

Are You Handling God's Word Aright?

¹ Jesus Christ was the greatest teacher who ever lived on earth. He spoke in a way that touched people's hearts, stirred their emotions, and motivated them to practice good works. (Matt. 7:28, 29) He always used God's Word as the basis for his teaching. (Luke 24:44, 45) He gave Jehovah God the credit for all that he knew and was able to teach. (John 7:16) Jesus set a splendid example for his followers by handling God's Word aright.—2 Tim. 2:15.

² The apostle Paul also served as an outstanding example by effectively handling the Word of God. He did more than just read the Scriptures to others; he explained and reasoned on what he read, presenting proof from God's Word that Jesus was the Christ. (Acts 17:2-4) Likewise, the eloquent disciple Apollos was "well versed in the Scriptures," and he handled them aright in making a powerful presentation of the truth.—Acts 18:24, 28.

³ Be a Teacher of God's Word:

Modern-day Kingdom proclaimers have enjoyed excellent success in teaching honesthearted people by referring to and reasoning from the Bible. In one case, a brother was able to use Ezekiel 18:4 along with related texts to reason with a pastor and three of his parishioners on the destiny of the wicked and the righteous. As a result, some members of the church began to study, and one of them eventually accepted the truth. In another case, a sister was asked to explain to the opposed husband of an interested person why Jehovah's Witnesses do not celebrate Christmas and birthdays. As she read the Scriptural answers directly from the *Reasoning* book, the man expressed his agreement. His wife was so delighted at his acceptance that she said: "We will be coming to your meetings." And the husband agreed!

⁴ **Use the Help That Is Available:** *Our Kingdom Ministry* and the Ser-

vice Meeting program offer fine direction to assist us in the handling of God's Word. Many publishers have expressed appreciation for the variety of suggested presentations that are published and demonstrated for our benefit and that have proved to be very timely and effective. *Reasoning From the Scriptures* contains a wealth of ideas on how to expound aright on more than 70 principal subjects that are addressed in God's Word. *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life* provides a concise summary of all the fundamental Bible teachings that new ones need to understand. Studies 24 and 25 in the *Theocratic Ministry School Guidebook* show us how skilled teachers properly introduce, read, and apply scriptures. We should make good use of all this help that is readily available to us.

⁵ When we handle the Word of God aright, we will find that it "is alive and exerts power . . . and is able to discern thoughts and intentions of the heart" of those to whom we preach. (Heb. 4:12) The success we enjoy with it will move us to speak the truth with ever greater boldness!—Acts 4:31.

We Have a Commission

¹ Jesus commanded his followers to "make disciples of people of all the nations." (Matt. 28:19) In 232 lands and island groups around the earth, over five million praisers of Jehovah God provide living testimony to the fulfillment of Jesus' command. But what about us personally? Do we take seriously the commission to preach?

² **A Moral Obligation:** A commission is "a command to perform prescribed acts." We are under orders from Christ to preach. (Acts 10:42) The apostle Paul realized that this laid upon him a necessity, or moral obligation, to declare the good news. (1 Cor. 9:16) To illustrate: Imagine that you are a crewman on a sinking ship. The captain orders you to warn the passengers and direct them to the lifeboats. Will you ignore that command and concentrate on saving just yourself? Certainly not. Others are depending on you. Their lives are at stake. You

are morally obligated to carry out your commission to help them.

³ We have been divinely commissioned to sound a warning. Jehovah will soon bring an end to this entire wicked system of things. Millions of lives hang in the balance. Would it be right for us to ignore the peril to others and be concerned only about saving ourselves? Of course not. We are morally obligated to help save the lives of others.—1 Tim. 4:16.

⁴ **Faithful Examples to Follow:** The prophet Ezekiel felt an accountability to give a warning message to unfaithful Israelites. Jehovah emphatically warned him of the consequences if he failed to carry out his assignment: "When I say to someone wicked, 'You will positively die,' and you do not actually warn him . . . , he being wicked, in his error he will die, but his blood I shall ask back from your own hand." (Ezek. 3:18) Ezekiel loy-

ally fulfilled his commission even in the face of stiff opposition. Therefore, he could rejoice when Jehovah's judgments were carried out.

⁵ Centuries later, the apostle Paul wrote of his responsibility to preach. He declared: "I am clean from the blood of all men, for I have not held back from telling you all the counsel of God." Paul preached publicly and from house to house because he recognized that a failure to do so could have made him bloodguilty before God.—Acts 20:20, 26, 27.

⁶ Do we have the zeal of Ezekiel? Do we feel impelled to preach as did Paul? Our commission is the same as theirs was. We must continue to fulfill our responsibility to warn others, in spite of their apathy, indifference, or opposition. Thousands more can yet respond to the Kingdom message and declare: "We will go with you people, for we have heard that God is with you people." (Zech. 8:23) May our love for God and our fellowman motivate us not to give up. We have a commission to preach!

SERVICE MEETINGS FOR NOVEMBER

Week Starting November 4

Song 29

10 min: Local announcements. Selected Announcements from *Our Kingdom Ministry*. Comment on August field service report for the congregation and for the local congregation.

15 min: "Are You Handling God's Word Aright?" Questions and answers. Include comments on "Reasons for considering the Bible," from the *Reasoning* book, pages 58-60.

20 min: "This Means Everlasting Life." (Paragraphs 1-5) After brief opening comments on paragraph 1, have two capable publishers demonstrate the presentations in paragraphs 2-5. Include a reminder to mention the donation arrangement when placing literature. Emphasize the goal of starting a Bible study. Song 128 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting November 11

Song 40

10 min: Local announcements. Accounts report.

20 min: Why Give to Jehovah? Discussion between two elders, highlighting main points in article on pages 28-31 of *The Watchtower* of November 1, 1996. Or information may be presented in a talk by an elder.

15 min: "This Means Everlasting Life." (Paragraphs 6-8) Discuss the advantages of using a direct approach to start studies. Have experienced publishers demonstrate the presentations in paragraphs 6-7. Invite audience to relate instances of where a study was started on the initial call. When directly offered a study, one man replied: "Yes. Come inside. I would love to have a study." The study was started with him, his whole family sat in the next week, and soon all were attending meetings and sharing in the witness work. Encourage all to bring their copy of the June 1996 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert to next week's Service Meeting.

Song 129 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting November 18

Song 140

10 min: Local announcements. Review field service arrangements during worldly holiday on November 28.

15 min: "We Have a Commission." Questions and answers. Comment briefly on paragraphs 13-16 in the January 1, 1988, *Watchtower*, pages 28-9.

20 min: Conducting Progressive Bible Studies. Talk by the service overseer. We have been using the *Knowledge* book in the Bible study work for over a year. Likely some students have already finished it, while others are well along in the book. We were encouraged to concentrate on conducting studies designed to help new ones learn the truth quickly, apply it in their lives, and become part of the congregation. The June 1996 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert provided fine suggestions to help us to be effective as teachers. Briefly review some of the things we can do to teach students skillfully, as covered in paragraphs 3-13 of that insert. Next, concentrate on what needs to be done to help them take a positive stand, as outlined in paragraphs 14-22. Read paragraphs 15, 17, 20-1. Review some positive reports showing how good results have been achieved by local publishers. Encourage more to share in the Bible study work.

Song 85 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting November 25

Song 46

15 min: Local announcements.

15 min: "Share With Others According to Their Needs." Talk by an elder.

10 min: Question Box. Discuss with audience.

15 min: Review Literature Offer for December. Offer the *New World Translation* with the book *The Bible—God's Word or Man's?* Using pages 327-31 in the "All Scripture" book, show the superiority of the *New World Translation*: It upholds and magnifies the divine name (paragraphs 1-2); its improved renderings make the text more understandable (paragraph 6); it is a powerful instrument for use in the ministry (paragraphs 22-3). Outline and demonstrate a brief presentation, using thoughts on page 189 of *The Bible—God's Word or Man's?* Wherever interest is shown, definite arrangements should be made for a return visit.

Song 180 and concluding prayer.

CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY

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

November 4: **Chapters 23-25**

November 11: **Chapters 26-28**

November 18: **Chapters 29-31**

November 25: **Chapters 32-34**

QUESTION BOX

■ What should we keep in mind when writing letters to householders whom we have been unable to find at home?

For a variety of reasons, we are finding it increasingly difficult to contact people when we visit their homes. Some publishers have found letter writing to be a practical way to reach them. While this can produce some good results, there is a need to consider some reminders that can help us to avoid some difficulties:

- 1 Do not use the Society's return address. This would improperly indicate that the correspondence was sent from our offices, causing unnecessary problems and sometimes extra expense.
- 2 Make sure you have the correct address and sufficient postage.
- 3 Do not address letters to "Occupant"; use a specific name.

4 Do not leave letters in the door when no one is at home.

5 Brief letters are best. Enclose a tract or a magazine rather than attempt to write out a lengthy message.

6 Typewritten letters are much easier to read and create a more favorable impression.

Letters are not counted as return visits unless you have personally witnessed to the individual previously.

7 If you are writing to a person who formerly showed interest, you should provide an address or phone number so that you can be contacted. Explain our Bible study program.

8 Extend an invitation to the meetings of the local congregation. Give the address and meeting times.

9 Do not continue to send letters to not-at-homes after turning in the territory; the publisher who currently holds the territory is responsible for working it.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ **Literature offer for November:** *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. A special effort will be made to follow up on all placements, with a view to starting home Bible studies. **December:** *New World Translation with the book The Bible—God's Word or Man's?* **January:** Any 192-page book published prior to 1984 that the congregation may have in stock. Congregations that do not have a supply of such books may offer *Survival Into a New Earth*. **February:** *Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!*

■ Congregations that still have a supply of *Kingdom News* No. 34 may encourage publishers to offer these in the same manner that other tracts are

used, whether from door to door or elsewhere. If permissible, publishers may leave one at each not-at-home, making sure it is placed completely out of sight of passersby. Effort should be made to distribute all remaining copies of this valuable message.

■ Congregations should begin requesting the 1997 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses* with their November literature request. The *Yearbook* will be available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish. Until the *Yearbook* is available and shipments are made, it will appear as "Pending" on congregation packing lists. *Yearbooks* are special-request items.

AUGUST SERVICE REPORT

Number of:	Avg. Hrs.	Avg. Mags.	Avg. R.V.	Avg. Bt.St.
Sp'l Pios.	143	117.0	80.3	48.7 4.4
Pios.	70,582	60.1	32.2	19.3 2.0
Aux. Pios.	21,334	58.5	32.4	13.5 1.1
Pubs.	883,770	9.4	6.4	3.4 0.4
TOTAL	975,829			Baptized: 3,308

The report shows a new peak of 975,829 total publishers. This is an increase of 19,483, or 2.0 percent, over the previous peak, in August 1995.

Share With Others According to Their Needs

¹ Jehovah makes provision to fill our spiritual needs through the faithful "slave." (Matt. 24:45-47) Many of these provisions are in the form of books, Bibles, bound volumes, videos, audiocassette recordings, and computer disks for Bible research. What Jehovah supplies is always sufficient without being wasteful. He expects us to share with one another, making sure that all benefit equally.

² All such provisions are produced at tremendous financial cost. These expenses are cared for by the worldwide brotherhood. This is especially true since the organization instituted the arrangement to distribute literature without charge, depending entirely on voluntary donations to cover the expense. Additionally, many branches obtain these provisions from the Society at a cost that enables the brothers to have what they need for meetings and field activity even though they have very limited material resources.

³ **How We Can Help:** We can respond to Paul's admonition to share with others "according to their needs." (Rom. 12:13) When we make financial contributions toward the worldwide work, we are directly sharing what we have with our brothers around the world. With this in mind, some have de-

cided to set aside an amount to contribute to the worldwide work each month, just as they do for Kingdom Hall expenses. They recognize that these funds are used not only for literature production but for all facets of the work as well. Imagine the great benefit our worldwide brotherhood would experience if more would share in this way on a regular basis.

⁴ Further, we can share with them by always being conservative when requesting items that are readily available to us. Ordering only what we actually need allows our brothers elsewhere to receive the spiritual provisions that they also need to keep strong and to advance the preaching of the good news in their part of the world.—Heb. 13:16.

⁵ We should especially bear this in mind when we request items that are produced at considerable expense to the Society. These include videos, CD-ROMs, large reference books, bound volumes, and audiocassette subscriptions. Rather than requesting one item for each member of the household, could the entire family get along with just one? If we limit what we take for ourselves, it will allow others to obtain the same good things that we enjoy.—Phil. 2:4.

⁶ The cost of literature that we place in the field may be offset in part by donations to the Society's worldwide work offered by us at the King-

dom Hall and by interested ones who accept it. However, when it comes to literature items we request for our personal use, including songbooks, *Yearbooks*, deluxe Bibles, and so forth, we cannot expect outsiders to care for our needs. Jehovah's dedicated servants are the primary source of this financial support. With that in mind, many publishers estimate what these items might cost if commercially produced, and then they contribute accordingly. For example, a deluxe, gold-edged Bible can easily cost \$20 or more, a reference book may be \$40 and up, a full-color wall calendar may sell for at least \$5, an encyclopedia on CD-ROM costs from \$50 to \$100 or higher, music compact discs commonly cost close to \$20, and some videos are often sold for much more. A failure to contribute enough to cover costs will ultimately restrict what the organization may otherwise be able to accomplish in furthering the worldwide work.

⁷ Jesus declared that his true disciples would be clearly identified by their love for one another. (John 13:34, 35) Our generosity in giving materially and our unselfishness in sharing with others according to their needs are surely fine ways to prove ourselves to be genuine Christians.

"This Means Everlasting Life"

¹ Jesus' words recorded at John 17:3 are to be taken seriously. He meant what he said—taking in knowledge of God and Christ means everlasting life! But is it just by our possessing knowledge of Jehovah and Jesus that we will be rewarded with life eternal? No. The Israelites knew that Jehovah was their God, but their life course did not reflect that belief. As a result, they lost his favor. (Hos. 4:1, 2, 6) Today millions of people may "have

a zeal for God; but not according to accurate knowledge." (Rom. 10:2) They need to come to know Jehovah, "the only true God," and to learn how to serve him properly. To that end, during November we will be offering the book *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. What approach will you use in presenting the *Knowledge* book? Here are some suggestions that may help you.

² *Since the idea of living forever on earth is new for most people, this introduction might capture their interest:*

■ "We are asking our neighbors a question. If you were invited to live forever in a world like this, would you accept the invitation? [Show the picture on pages 4-5 in the *Knowledge* book. Allow for response.] This can really become your happy lot in life. But what do you think you would have to do to see it become a reality for you? [Allow for response.] Notice what action is required according to John 17:3. [Read.] This book is helping many to acquire this special kind of knowledge. Would you like to have a personal copy to read? [Allow for response.] On my next visit, we can discuss why it is reasonable to believe that we can attain to everlasting life right here on earth."

³ *When you return to visit those with whom you discussed John 17:3, you might proceed in this way:*

■ "During my last visit, I read to you Jesus' fascinating words found at John 17:3, where he assured us that taking in knowledge of God and of him means everlasting life. But many people believe that a better life can be achieved only in heaven. How do you feel about that? [Allow for response.] If the book that I left with you is handy, I would like to show you some Bible verses that prove Paradise is to be restored on earth. [Discuss paragraphs 11-16 on pages 9-10 in the *Knowledge* book.] On my next visit, I would like to show you why you can trust these promises that are found in the Bible. In the meantime, perhaps you could read chapter 2 in your copy of the book."

⁴ *Here is a presentation that you may wish to use with people who are religiously inclined:*

■ "We have been talking to our neighbors regarding why there are so many different religions in the world. Some 1,200 religious denominations exist in the United States alone, and over 10,000 in the entire world. Yet, there is only one Bible. In your opinion, why does this confusion of religions exist? [Allow for response. Open the *Knowledge* book to chapter 5, and read paragraph 1.] You will receive satisfying answers to those questions by reading this chapter. I will be happy to leave the book with you if you care to examine it." If it is accepted, make definite arrangements to return, and say: "When I come back, perhaps we could discuss whether all religions are simply different roads leading to the same place."

⁵ *When you return to continue the discussion about why there are so many religions, you could say this:*

■ "When I last spoke with you, I raised the question of whether all religions are merely different roads leading to the same place. What do you think about that? [Allow for response.] I would like to show you in the book I left with you what Jesus said on the matter. [Turn to chapter 5 in the *Knowledge* book, and read paragraphs 6-7, including Matthew 7:21-23.] You may wonder why it is so important to know exactly what the will of God is. You will find that the next paragraphs are very informative. Please read the remainder of this chapter. Next time I come, I will be pleased to show you the value of having accurate Bible knowledge."

⁶ *A direct approach is often successful in starting Bible studies. Here is a suggested introduction that appears on page 12 in the "Reasoning" book:*

■ "I'm calling to offer you a free home Bible course. If I may, I'd like to take just a few minutes to demonstrate how people in some 200 lands discuss the Bible at home as family groups. We can use any of these topics as a basis for discussion. [Show the table of contents in the *Knowledge* book.] Which one especially interests you?" Wait for the person to make a selection. Turn to the chapter that is chosen, and start the study in the first paragraph.

⁷ *Here is another successful direct approach that you could try for starting studies:*

■ "I give Bible lessons free of charge and have openings in my schedule for additional students. This Bible study aid is what we use. [Show the *Knowledge* book.] The course lasts only a few months and provides answers to such questions as: Why does God permit suffering? Why do we grow old and die? What happens to our dead loved ones? And how can we draw close to God?" Then ask, "May I demonstrate the study to you?" If the offer of a study is declined, ask if the person would like to have the *Knowledge* book to read on his own. If he promises to read it, leave a copy.

⁸ What a treasure the accurate knowledge of God and Christ is for everyone that possesses it! Taking it in truly means everlasting life in perfect conditions. Let us use every opportunity during November to share with others the knowledge that leads to everlasting life.