the Bible. (John 17:3; Col. 2:6, 7; 1 Thess. 2:13) All in the congregation can help Bible students by setting an example in showing these new ones love and in making them feel welcome when they attend meetings. (John 13:35) The one conducting the study may also have to spend much time and energy helping a student overturn “strongly entrenched” beliefs or practices. (2 Cor. 10:4, 5) It may take many months to guide an individual through these steps so that he eventually reaches the goal of baptism. But it is well worth the effort.

### LOVE MOTIVATES US TO MAKE DISCIPLES

<sup>7</sup> Why do we engage in the preaching and disciple-making work? First, because **we love Jehovah**. When you do your best to obey the command to preach and make disciples, you are demonstrating your love for God. (1 John 5:3) Think of this: Your love for Jehovah has already moved you to preach

---

6. What does our work as teachers involve?

7. What motivates us to share in the preaching and disciple-making work?





See what our preaching and teaching  
work can do for a person  
(See paragraphs 15-17)

from house to house. Was that command easy to obey? Probably not. When you approached your very first door in the preaching work, were you nervous? No doubt you were! But you knew that this is the work that Jesus wants you to do, and you obeyed the command. And likely, with time, it has become easier for you to engage in the preaching work. Now what about conducting a Bible study? Does the very thought make you nervous? Perhaps. However, when you ask Jehovah to help you overcome your nervousness and muster up courage to offer a Bible study, Jehovah can help you to strengthen your desire to make disciples.

<sup>8</sup> Second, *love for our neighbors* moves us to teach them the truth. On one occasion, Jesus and his disciples were exhausted from their intensive preaching activity. They needed a place where they could rest, but a large crowd found them. Moved with pity, Jesus began teaching the people “*many* things.” (Read **Mark 6:34.**) He exerted himself on that occasion. Why? Jesus put himself in the place of the people in the crowd. He saw how much they were suffering—how much they needed hope—and he wanted to help them. People today are in the same condition. Do not be misled by their outward appearance. They are like sheep straying helplessly, having no shepherd to guide them. The apostle Paul described people like this as being without God and having no hope. (Eph. 2:12) They are on “the road leading off into destruction”! (Matt. 7:13) When we consider the spiritual condition of those in our

---

8. According to Mark 6:34, what else can move us to teach others?

territory, love and compassion move us to help them. And the best way we can help is by offering to study the Bible with them.

<sup>9</sup> Perhaps you hesitate to offer a Bible study because you are aware of the commitment of time that a study will require. If that is the case, share your feelings with Jehovah. Ask him to help you cultivate the desire to find and conduct a study. (Read **Philippians 2:13.**) The apostle John assured us that God will answer prayers that are in harmony with His will. (1 John 5:14, 15) So you can be sure that Jehovah will help you cultivate the desire to have a share in making disciples.

#### OVERCOMING OTHER CHALLENGES

<sup>10</sup> We take seriously our commission to teach even though we face challenges that may keep us from doing as much as we would like to do in making disciples. Let us consider what some of those challenges are and how we can overcome them.

<sup>11</sup> *We may feel limited by our circumstances.* For example, some publishers are older or have poor health. Does that describe your situation? If it does, consider one of the lessons we have learned from the COVID-19 pandemic. We have discovered that we can conduct effective Bible studies electronically! So you may be able to start and conduct a study from the comfort of your own home. And there is another advantage. Some would

---

9. According to Philippians 2:13, how can Jehovah help you?

10-11. What may hold us back from conducting a Bible study?

enjoy studying the Bible, but they are not available during the times our brothers usually set aside for preaching. However, they may be available early in the morning or late at night. Might you be able to make yourself available to fill that need? Jesus taught Nicodemus at night, which was a time that Nicodemus preferred.—John 3:1, 2.

**<sup>12</sup> We may lack confidence in our ability to conduct a Bible study.** Perhaps we feel that we should have more knowledge or skill as a teacher before we can study with someone. If this is how you feel, consider three factors that can bolster your confidence. First, Jehovah considers you qualified to teach others. (2 Cor. 3:5) Second, Jesus, who has ‘all authority in heaven and on the earth,’ has authorized you to teach. (Matt. 28:18) And third, you can rely on others to help you. Jesus relied on what his Father taught him to say and speak, and so can you. (John 8:28; 12:49) In addition, you can ask your field service group overseer, a qualified pioneer, or an experienced publisher to help you to start and conduct a Bible study. One way you could gain confidence is by sitting in on a Bible study conducted by one of these publishers.

**<sup>13</sup> We may find it challenging to adapt to new methods and new tools.** The way that we conduct Bible studies has now changed. Our principal study publication, *Enjoy Life Forever!*, requires that we prepare for the study and conduct it differently from how we did in the past. We read fewer paragraphs and have more of

a conversation with the student. When teaching, we use more videos and electronic resources, such as *JW Library*®. If you are not comfortable using these tools, talk to someone who can help you learn to use them. We humans are creatures of habit. It is not easy for us to adapt to new ways of doing things. But with Jehovah’s help and the help of others, you will find it easier to adjust and even more enjoyable to study with people. As one pioneer said, this method of study is “refreshing for both the student and the teacher.”

**<sup>14</sup> We may live in a territory where it is difficult to start Bible studies.** People may seem to be indifferent to our message or even opposed to it. What can help us remain positive in such territory? Remember that people’s circumstances can change quickly in this turbulent world, and those who were once not interested may become conscious of their spiritual need. (Matt. 5:3) Some who always in the past refused our literature later accepted a Bible study. We also know that Jehovah is the Master of the harvest. (Matt. 9:38) He wants us to keep planting and watering, but he is the One responsible for the growth. (1 Cor. 3:6, 7) And how encouraging it is to be reminded that even if we are not able to conduct a Bible study at present, Jehovah rewards us based on our efforts, not on our results!\*

---

\* For a discussion of what part we play in making disciples, see the article “As a Congregation, Help Bible Students to Progress to Baptism,” published in the March 2021 issue of *The Watchtower*.

---

12. What factors give us confidence that we can be effective teachers?

13. Why do we need to be adaptable?

14. What should we remember when working in difficult territory, and how is 1 Corinthians 3:6, 7 encouraging to us?

## EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF MAKING DISCIPLES

<sup>15</sup> Jehovah rejoices when a person accepts Bible truth and shares that truth with others. (Prov. 23:15, 16) How great Jehovah's joy must be when he sees what is happening today! For example, despite a global pandemic during the 2020 service year, 7,705,765 Bible studies were conducted, which helped 241,994 people to dedicate themselves to Jehovah and get baptized. These new disciples will, in turn, conduct Bible studies and make more disciples. (Luke 6:40) Without doubt, we make Jehovah happy when we share in the disciple-making work.

<sup>16</sup> Making disciples is hard work, but with Jehovah's help we can play a part in teaching new ones to love our heavenly Father. Could we set the goal of starting and conducting at least one Bible study? We may be surprised to see what will happen if we use every appropriate occasion to ask those whom we meet to study with

---

15. How does Jehovah feel when someone accepts a Bible study and acts on what he is learning?

16. What is a good goal?

us. We can be sure that Jehovah will bless our efforts.

<sup>17</sup> What a privilege we have both to **preach** and to **teach** the truth to others! This work makes us genuinely happy. The apostle Paul, who helped many in Thessalonica to become disciples, expressed his feelings this way: "What is our hope or joy or crown of exultation before our Lord Jesus at his presence? Is it not in fact you? You certainly are our glory and joy." (1 Thess. 2:19, 20; Acts 17:1-4) Many today have felt that same way. A sister named Stéphanie who, along with her husband, has helped a number of individuals to come to the point of baptism says, "There is no greater joy than helping people to dedicate themselves to Jehovah."

---

17. What will we experience if we are able to conduct a Bible study?

---

**PICTURE DESCRIPTION Page 4:** See the changes a Bible study can bring about in a person's life: At first a man's life seems to be without purpose, alienated from Jehovah. Then Witnesses meet him in the preaching work, and he accepts a Bible study. What he is taught leads to his dedication and baptism. In time, he too becomes a disciple-maker. Finally, they all enjoy life in Paradise.

---

## HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

■ Why must we be preachers **and** teachers of the good news?

■ What motivates us to make disciples?

■ How can we overcome challenges to conducting a Bible study?



## SONG 114

“Exercise Patience”

## PREVIEW

All of us have problems of one kind or another. There is presently no solution for many of them; we simply have to endure. But we are not alone. Jehovah himself is enduring many things. In this article, we will examine nine of them. We will also see what Jehovah’s endurance has accomplished and how we can benefit from his example.

## Imitate Jehovah’s Endurance

*“By your endurance you will preserve your lives.”*—LUKE 21:19.

“DON’T GIVE UP!” was the rousing theme of the 2017 regional convention program. The program showed us how we can bear up under the trials that befall us. Four years have passed since then, and here we are, still enduring life in this present system of things.

<sup>2</sup> What have you had to deal with recently? The loss of a family member or a dear friend? A life-threatening illness? The trials of getting older? A natural disaster, violence, or persecution? Or the effects of a disease, such as the COVID-19 pandemic? How we yearn for the day when all of that will be behind us—long forgotten and never to be repeated!—**Read Isaiah 65:16, 17.**

<sup>3</sup> Life in this system is hard, and we may be confronted with even more difficult challenges in the future. (Matt. 24:21) Clearly, we need to continue to strengthen our endurance. Why? Because Jesus said: “By your endurance you will preserve your lives.” (Luke 21:19) Thinking about how others are successfully enduring trials similar to ours can strengthen our endurance.

<sup>4</sup> Who is the best example of endurance? Jehovah God. Does that answer surprise you? It might until you think about it. This world is under the control of the Devil, and it is riddled with problems. Jehovah has the power to end it in an instant, but he is waiting for a future day to do that. (Rom. 9:22) In the meantime, our God keeps on enduring until that appointed time arrives. Let us consider

---

1-2. How do Jehovah’s words recorded at Isaiah 65:16, 17 encourage us not to give up?

3. What must we do now, and why?

4. Why can we say that Jehovah is the best example of endurance?



nine things that Jehovah has chosen to endure.

#### WHAT HAS JEHOVAH CHOSEN TO ENDURE?

<sup>5</sup> ***The reproach brought on his name.*** Jehovah loves his name, and he wants everyone to respect it. (Isa. 42:8) But for some six millennia, his good name has been reproached. (Ps. 74:10, 18, 23) This started in the garden of Eden when the Devil (meaning “Slanderer”) accused God of depriving Adam and Eve of something they needed in order to be happy. (Gen. 3:1-5) Ever since then, Jehovah has been falsely accused of depriving humans of what they truly need. Jesus was concerned about the reproach that was being heaped on his Father’s name. For that reason, he taught his disciples to pray: “Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified.”—Matt. 6:9.

<sup>6</sup> ***The opposition to his sovereignty.*** Jehovah has the absolute right to rule the heavens and the earth, and his way of ruling is the very best. (Rev. 4:11) But the Devil has tried to mislead angels and humans into thinking that God does not have that right. The issue of the rightfulness of Jehovah’s sovereignty could not be settled overnight. Wisely, God has allowed ample time for people to see that when humans try to rule themselves independently of the Creator, they are doomed to fail. (Jer. 10:23) As a result of God’s patience, the issue will be settled once and for all. He will be vindicated as he proves that his Kingdom alone

can establish real peace and security on earth.

<sup>7</sup> ***The rebellion of some of his children.*** Jehovah created his spirit and human children perfect, without any flaws. But then the rebel angelic son Satan (meaning “Resister”) turned the perfect humans, Adam and Eve, against Jehovah. Other angels and humans joined in the rebellion. (Jude 6) Later, even members of the nation of Israel, God’s chosen people, rejected him and turned to the worship of false gods. (Isa. 63:8, 10) Jehovah rightly felt betrayed. Still, he has endured, and he will keep on enduring until the time comes to put an end to all rebels. That will bring blessed relief to his loyal ones, who along with him are enduring evil in this system of things!

<sup>8</sup> ***The constant lies of the Devil.*** Satan accused Jehovah’s upright servant Job, saying in effect that all of Jehovah’s faithful worshippers serve God for selfish reasons. (Job 1:8-11; 2:3-5) The Devil has kept up his accusations to this day. (Rev. 12:10) We can do our part to prove that there is no truth to Satan’s lies by enduring our trials and remaining loyal to Jehovah out of love for Him. As with Job, we will be blessed for our endurance.—Jas. 5:11.

<sup>9</sup> Satan uses leaders of false religion to say that Jehovah is cruel and is responsible for man’s suffering. Some even say that when children die, it was God who took them because he needed more angels in heaven. How blasphemous!

---

5. How has God’s name been reproached, and how do you feel about that?

6. Why has Jehovah allowed ample time to pass before settling the issue of his sovereignty?

---

7. Who have rebelled against Jehovah, and what will he do about them?

8-9. What lies are being told about Jehovah, and how do we respond to them?

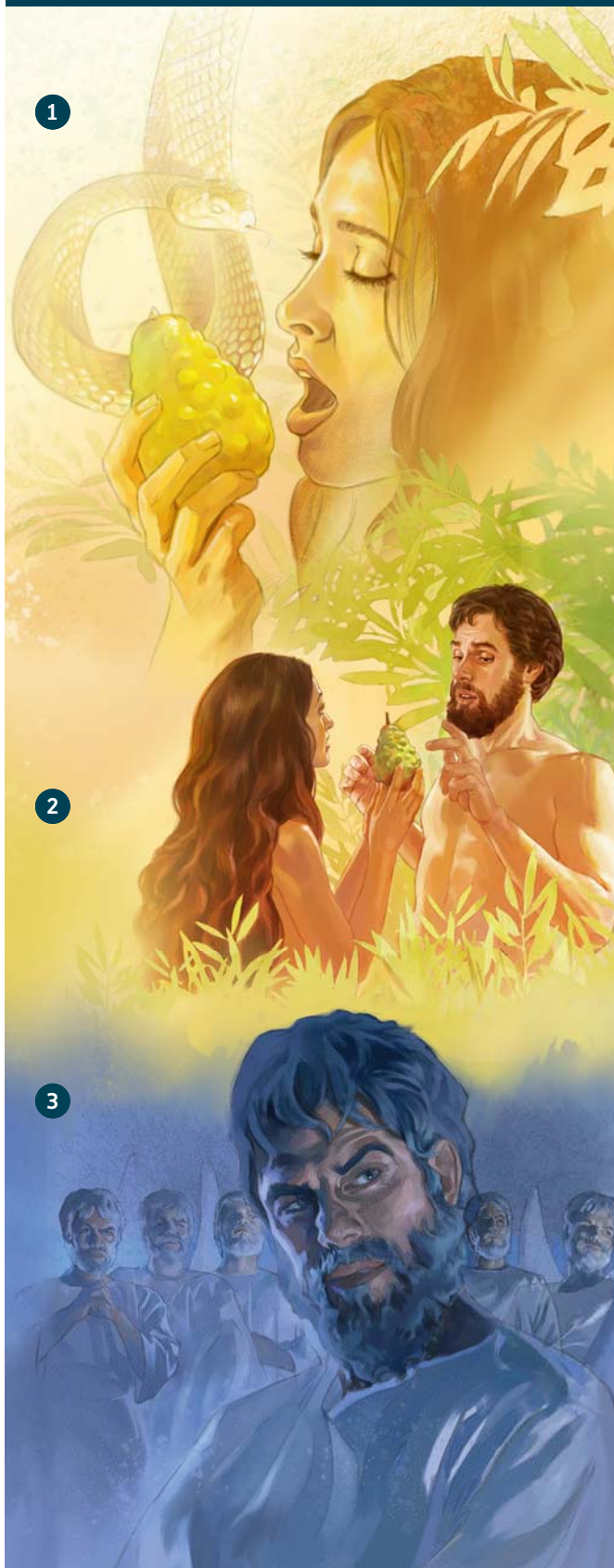
We know better. When we are stricken with a serious illness or when someone we love dies, we never blame our God. On the contrary, we have faith that one day he will make things right. We can tell everyone who will listen what a loving God Jehovah is. That gives him a good reply to make to the one taunting him.—Prov. 27:11.

<sup>10</sup> ***The suffering of his cherished servants.*** Jehovah is a compassionate God. He hates to hear us cry out because of the suffering that we are enduring—be it persecution, illness, or our imperfections. (**Read Psalm 22:23, 24.**) Jehovah feels our pain; he wants to stop it, and he will stop it. (Compare Exodus 3:7, 8; Isaiah 63:9.) The day will come when “he will wipe out every tear from [our] eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore.”—Rev. 21:4.

<sup>11</sup> ***Separation from his friends who have died.*** How does Jehovah feel about faithful men and women who have died? He longs to see them again! (Job 14:15) Can you imagine how much Jehovah misses his friend Abraham? (Jas. 2:23) Or Moses, with whom he spoke “face-to-face”? (Ex. 33:11) And how he must yearn to hear David and the other psalmists sing their beautiful songs of praise! (Ps. 104:33) Although these friends of God are sleeping in death, Jehovah has not forgotten them. (Isa. 49:15) He remembers every detail of their personality. In a sense, “they are all living from

10. What does Psalm 22:23, 24 reveal about Jehovah?

11. What does Jehovah miss about his loyal servants who have died?







## What Jehovah Is Enduring

1. Reproach brought on his name
2. Opposition to his sovereignty
3. Rebellion of some of his children
4. Constant lies of the Devil
5. Suffering of his cherished servants
6. Separation from his friends who have died
7. Oppression of humans by the wicked
8. Degradation of the human family
9. Ruining of his creation

his standpoint.” (Luke 20:38, fn.) One day, he will bring them back to life, and he will once again hear their earnest prayers and accept their worship. If you have lost a loved one in death, may these thoughts console and comfort you.

**12 *The oppression of humans by the wicked.*** When the rebellion began in Eden, Jehovah knew that conditions would get worse before they got better. Jehovah hates the wickedness, injustice, and violence in the world today. He has always been especially empathetic toward the most vulnerable—the weak and defenseless, the orphan as well as the widow. (Zech. 7:9, 10) Jehovah is particularly distressed when he sees his faithful servants being oppressed and imprisoned. Be assured that he loves all of you who are enduring along with him.

**13 *The degradation of the human family.*** Satan loves to degrade humans, who were created in God’s image. When God “saw that man’s wickedness was great” in Noah’s day, “Jehovah regretted that he had made men on the earth, and he felt hurt at his heart.” (Gen. 6:5, 6, fn., 11) Have conditions improved since then? Certainly not! How pleased the Devil must be when he sees the prevalence of sexual immorality in all its forms, including immoral acts between people of the opposite sex and people of the same sex! (Eph. 4:18, 19) Satan is especially happy when he can cause those who practice true worship to fall into sin. When Jehovah’s patience comes to an end, he will

demonstrate his strong disapproval of all immoral conduct.

**14 *The ruining of his creation.*** Not only is man ‘dominating man to his harm’ but he is mismanaging the earth and the animal creation that Jehovah entrusted to man’s care. (Eccl. 8:9; Gen. 1:28) Some experts warn that human actions could push one million more species\* to extinction in the next few years. No wonder they say nature is in trouble! Thankfully, Jehovah has promised “to bring to ruin those ruining the earth” and to turn the planet into a global paradise.—Rev. 11:18; Isa. 35:1.

#### WHAT WE LEARN FROM JEHOVAH’S ENDURANCE

**15** Think of all the distressing problems that our heavenly Father has been enduring for thousands of years. (See the box “What Jehovah Is Enduring.”) Jehovah could put an end to this wicked system of things at any time. But his patience has proved to be a blessing for us! We might think of it this way. Suppose a man and his wife are told that their unborn baby has serious physical problems and that the child will never have an easy life and will die prematurely. Even so, at great cost to themselves, the parents welcome the child’s birth. Their love for the child moves them to endure any hardship in order to provide him with the best possible quality of life.

---

\* “Species” should not be confused with the Bible term “kinds,” which refers to a broad group of living things.

---

12. What especially distresses Jehovah during these wicked last days?

13. How is the human family being degraded before God’s eyes, and what will he do about it?

14. What is man doing to God’s earthly creation?

15-16. What should move us to endure along with Jehovah? Illustrate.



<sup>16</sup> Similarly, all descendants of Adam and Eve are imperfect when they come into the world. Still, Jehovah loves them and cares for them. (1 John 4:19) And unlike the human parents in our illustration, Jehovah can do something about it. He has set the date when he will undo all the maladies that plague his human creation. (Matt. 24:36) Should not his love motivate us to endure along with him for as long as it is necessary?

<sup>17</sup> Jehovah set the perfect example of endurance. Jesus succeeded in imitating his Father's endurance. As a human, Jesus endured hostile speech, shame, and a torture stake for our sake. **(Read Hebrews 12:2, 3.)** Jehovah's example of endurance undoubtedly gave Jesus the strength to endure. It can strengthen us too.

<sup>18</sup> **Read 2 Peter 3:9.** Jehovah knows the best time to end this wicked world. His patience has allowed for the gathering of a great crowd, numbering into the

---

17. How does the description of Jesus recorded at Hebrews 12:2, 3 encourage us to keep on enduring?

18. How does 2 Peter 3:9 help us to understand what Jehovah's patience is accomplishing?

millions, who worship and praise him. All of them are glad that Jehovah has endured long enough for them to be born, to learn to love him, and to dedicate themselves to him. Jehovah's decision to endure will be fully justified when he joyfully rewards the millions of us who have endured to the end!

<sup>19</sup> We learn from Jehovah how to endure with joy. Despite all the heartache and suffering Satan has caused, Jehovah remains "the happy God." (1 Tim. 1:11) We can likewise remain joyful while we patiently wait for Jehovah to sanctify his name, vindicate his sovereignty, end all wickedness, and bring an end to our present problems. Let us be determined to endure and to take comfort in knowing that our heavenly Father is enduring too. If we do, these words will come true for each one of us: "Happy is the man who keeps on enduring trial, because on becoming approved he will receive the crown of life, which Jehovah promised to those who continue loving Him."—Jas. 1:12.

---

19. What should we be determined to do, and what will be our reward?

---

## WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

- |   |   |                                     |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| ■ What example of Jehovah's endurance especially impresses you? | ■ How did Jesus benefit from his Father's example of endurance? | ■ Why are you determined to endure? |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|

**SONG 101**

Working Together in Unity

**PREVIEW**

Like small cracks that can weaken a clay vessel, the spirit of competition can weaken a congregation. If the congregation is not strong and united, it cannot be a peaceful place to worship God. This article will discuss why we should avoid developing a competitive spirit and what we can do to promote peace in the congregation.

## Avoid Stirring Up Competition —Promote Peace

*“Let us not become egotistical, stirring up competition with one another, envying one another.”—GAL. 5:26.*

IN THE world today, many people are selfishly motivated by a spirit of competition. A businessman may resort to cutthroat tactics to get ahead of his competitors. An athlete in a sporting event may deliberately injure a player on the other team in order to win the game. A student competing for a place at a prestigious university may cheat on the entrance exams. As Christians, we recognize that such conduct is wrong; it is part of “the works of the flesh.” (Gal. 5:19-21) However, could it be that some of Jehovah’s servants might stir up competition in the congregation without even realizing it? That is an important question because a spirit of competition can affect the unity of our brotherhood.

<sup>2</sup> In this article, we will discuss the negative qualities that can cause us to stir up competition with our brothers. We will also consider the examples of faithful men and women in Bible times who did not give in to the spirit of competition. First, let us consider how we can examine our motives.

### EXAMINE YOUR MOTIVES

<sup>3</sup> From time to time, it is a good idea to examine our motives. We might ask ourselves: ‘Do I measure my worth by comparing myself with others? Am I motivated by

1. What effect can a spirit of competition have on people?
2. What will we discuss in this article?
3. What questions should we ask ourselves?

a desire to view myself as the best at whatever I do or at least to see myself as better than a particular brother or sister? Or do I simply want to give my very best to Jehovah?" Why should we ask those questions? Note what God's Word says.

<sup>4</sup> The Bible urges us to avoid comparing ourselves with others. (**Read Galatians 6:3, 4.**) Why? On the one hand, if we think we are doing better than our brother, we may become prideful. On the other hand, if we compare ourselves unfavorably with others, we will likely get discouraged. Either way, we will not be thinking with a sound mind. (Rom. 12:3) A sister named Katerina,\* who lives in Greece, says: "I used to compare myself with others who seemed prettier, more effective in the ministry, and better at making friends. As a result, I felt worthless." We must remember that Jehovah drew us to him, not because we are beautiful, articulate, or popular, but because we are willing to love him and to listen to his Son.—John 6:44; 1 Cor. 1:26-31.

<sup>5</sup> Another question we could ask ourselves is this, 'Am I known as a peace-maker, or do I often find myself in the middle of a dispute?' Note the experience of a brother named Hyun, who lives in South Korea. At one time, he viewed some who had privileges of service as his rivals. He says, "I was critical of these brothers, and I often disagreed

with the things they said." With what result? "My attitude caused disunity in the congregation," he admits. Some of Hyun's friends helped him to recognize his problem. Hyun made needed adjustments, and today he serves as an effective elder. If we see in ourselves a tendency to stir up competition rather than to promote peace, we must take action.

### GUARD AGAINST EGOTISM AND ENVY

<sup>6</sup> **Read Galatians 5:26.** What undesirable qualities can lead to manifesting a spirit of competition? One is *egotism*. An egotistical person is proud and selfish. Another bad trait is *envy*. Not only does an envious person want what another person has but he also wants to deprive the other person of what he has. Really, envy is a form of hatred. We certainly want to avoid those bad traits like the plague!

<sup>7</sup> The negative qualities of egotism and envy could be likened to impurities contaminating the fuel that powers an aircraft. The plane may be able to take off, but the contaminants can block the fuel lines, causing the engines to lose power just before landing and the plane to crash. Similarly, someone may serve Jehovah for a while. But if he is motivated by egotism and envy, he will crash. (Prov. 16:18) He will stop serving Jehovah and will harm himself and others. How, though, can we guard against egotism and envy?

---

\* Names have been changed.

---

4. Why should we avoid comparing ourselves with others, as mentioned at Galatians 6:3, 4?

5. What do you learn from the experience of a brother named Hyun?

---

6. According to Galatians 5:26, what undesirable qualities contribute to a spirit of competition?

7. How could the damage caused by egotism and envy be illustrated?

<sup>8</sup> We can combat egotism by keeping in mind the apostle Paul's counsel to the Philippians: "Do nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with humility consider others superior to you." (Phil. 2:3) If we consider others superior to us, we will not compete with those who may have greater talents and abilities than we possess. On the contrary, we will be happy for them. That is especially true if they are using their abilities in Jehovah's service to his praise. In turn, if our gifted brothers and sisters are following Paul's advice, they will be focusing on qualities that they appreciate in us. As a result, we will all promote peace and unity in the congregation.

<sup>9</sup> We can control our tendency toward envy by cultivating modesty, that is, by being aware of our own limitations. If we are modest, we will not try to prove that

---

8. How can we combat egotism?

9. How can we control our tendency to be envious?

we are more talented or more capable than everyone else. Instead, we will look at how we can learn from those who are more capable than we are. For example, suppose a brother in the congregation gives excellent public talks. We might ask him how he goes about preparing his talks. If a sister is a fine cook, we might ask her for suggestions that will help us to improve in that area. And if a young Christian does not make friends easily, he might ask for advice from someone who is good at making friends. In these ways we can avoid envy and improve our own skills.

#### LEARN FROM BIBLE EXAMPLES

<sup>10</sup> Consider the incident involving *Gideon*, who was from the tribe of Manasseh, and the men of the tribe of Ephraim. With Jehovah's backing, Gideon and his 300 men had a remarkable victory for which they could have taken great pride.

---

10. What challenge did Gideon face?

Because he was humble,  
Gideon maintained peace  
with the Ephraimites  
(See paragraphs 10-12)





The men of Ephraim met Gideon, not to commend him, but to quarrel with him. It appears that their pride was hurt because Gideon had not invited them from the beginning to join in the fight against God’s enemies. They were so focused on protecting the honor of their tribe that they failed to see the big picture—Gideon had just helped to honor Jehovah’s name and to protect His people.—Judg. 8:1.

<sup>11</sup> Gideon humbly said to the men of Ephraim: “What have I done compared with you?” He then gave them a specific example of how Jehovah had blessed them. As a result, the men “calmed down.” (Judg. 8:2, 3) Gideon willingly set pride aside in order to maintain peace among God’s people.

<sup>12</sup> What can we learn from this account? From the example of the Ephraimites, we learn that we should not become more focused on protecting our own honor than on honoring Jehovah. As family heads and elders, we can learn a lesson from Gideon. If someone is upset by something we did, we should try to see things from his perspective. We can also commend the person for what he has done well. That will require humility on our part, especially if the other person is clearly in the wrong. But peace is worth much more than our personal pride.

<sup>13</sup> Think, too, of the example of **Hannah**. She was married to a Levite named

11. How did Gideon respond to the men of Ephraim?

12. What do we learn from the example of the Ephraimites and that of Gideon?

13. What challenge did Hannah face, and how did she overcome it?



Because she trusted in Jehovah to make matters right, Hannah regained her inner peace  
(See paragraphs 13-14)

Elkanah, who loved her very much. But Elkanah had another wife, Peninnah. Elkanah loved Hannah more than he loved Peninnah; however, “Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.” Because of this, Peninnah taunted Hannah “relentlessly in order to upset her.” How did Hannah react? She became very upset! “She would weep and not eat.” (1 Sam. 1:2, 6, 7) Yet, there is no record that Hannah tried to take revenge on Peninnah in some way. Instead, she poured out her heart to Jehovah and trusted that he would make matters right. Did Peninnah’s attitude toward Hannah change? The Bible does not say. But we do know that Hannah regained and maintained her inner peace. “Her face was no longer downcast.”—1 Sam. 1:10, 18.

<sup>14</sup> What can we learn from Hannah’s

14. What do we learn from Hannah’s example?



Because they realized that Jehovah was blessing the work, Apollos and Paul were not rivals  
(See paragraphs 15-18)

## Avoid Stirring Up Competition

We might unintentionally contribute to a spirit of competition in the congregation if we inappropriately share our opinion as to who is the best speaker, who gives the best comments, or who is the most productive pioneer. We might compare one elder with another whose particular gifts we appreciate. Elders are only human, and if an elder finds himself being constantly compared with another, he could begin to view his brother as a rival. That would be damaging to the congregation.

example? If someone tries to compete with you in some way, remember that you are in control of the situation. You do not have to allow yourself to be drawn into the competition. Instead of repaying evil for evil, try to make peace with the person. (Rom. 12:17-21) Even if he does not respond, you will maintain your inner peace.

<sup>15</sup> Finally, consider what we can learn from the examples of the disciple **Apollos** and the apostle **Paul**. Both men had an excellent knowledge of the Scriptures. Both were prominent and influential teachers. And both had helped to make many disciples. But neither man viewed the other as a rival.

<sup>16</sup> Apollos was “a native of Alexan-

dria,” which was a center of learning in the first century. He was apparently a gifted speaker, and he was “well-versed in the Scriptures.” (Acts 18:24) When Apollos spent time in Corinth, some in the congregation made it obvious that they preferred him over other brothers, including Paul. (1 Cor. 1:12, 13) Did Apollos promote that divisive attitude? We cannot imagine that he did. In fact, some time after Apollos left Corinth, Paul urged him to return there. (1 Cor. 16:12) Paul would never have done that if he had felt that Apollos was dividing the congregation. Clearly, Apollos used his gifts in a good way—to proclaim the good news and to strengthen his brothers. We can also be sure that Apollos was a humble man. For example, there is no record that he took offense

15. How were Apollos and Paul similar?

16. How would you describe Apollos?

when Aquila and Priscilla “explained the way of God more accurately to him.” —Acts 18:24-28.

<sup>17</sup> The apostle Paul was aware of the good work done by Apollos. But Paul did not feel threatened by him. Paul’s humility, modesty, and reasonableness are seen in the counsel that he gave to the congregation in Corinth. Instead of being flattered by those who were saying “I belong to Paul,” he directed all attention to Jehovah God and to Jesus Christ. —1 Cor. 3:3-6.

<sup>18</sup> What can we learn from the examples of Apollos and Paul? We may work hard for Jehovah, and we may help many progress to baptism. But we realize that any success we have is only because of Jehovah’s blessing. From the exam-

---

17. How did Paul promote peace?

18. Based on 1 Corinthians 4:6, 7, what do we learn from the examples of Apollos and Paul?

ples of Apollos and Paul, we learn another lesson—the more prominence we have, the greater our opportunity to promote peace. How grateful we are when appointed men promote peace and unity by basing their counsel on God’s Word and by focusing attention, not on themselves, but on our model, Christ Jesus! —**Read 1 Corinthians 4:6, 7.**

<sup>19</sup> Each one of us has some God-given talent or ability. We can use that gift “in ministering to one another.” (1 Pet. 4:10) We may feel that the part we play is small. But the small acts that promote unity are like the small stitches that hold a garment together. May we work hard to remove from ourselves any trace of a competitive spirit. Let us be determined to do all we can to promote peace and unity in the congregation.—Eph. 4:3.

---

19. What can each of us do? (See also the box “Avoid Stirring Up Competition.”)

---

## HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- |                                      |   |  |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| ■ Why should we examine our motives? | ■ How can we avoid promoting a spirit of competition? | ■ What did you learn from the examples set by Gideon, Hannah, Apollos, and the apostle Paul? |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|

**SONG 34**

Walking in Integrity

**PREVIEW**

Jehovah does not compare us with others. Yet, some of us might be inclined to do just that and then to judge ourselves negatively. In this article, we will discuss why it can be harmful to compare ourselves with others. We will also see how we can help family members and those in the congregation to see themselves as Jehovah does.

## Rejoice in Your Own Progress!

*“Let each one . . . have cause for rejoicing in regard to himself alone, and not in comparison with the other person.”—GAL. 6:4.*

JEHOVAH loves variety. This is evident in his amazing creations, including humankind. Each of us is unique. So Jehovah never compares you with others. He examines your heart, your inner person. (1 Sam. 16:7) He also takes into account your strengths, weaknesses, and background. And he does not ask more of you than you can give. We need to imitate Jehovah by seeing ourselves as he does. Then we will have “a sound mind,” thinking neither too much nor too little of ourselves.—Rom. 12:3.

<sup>2</sup> Of course, we may benefit by observing the good example of a faithful brother or sister who has a productive ministry. (Heb. 13:7) We might then see ways in which we can be more effective in our own ministry. (Phil. 3:17) But there is a difference between imitating someone’s good example and using it to assess your value as an individual. Such a comparison could cause you to feel envious, discouraged, or even unworthy. As we learned in the preceding article, to compete with others in the congregation would also be spiritually harmful. So Jehovah lovingly exhorts us: “Let each one examine his own actions, and then he will have cause for rejoicing in regard to himself alone, and not in comparison with the other person.”—Gal. 6:4.

<sup>3</sup> Jehovah wants you to rejoice in your own spiritual

1. Why does Jehovah not compare us with others?
2. Why is it not good to compare ourselves with others?
3. What spiritual progress have you made that brings you joy?





Parents, acknowledge the good efforts of each of your children (See paragraphs 5-6)

progress. For instance, if you got baptized, you should be thrilled that you have reached that goal! You made the decision to do that on your own. You based it on **your** love for God. Think about the progress you have made since then. For example, has your love for personal Bible reading and study deepened? Have your prayers become more meaningful and heartfelt? (Ps. 141:2) Have you become more conversational in the preaching work and more effective at using our tools for the ministry? And if you have a family, has Jehovah helped you to become a better husband, wife, or parent? You can feel happy and deeply satisfied about the progress you have made in such areas.

<sup>4</sup> We can help others to rejoice in their own spiritual progress. We can also help them to refrain from making comparisons. In this article, we will see how parents can help their children, how marriage mates can help each other, and how elders and others can help their brothers and sisters. Finally, we will con-

sider some Bible principles that can assist us in setting reasonable goals according to our individual abilities and circumstances.

#### WHAT PARENTS AND MARRIAGE MATES CAN DO

<sup>5</sup> Parents should be careful not to compare one child with another or to ask more of a child than he or she can give. Unfavorable comparisons and unreasonable demands can exasperate a child. **(Read Ephesians 6:4.)** A sister named Sachiko\* says: “My teachers expected me to do better than my classmates at school. Additionally, my mother wanted me to do well at school so that I would give a good witness to my teacher and my unbelieving father. In fact, she wanted me to get 100 percent on my exams, which I found impossible. Although I left school years ago, at times I still wonder if my best is good enough for Jehovah.”

\* Some names have been changed.

5. According to Ephesians 6:4, what should parents avoid?

4. What will we consider in this article?

<sup>6</sup> A valuable lesson for parents is found at **Psalm 131:1, 2. (Read.)** King David said that he did not “aspire to things too great” or to things that were beyond him. His humility and modesty “calmed and quieted” him. What can parents learn from David’s words? Parents can be humble and modest not only in what they expect of themselves but also in what they expect of their child. Parents can reassure their child by acknowledging his strengths and weaknesses when helping him to set appropriate goals. A sister named Marina recalls: “My mother never compared me with my three siblings or with other children. She taught me that everyone has different gifts and that each of us is precious to Jehovah. Thanks to her, I rarely compare myself with others.”

<sup>7</sup> A Christian husband must show honor to his wife. (1 Pet. 3:7) Honor involves giving special attention and respect to others. For example, a husband honors his wife by dignifying her. He does not ask more of her than she can give. And he certainly does not compare her with other women. If he were to do so, what effect might such a comparison have? The non-Witness husband of a sister named Rosa often compares her with other women. His cruel words have done more than undermine Rosa’s self-confidence. She says, “I need constant reassurance that Jehovah values me.” In contrast, a Christian husband assigns honor to his wife. He knows that his doing so affects both his

relationship with her and his relationship with Jehovah.\*

<sup>8</sup> A husband who honors his wife praises her, reassures her of his love, and commends her. (Prov. 31:28) That is how the husband of Katerina, mentioned in the preceding article, has helped her to overcome feelings of low self-worth. As a child, she was belittled by her mother, who often compared her with other girls, including her friends. As a result, Katerina began to measure her worth by comparing herself with others—even after she came into the truth! Her Christian husband, however, has helped her to fight this tendency and to develop a more reasonable view of herself. She states: “He loves me, commends me for the good things I do, and prays for me. He also reminds me of Jehovah’s wonderful qualities and helps me to correct my negative thinking.”

#### WHAT LOVING ELDERS AND OTHERS CAN DO

<sup>9</sup> How can elders help those who have a tendency to compare themselves with others? Consider the experience of a sister named Hanuni, who as a child was rarely commended. She recalls: “I was shy and felt that other kids were better than I was. I began comparing myself with others as far back as I can remember.” Even after she came into the truth, Hanuni still compared herself with others. As a result, she felt of little value

---

\* Although these points are focusing on the husband, many of the principles also apply to the wife.

---

6. What can parents learn from Psalm 131:1, 2?

7-8. How can a husband show honor to his wife?

9-10. How did caring elders help a sister to overcome her tendency to compare herself unfavorably with others?

in the congregation. Now, though, she serves as a happy pioneer. What helped her to change her outlook?

<sup>10</sup> Hanuni says that she was helped by caring elders. They expressed confidence in her and commended her for her faithful example. She writes: “A few times the elders asked me to encourage some sisters who needed help. These assignments made me feel needed. I remember when caring elders thanked me for the encouragement I had given to some younger sisters. Then they read 1 Thessalonians 1:2, 3 to me. How that touched my heart! Thanks largely to those fine shepherds, I now treasure my place in Jehovah’s organization.”

<sup>11</sup> **Read Isaiah 57:15.** Jehovah cares deeply for those “crushed and lowly in spirit.” All of us, not just the elders, can help to encourage these dear brothers and sisters. One way we can encourage them is by showing a sincere interest in them. Jehovah wants us to convey to them his love for his precious sheep. (Prov. 19:17) We can also help our brothers and sisters by being humble and modest. We do not want to draw attention to ourselves that could result in stirring up envy in others. Instead, we use our abilities and knowledge to encourage one another.—1 Pet. 4:10, 11.

<sup>12</sup> We can learn much about how to treat others by considering how Jesus treated his followers. He was the greatest man who ever lived. Yet, he

was “mild-tempered and lowly in heart.” (Matt. 11:28-30) He did not show off his superior intelligence and vast knowledge. He taught by using simple language and appealing illustrations that touched the hearts of lowly ones. (Luke 10:21) Unlike the arrogant religious leaders, Jesus never made others feel that they were of little value to God. (John 6:37) Instead, he dignified the common people.

<sup>13</sup> Jesus’ kindness and love were reflected in the way he dealt with his disciples. He knew that they had different abilities and circumstances. So they could not all handle the same responsibilities; nor could they be equally productive in the ministry. Yet, he appreciated the whole-souled efforts of each one. Jesus’ understanding attitude is reflected in the parable of the talents. In that illustration, the master assigned each slave work “according to his own ability.” One of the two diligent slaves gained more than the other. But the master commended both with the same words: “Well done, good and faithful slave!”—Matt. 25:14-23.

<sup>14</sup> Jesus is kind and loving in the way he deals with us. He knows that our abilities and circumstances vary, and he is pleased when we do *our* best. We do well to treat others as Jesus did. Never would we want to make a fellow worshipper feel unworthy or ashamed because he cannot do as much as others can.

---

11. How can we help those who are “crushed and lowly in spirit,” as described at Isaiah 57:15?

12. Why were lowly ones drawn to Jesus? (See cover picture.)

---

13. How were Jesus’ kindness and love reflected in the way he dealt with his disciples?

14. How can we imitate the way Jesus treated others?



Find joy in setting and reaching reasonable goals  
(See paragraphs 15-16)



Instead, let us look for opportunities to commend our brothers and sisters for doing their best to serve Jehovah.

### SET REASONABLE GOALS

<sup>15</sup> Spiritual goals give our life direction and purpose. The key, however, is to set goals according to **our** abilities and circumstances, not those of others. We do not want to set ourselves up for disappointment and discouragement. (Luke 14:28) Consider the example of a pioneer sister named Midori.

<sup>16</sup> Midori's father, who is not a Witness, humiliated her as a child by comparing her with her siblings and classmates. "I felt worthless," says Midori. As she grew older, however, Midori gained self-confidence. She says, "I read

15-16. How did a sister benefit from setting reasonable goals for herself?

the Bible every day so that I could have peace in my heart and I could feel that Jehovah loves me." In addition, she set reasonable goals for herself, and she prayed specifically for help to achieve those goals. As a result, Midori could rejoice in her own spiritual progress.

### CONTINUE TO GIVE JEHOVAH YOUR BEST

<sup>17</sup> Negative feelings and thoughts may not go away overnight. So Jehovah exhorts us: "You should **continue** to be made new in your dominant mental attitude." (Eph. 4:23, 24) To do so, of course, we need to pray, study God's Word, and meditate. Apply yourself to these things, and look to Jehovah for strength. His holy spirit will help you to overcome any tendency to compare

17. How can we "continue to be made new in [our] dominant mental attitude," and with what results?



yourself with others. Jehovah will also help you to recognize and quickly root out envy or undue pride if these undesirable feelings spring up in your heart.

**18 Read 2 Chronicles 6:29, 30.** Jehovah knows our heart. He also knows our struggles—our fight against the spirit of the world and against our own imperfections. As Jehovah sees how hard we are fighting against such negative influences, his love for us grows.

**19** To illustrate how he feels about us, Jehovah uses the bond between a mother and her baby. (Isa. 49:15) Consider the example of a mother named Rachel. She writes: “My daughter Stephanie was born prematurely. When I first saw her, she looked tiny and helpless. But the hospital allowed me to hold her every day during the first month when she was in an incubator. Those tender moments helped us to form a close bond. She is now six years old and is smaller than others her age. Yet, I love her all the more because she fought so hard to live,

---

18. How can you take comfort from the words found at 2 Chronicles 6:29, 30?

19. How does Jehovah illustrate the way he feels about us?

and she has brought so much joy to my life!” How comforting it is to know that Jehovah feels that type of deep love for us when he sees us fighting to serve him whole-souled!

**20** As a servant of Jehovah, you are a unique and valued member of his diverse family. Jehovah did not draw you to himself because you were better than your neighbors. He drew you because he looked into your heart and saw a meek and teachable person whom he could mold. (Ps. 25:9) Be assured that he appreciates it when you do your best to serve him. Your endurance and your faithfulness are evidence of “a fine and good heart.” (Luke 8:15) So continue to give Jehovah **your** best. Then you will have good reason to rejoice “in regard to [yourself] alone.”

---

20. As a dedicated servant of Jehovah, what reason do you have to rejoice?

---

**PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS** **Page 21:** During family worship, the parents show their delight with what each child has made to put into Noah’s ark.

**Page 24:** A single parent who has a preschooler works out a schedule to auxiliary pioneer, and she is happy to have reached her goal.

---

## HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| ■ How can parents help their children to rejoice in their own spiritual progress? | ■ How can elders help those in their care to feel loved and appreciated? | ■ Why can we rejoice when we give Jehovah our best? |
|---|--|---|

# My Happy Life in Jehovah's Service

AS TOLD BY JOHN KIKOT



MY FIRST job at Bethel in Canada was to sweep the floor of the building where the printing was done. It was 1958, and I was 18 years old. Life was good, and soon I was operating a machine that trimmed the magazines as they came off the press. I was so happy to be at Bethel!

---

The next year, it was announced to the Bethel family that volunteers were needed to serve at the South Africa branch, where a new rotary printing press was to be installed. I put in my name for consideration, and I was excited to be chosen. Three other Canadian Bethelites were also chosen—Dennis Leech, Bill McLellan, and Ken Nordin. We were told that we would receive one-way tickets!

I phoned my mother: “Mom, I have news for you. I’m going to South Africa!” My mother was a quiet woman but a woman of faith and of deep spirituality. She didn’t say much, but I knew I had her support. Neither she nor my father ever objected to the decision I made, though they were saddened that I would be so far away.

## OFF TO SOUTH AFRICA!

At Brooklyn Bethel, the four of us brothers received three months of training in hot-lead typesetting for letterpress printing. Then we boarded a cargo ship bound for Cape Town, South Africa. I had just turned 20. It was evening when we began the long train journey from Cape Town to Johannesburg. The first stop at dawn was at a little town in the Karoo, a semidesert area. It was dusty, smoky, and hot. The four of us peered out the window and wondered what kind of place this was. What were we getting ourselves into? In later years, we would revisit this area and come to appreciate those charming little towns and their peaceful way of life.

My assignment for a few years was to operate the amazing and intricate Linotype machine, setting lines of lead type for printing the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. The branch office printed the magazines in many African languages not only for South Africa but for many countries to the north. That new rotary printing press that brought us halfway around the world was being well-used!

Later, I worked in the Factory Office, which cared for various aspects of the printing, shipping, and translation work. Life for me was busy, satisfying, and meaningful.

## MARRIAGE AND A NEW ASSIGNMENT

In 1968, I married a pioneer sister, Laura Bowen, who lived near Bethel. She also did typing for the Translation Department. In those days, there was no arrangement for newly married couples to stay at Bethel, so we were given a special pioneer assignment. I was a little concerned. After ten years at Bethel with food and shelter always being provided, how would we manage on the special pioneer allowance? We would each receive 25 rand (back then worth \$35, U.S.) every month—if we reached the required hours, return visits, and literature placements. With that money, we would need to pay for our rent, food, and transportation as well as for medical and other personal expenses.

We were assigned to a little group near the city of Durban, on the Indian Ocean. There was a huge population of Indian people, many of them descendants of indentured laborers originally contracted for the sugar industry in the late 1800's. Now they were engaged in other occupations, though they still retained their culture and cuisine, including delicious curries. And they spoke English, which made it easy for us.

Special pioneers were expected to spend 150 hours each month in the ministry, so Laura and I scheduled six hours for the first day. It was hot and humid. We had no return visits and no Bible studies—just six hours of door-to-door preaching. A while after we started, I looked at my watch—only 40 minutes had passed! How, I wondered, were we going to get through this?

Soon, we got ourselves organized. Each day, we prepared sandwiches and put soup or coffee in a thermos. When we needed a break, we parked our little Volkswagen under the shade of a nearby tree—sometimes surrounded by beautiful little Indian children studying us curiously! Within a few days, we realized that after the first two or

three hours, the rest of the day went by very quickly.

What a joy it was to bring Bible truth to the hospitable people in that territory! We found the Indian people to be respectful, gracious, and God-fearing. Many Hindus responded to the message we brought them. They loved to learn about Jehovah, Jesus, the Bible, the future new world of peace, and the hope for the dead. After a year, we had 20 Bible studies. Every day, we enjoyed our main meal with one of the families with whom we studied. We were so happy.

All too soon we received another assignment—circuit work along the coast of the beautiful Indian Ocean. Each week, we were guests in a family's home while we visited and worked with the publishers in the congregation to encourage them. We became a part of their family, enjoying their children and pets. Two wonderful years passed by. Then suddenly a phone call came from the branch office. The message, "We're thinking of bringing you back to Bethel." My response was, "You know, we're really very happy out here." But, of course, we were willing to be used wherever we were assigned.

## BACK TO BETHEL

My assignment at Bethel was with the Service Department, where I had the privilege of working along with many mature, experienced brothers. In those days, each congregation received a letter in response to a report from the circuit overseer after his visit. The letters were meant to encourage and to give any direction that might be needed. This involved much work for our secretaries who translated correspondence from Xhosa, Zulu, and other languages into English and then from English into the African languages. I appreciated those hard-working translators who also gave me insight into the difficulties that our black African brothers and sisters faced.



**A. On a train traveling from Cape Town to Johannesburg with Dennis Leech, Ken Nordin, and Bill McLellan in 1959**

**B. The four of us at a 60-year reunion at the South Africa branch in 2019**

**C. Laura and me, serving as special pioneers in 1968**

At that time, South Africans lived under the apartheid system of government. Each racial group had designated living areas, so there wasn't much socializing between people of different races. Our black African brothers spoke their own languages, preached in their own languages, and attended their own language congregations.

I did not know many black Africans, since my congregation territory assignments had always been English-speaking. Now, though, I had a chance to learn about the black Africans and their culture and customs. I learned of the challenges our brothers faced in dealing with local traditions and religious beliefs. How courageous they were in breaking free from unscriptural traditions and in facing severe opposition from their family and village when refusing to follow spiritistic practices! In rural areas, there was much poverty. Many had little in the way of a formal education, but they respected the Bible.

I had the privilege of working on some legal cases involving freedom of worship and neutrality. It was so faith-strengthening to observe the loyalty and courage of young Witness children who had been expelled from school for refusing to join in prayers and hymns.

The brothers faced another challenge in the little African country that was then called Swaziland. When King Sobhuza II died, all citizens were required to carry out certain mourning rites. Men were to shave off their hair, and women were to cut their hair short. Many brothers and sisters were persecuted for refusing to participate in this practice that was related to ancestor worship. How their loyalty to Jehovah warmed our hearts! We learned a lot about faithfulness, loyalty, and patience from our African brothers, and that built up our faith.

### **BACK TO THE PRINTERY**

In 1981, I was assigned to assist with the development of computerized printing



methods. So back to the Printery I went. What an exciting time it was! The printing world was changing. A local sales representative gave the branch a phototypesetter to try out, without any obligation. This resulted in replacing the nine Linotype machines with five new phototypesetters. A new rotary offset printing press was also installed. Things were speeding up!

Computerization led to devising new composition methods using MEPS, the Multilanguage Electronic Publishing System. What a long way we had come from the cumbersome, slow Linotype machines and hot-lead printing presses that had brought us four Canadian Bethelites to South Africa! (Isa. 60:17) By then all of us had married good, spiritually-minded pioneer sisters. Bill and I were still serving at Bethel. Ken and Dennis had started raising families nearby.

Branch activities were increasing. Bible literature was being translated and printed in an increasing number of languages, and it was being shipped to other branches. Consequently, a new Bethel complex was needed. The brothers built one in a beautiful area west of Johannesburg, and it was dedicated in 1987. It was a pleasure to be part of all that expansion and to serve on the Branch Committee in South Africa for many years.

### **ANOTHER NEW ASSIGNMENT!**

A great surprise came in 2001 when I was invited to serve on the newly formed United States Branch Committee. Although we were sad to leave our work and friends in South Africa, we were excited to begin a new life as part of the United States Bethel family.

We were, however, concerned about leaving behind Laura's aging mother. We could not do much for her from New York, but Laura's three sisters offered to help her physically, emotionally, and financially. They said, "We can't be in full-time service our-

selves, but if we look after Mom's needs, it will assist you in continuing in your assignment." We are deeply grateful to them.

In the same spirit, my brother and his wife, who lived in Toronto, Canada, were caring for my widowed mother. At that time, she had been part of their family for more than 20 years. We really appreciate the love and care they gave her until her death soon after our arrival in New York. What a blessing to have supportive family members who are willing to adjust their lives in order to take on a responsibility that can at times be quite challenging!

For some years, my work assignment in the United States was in literature production, which has become even more modernized and simplified. More recently, I have been working in the Purchasing Department. What a pleasure it has been for the past 20 years to be part of this huge branch, now numbering some 5,000 Bethel family members along with about 2,000 commuter workers!

Sixty years ago, I would not have thought that this is where I would be. Laura has given me her wholehearted support through all these years. What a rich life it has been! We treasure the variety of assignments we have had and all the wonderful people we have worked with, including those in the many branches we have visited on branch assignments in so many parts of the world. Now that I am over 80 years old, I have been given a reduced workload, as there are many capable younger brothers who can care for the work.

The psalmist wrote: "Happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah." (Ps. 33:12) How true that is! I am so very grateful that I have been able to share in the joy of Jehovah's happy people.

## How should Jehovah's Witnesses view using matchmaking websites to find a marriage mate?



■ Jehovah certainly wants two people who marry to be happy and to enjoy a lasting and close bond with each other. (Matt. 19: 4-6) If you wish to marry, how can you find a good marriage mate? As our Creator, Jehovah knows what will lead to success in courtship and marriage. Therefore, if you apply the principles he has given us, you will get the best results. Consider some of those principles.

First, we have to understand this about ourselves: “The heart is more treacherous than anything else and is desperate.” (Jer. 17:9) As a person attempts to find and attract a prospective marriage mate, intense emotions can build up quickly and override sound reasoning. When people base a decision to marry primarily on emotion, they often end up devastated. (Prov. 28:26) That is why it is not wise for two people to express intimate feelings early on in a relationship or to make commitments before they really get to know each other.

Proverbs 22:3 says: “The shrewd one sees the danger and conceals himself, but the in-

experienced keep right on going and suffer the consequences.” What could be dangerous about using matchmaking websites? Sadly, some have learned through bitter experience that they were taken advantage of emotionally by the strangers they met online. Also, dishonest people have set up fake accounts to scam naive people out of their money. At times, those who were behind the cruel deceptions claimed to be Witnesses.

Consider an additional risk. Some matchmaking sites use mathematical algorithms, or calculations, that are supposed to match compatible people. However, there is no evidence that such methods really work. Would it be wise to put trust in a man-made formula to ensure the success of something as important as marriage? How can mathematical formulas even begin to compare with Bible principles?—Prov. 1:7; 3:5-7.

A principle found at Proverbs 14:15 states: “The naive person believes every word, but the shrewd one ponders each step.” Before considering someone as a potential marriage mate, you want to get to know the

person well. But meeting online can make that hard to accomplish. Even if you share profiles and spend considerable time exchanging messages, can you really say that you know the person? Some who thought they had found their true love were shocked at what they learned when they finally met the individual in person.

The psalmist said: “I do not associate with deceitful men, and I avoid those who hide what they are.” (Ps. 26:4) Many consider it a common practice to lie on their online dating profiles to make themselves appear more desirable. They may conceal their real character or just not manifest it when presenting themselves online. While some people may identify themselves as Jehovah’s Witnesses, are they really baptized Christians? Are they spiritually mature? Do they have a personal relationship with Jehovah? Are they respected in their congregation? Or might they be poor examples or even “bad associations”? (1 Cor. 15:33; 2 Tim. 2:20, 21) And are they Scripturally free to marry? You need to know these things, but they are difficult to discern without some sort of corroboration from other Witnesses who know the person well. (Prov. 15:22) And, of course, a loyal servant of Jehovah would not even consider being “unevenly yoked” with an unbeliever.—2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Cor. 7:39.

In view of the risks associated with using matchmaking websites, there are better ways to look for a mate and to develop a relationship that may lead to an honorable marriage. How can you find opportunities to meet a potential mate? When public gatherings are not prohibited, Jehovah’s Witnesses can get acquainted in person while attending congregation meetings, assemblies, conventions, and other gatherings.

When these public gatherings are not possible, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic, we use electronic tools to attend congregation meetings, where there are



**As you spend time together, you will see more clearly whether your goals and values are similar**

opportunities to get acquainted with other single Witnesses. You can see how they participate in the meetings and hear their personal expressions of faith. (1 Tim. 6:11, 12) You may also be able to visit with each other in a breakout room after the meetings. Through virtual social gatherings with groups of Witnesses, you can observe how the person you are interested in interacts with other people, and that can reveal the person’s true character. (1 Pet. 3:4) In time, as you get better acquainted, you can determine whether your goals and values are similar and whether the two of you are compatible.

When single people look for a potential marriage mate in ways that harmonize with Bible principles, they are more likely to experience the truth of the proverb that says: “The one who finds a good wife [or husband] has found something good, and he [or she] receives Jehovah’s favor.” —Prov. 18:22.

## IN THIS ISSUE

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Study Article 26: August 30–September 5                 | 2  |
| <b>Can You Help in the Disciple-Making Work?</b>        |    |
| Study Article 27: September 6-12                        | 8  |
| <b>Imitate Jehovah's Endurance</b>                      |    |
| Study Article 28: September 13-19                       | 14 |
| <b>Avoid Stirring Up Competition<br/>—Promote Peace</b> |    |
| Study Article 29: September 20-26                       | 20 |
| <b>Rejoice in Your Own Progress!</b>                    |    |
| LIFE STORY  | 26 |
| <b>My Happy Life in Jehovah's Service</b>               |    |
| QUESTIONS FROM READERS                                  | 30 |

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. To make a donation, please visit [donate.jw.org](https://donate.jw.org).

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

*The Watchtower* (ISSN 0043-1087) July 2021 is published by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; Harold L. Corkern, President; Mark L. Questell, Secretary-Treasurer; 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299, and by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada, PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. © 2021 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. Printed in Canada.

## FEATURED CONTENT IN JW LIBRARY AND ON JW.ORG

### THE BIBLE CHANGES LIVES

#### **I Found True Riches**

How did a successful business executive discover something more valuable than wealth and money?

In *JW Library*, go to PUBLICATIONS > ARTICLE SERIES > THE BIBLE CHANGES LIVES.

On [jw.org](https://jw.org), go to LIBRARY > ARTICLE SERIES > THE BIBLE CHANGES LIVES.

### YOUNG PEOPLE ASK

#### **How Resilient Am I?**

Adversity is inevitable. That is why it is important for you to build resilience, no matter how trivial or how serious your problems may be.

In *JW Library*, go to PUBLICATIONS > ARTICLE SERIES > YOUNG PEOPLE ASK.

On [jw.org](https://jw.org), go to LIBRARY > ARTICLE SERIES > YOUNG PEOPLE ASK.

### COVER PICTURE:

Jesus' disciples were drawn to him because he never assumed a superior attitude. He enjoyed association with his friends (See study article 29, paragraph 12)

Visit the [jw.org](https://jw.org) website, or scan code



w21.07-E  
210302