



MID-WEEK MEETING FILE

JULY 1-5, 2013

WEEK STARTING JULY 1

Song 69 and Prayer

□ Congregation Bible Study:

jr chap. 11 ¶9-14 (30 min.)

□ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Acts 11-14 (10 min.)

No. 1: Acts 11:1-18 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: What Effect Should the Ransom Have on How We Use Our Lives?—*rs* p. 311 ¶4-6 (5 min.)

No. 3: Who Really Are Your Friends?—Ps. 119: 63 (5 min.)

□ Service Meeting:

Song 70

10 min: Ideas for Offering the Magazines in July. Discussion. Take 30 to 60 seconds to relate why the magazines will have appeal in your territory. Then using the cover subject of *The Watchtower*, invite the audience to give suggestions on an interest-arousing question to ask and then invite suggestions on a scripture to read. Do the same for *Awake!* and, if time allows, for one other article from either magazine. Demonstrate how each issue may be offered.

10 min: Local needs.

10 min: What Do We Learn? Discussion. Have Luke 12:16-31 read. Consider how this account can help us in our ministry.

Song 35 and Prayer

Announcements

■ Literature offer for **June:** Feature one of the following tracts: *Enjoy Family Life*, *Who Really Rules the World?*, *Why You Can Trust the Bible*, or *Would You Like to Know the Truth?* If there is interest, demonstrate a Bible study using the *Bible Teach* book or one of the brochures *Listen to God* or *Listen to God and Live Forever*.

July and August: Feature one of the following 32-page brochures: *Good News From God!*, *Listen to God*, or *Listen to God and Live Forever*.

September: The *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines.

■ As of April 1, 2013, Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Saba, St. Eustatius, St. Maarten, and the United States Virgin Islands came under the oversight of the United States branch.

Sample Presentations

To Start Bible Studies on the First Saturday in July

“Almost everyone in our community would like to live a long, happy life. So we would like to get your opinion on this question: Do you think that science and medicine will enable us to live forever one day? [Allow for response.] Notice what it says here.” Show the back of the July 1 *Watchtower*, and consider together the material under the first question and at least one of the cited scriptures. Offer the magazines, and arrange to return to discuss the next question.

Note: This presentation should be demonstrated during the meeting for field service on July 6.

THE WATCHTOWER® July 1 ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

“Many whom we talk to have their own religion. But others say that they have lost trust in religion altogether. How do you feel about religion? [Allow for response.] Jesus provided a standard to help us when examining a religion. [Read Luke 6:44a.] This magazine discusses some of the bad fruit that religion has produced. It also answers the question, Is any religion deserving of trust?”

Awake!® July

“We are visiting our neighbors to talk about a distressing problem—injustice. Some people fight injustice by protesting. Do you think that people who protest succeed in bringing about changes? [Allow for response.] Notice what the Bible says will bring real change to the earth. [Read Matthew 6:9, 10.] This magazine answers the question, Is protest the answer?”

Good News From God!

“We’re visiting the families on your street to share an encouraging thought from the Bible. Many that we’ve talked to wonder why a loving God would allow so much suffering in the world. Do you think that suffering was part of God’s original purpose for the earth?” Allow for response. Then turn to Lesson 5, and read and discuss the first two paragraphs and the scriptures in italics. Offer the brochure, and make arrangements to return to consider the next question in bold print.

Field Service Highlights

We are happy to report two new all-time peaks in regular pioneers during the month of December 2012: 154,706 in the United States and 79 in Bermuda. Also, when comparing December with the same month of the previous year, the number of Bible studies being conducted increased by 5.9 percent in the Bahamas and by 15.6 percent in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Clearly, Jehovah’s servants are making a “sacrifice of praise” to him.—Heb. 13:15.

69 *Make Me Know Your Ways* (Psalm 25:4)

1. We're gathered together Jehovah, our God,
 Accepting your warm invitation.
Your Word is a lamp that lights up our roadway,
 The source of divine education.

(CHORUS)

*Teach me your ways, and make me understand;
 Incline my ear to hear your wise command.
Cause me to walk in ways of truth and right,
 And make your law my principal delight.*

2. Unreachably high is your wisdom, O God;
 Your judgments we find reassuring.
Your Word is a source of unending wonder;
 Your sayings of truth are enduring.

(Chorus)

hesitates to accept Scriptural counsel (not just a personal opinion), remember the Supreme Shepherd and Overseer, Jehovah. He patiently “kept speaking” to and striving to help his wayward people. (Jer. 25:3-6) Most of God’s people today do not practice bad things, but when counsel is required, an elder must offer it as did Jehovah.

⁸ While there was still hope that fellow Jews might return to Jehovah, Jeremiah prayed for them. He said to God: “Remember my standing before you to speak good even concerning them, to turn back your rage from them.” (Jer. 18:20) You can see from these words that Jeremiah was looking for the good in his brothers, not thinking ill of them. Today, Christian overseers should imitate Jeremiah’s attitude until there is clear evidence that a person has unrepentantly set his heart to do what is bad. A positive step is to commend others for the good they are doing and to pray for them and with them. —Matt. 25:21.

8. How may spiritual shepherds imitate Jeremiah’s example?

What promise did God make through Jeremiah regarding spiritual shepherds? How can Christian overseers provide protective care?

“THEY WILL CERTAINLY FEED YOU”

⁹ In harmony with what we read at Jeremiah 3:15, Christian shepherds are to “feed [others] with knowledge and insight,” that is, to serve as teachers. (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17) Jehovah promised his people that the good shepherds would do that. And he encouraged the Jews to ac-

9, 10. Why does being a good shepherd (congregation elder) mean being a teacher?

cept the corrective teaching from his prophet Jeremiah. (*Read Jeremiah 6:8.*) To be healthy, sheep need nourishment. Comparably, to remain spiritually healthy, God’s people need Scriptural feeding and direction.

¹⁰ When it comes to teaching, elders have a two-fold role—that of helping those who are already in the congregation and that of helping those who are not yet true Christians. As to the latter, remember: One of the chief reasons that the Christian congregation exists is to preach the good news of God’s Kingdom. Accordingly, elders must be zealous evangelizers. (Jer. 1:7-10) As such, they both fulfill their own responsibility toward God and set a fine example for their brothers. If you are an elder, do you not find that regularly preaching side by side with various brothers and sisters gives you the opportunity to help them refine their teaching abilities and to refine your own? And when you zealously take the lead in evangelizing, you are giving vital encouragement, which can help the whole congregation to progress.

¹¹ What elders share in dispensing to the congregation must be based on the Bible; thus, it will be wholesome spiritual food. You can appreciate, then, that in order to be effective teachers, congregation shepherds must be zealous students of God’s Word. Contrast this with what Jeremiah pointed out as to why the leaders of his people were ineffective: “The shepherds have behaved unreasoningly, and they have not looked even for Jehovah. That is why they have not acted with insight, and all their pastured animals have been scattered.” (Jer. 10:21) Those who should have been teachers were not following Scriptural principles and were not searching for

11, 12. An elder who wants to be a good shepherd must give attention to what?

God. Hence, they could not act with true wisdom. Jeremiah proclaimed an even stronger denunciation of the so-called prophets.—*Read Jeremiah 14:14, 15.*

¹² Unlike those false shepherds, Christian overseers study and imitate Jesus' example. Thus, they can serve as wise shepherds of the flock. It can be a challenge for them to schedule such study regularly, given the diverse demands on their time and attention. But if you serve as an elder, are you firmly convinced that your instruction can be beneficial and true, reflecting knowledge and insight, only when you base it on God's Word and direction from the faithful and discreet slave class? If you sense that you are not as involved in a personal study program as you were previously, what will you do so that you can continue to be different from the false shepherds of Jeremiah's day?

¹³ Something that made Jeremiah particularly effective as a teacher was his use of illustrations. Of course, he was instructed by Jehovah. How memorable it would have been to see him dash an earthenware pot to the ground and proclaim that in the same way, Jerusalem and its people would be smashed! (Jer. 19:1, 10, 11) Another example is that Jeremiah made and wore a wooden yoke to denote his people's suffering the severe bondage of submission to Babylon. (Jer., chaps. 27-28) The elders in your congregation have not been directed by God to carry out such dramatic actions to illustrate points. Yet, do you not appreciate it when they weave appropriate illustrations and experiences into their teaching? Truly well-thought-out and appropriate word pictures and examples can be both powerful and motivating.

13. What helped Jeremiah to be a good teacher, and what can Christian shepherds today learn from him?



¹⁴ How thankful we can be for the teaching done by Christian shepherds! In his day, Jeremiah saw the need for the spiritual healing of his people. He asked: “Is there no balsam in Gilead? Or is there no healer there?” (Jer. 8:22) There was *literal* balsam in Gilead, the part of Israel east of the Jordan. This aromatic plant oil was renowned for its medicinal properties, often being applied to soothe and cure wounds.

However, there was no *spiritual* healing. Why? Jeremiah observed: “The prophets themselves actually prophesy in falsehood; and as for the priests, they go subduing according to their powers. And my own people have loved it that way.” (Jer. 5:31) What about today? Can you not agree that there definitely is “balsam in Gilead”—yes, in your congregation? We can liken soothing balsam to the comfort that caring Christian shepherds provide by lovingly directing brothers to Scriptural principles, being upbuilding, and praying for them and with them.—Jas. 5: 14, 15.

14. (a) Jeremiah’s reference to “balsam in Gilead” was based on what? (b) How can Christian elders promote the spiritual health of their brothers?

What aspects of the teaching by elders in your congregation do you especially appreciate? What makes their teaching effective?



Paragraph 9

(Jeremiah 3:15) And I will give YOU shepherds in agreement with my heart, and they will certainly feed YOU with knowledge and insight.

(1 Timothy 3:2) The overseer should therefore be irreprehensible, a husband of one wife, moderate in habits, sound in mind, orderly, hospitable, qualified to teach,

(1 Timothy 5:17) Let the older men who preside in a fine way be reckoned worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard in speaking and teaching.

(Jeremiah 6:8) Be corrected, O Jerusalem, that my soul may not turn away disgusted from you; that I may not set you as a desolate waste, a land not inhabited.”

Paragraph 10

(Jeremiah 1:7-10) And Jehovah went on to say to me: “Do not say, ‘I am but a boy.’ But to all those to whom I shall send you, you should go; and everything that I shall command you, you should speak.”⁸ Do not be afraid because of their faces, for ‘I am with you to deliver you,’ is the utterance of Jehovah.”⁹ At that Jehovah thrust his hand out and caused it to touch my mouth. Then Jehovah said to me: “Here I have put my words in your mouth.¹⁰ See, I have commissioned you this day to be over the nations and over the kingdoms, in order to uproot and to pull down and to destroy and to tear down, to build and to plant.”

Paragraph 11

(Jeremiah 10:21) For the shepherds have behaved unreasoningly, and they have not looked even for Jehovah. That is why they have not acted with insight, and all their pastured animals have been scattered.”

(Jeremiah 14:14, 15) And Jehovah went on to say to me: “Falsehood is what the prophets are prophesying in my name. I have not sent them, nor have I commanded them or spoken to them. A false vision and divination and a valueless thing and the trickiness of their heart they are speaking prophetically to YOU people.¹⁵ Therefore this is what Jehovah has said concerning the prophets who are prophesying in my name and whom I myself did not send and who are saying that no sword or famine will occur in this land, ‘By sword and by famine those prophets will come to their finish.

Paragraph 13

(Jeremiah 19:1) This is what Jehovah said: “Go, and you must get an earthenware flask of a potter and some of the older men of the people and some of the older men of the priests.

(Jeremiah 19:10, 11) “And you must break the flask before the eyes of the men who are going with you.¹¹ And you must say to them, ‘This is what Jehovah of armies has said: “In the same way I shall break this people and this city as someone breaks the vessel of the potter so that it is no more able to be repaired; and in To’pheth they will bury until there is no more place to bury.”’”

(Jeremiah 27:1-28:17) *[Read from Bible]*

Paragraph 14

(Jeremiah 8:22) Is there no balsam in Gil’e-ad? Or is there no healer there? Why is it, then, that the recuperation of the daughter of my people has not come up?

(Jeremiah 5:31) The prophets themselves actually prophesy in falsehood; and as for the priests, they go subduing according to their powers. And my own people have loved [it] that way; and what will YOU men do in the finale of it?”

(James 5:14, 15) Is there anyone sick among YOU? Let him call the older men of the congregation to [him], and let them pray over him, greasing [him] with oil in the name of Jehovah.¹⁵ And the prayer of faith will make the indisposed one well, and Jehovah will raise him up. Also, if he has committed sins, it will be forgiven him.

“You well know how unlawful it is for a Jew to join himself to or approach a man of another race,^a and yet God has shown me I should call no man defiled or unclean.^b **29** Hence I came, really without objection, when I was sent for. Therefore I inquire the reason that you have sent for me.”

30 Accordingly Cornelius said: “Four days ago counting from this hour I was praying in my house at the ninth hour,^c when, look! a man in bright raiment^d stood before me **31** and said, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been favorably heard and your gifts of mercy have been remembered before God.^e **32** Send, therefore, to Jop’pa and call for Simon, who is surnamed Peter.^f This man is being entertained in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.’^g **33** Therefore I at once sent to you, and you did well in coming here. And so at this time we are all present before God to hear all the things you have been commanded by Jehovah to say.”^h

34 At this Peter opened his mouth and said: “For a certainty I perceive that God is not partial,ⁱ **35** but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him.^j **36** He sent out the word^k to the sons of Israel to declare to them the good news of peace^l through Jesus Christ: this One is Lord of all others.^m **37** You know the subject that was talked about throughout the whole of Ju-de’a, starting from Gal’i-lee after the baptism that John preached,ⁿ **38** namely, Jesus who was from Naz’a-reth, how God anointed him with holy spirit^o and power, and he went through the land doing good and healing all those oppressed by the Devil;^p because God was with him.^q **39** And we are witnesses of all the things he did both in

CHAP. 10

- a Joh 4:9
- Joh 18:28
- b Ac 10:45
- Ac 15:8
- Eph 3:6
- c Ac 11:13
- d Mt 28:3
- Ac 1:10
- e Da 10:12
- Heb 6:10
- f Ac 10:18
- g Ac 9:43
- h Ac 10:42
- i De 10:17
- 2Ch 19:7
- Job 34:19
- Ro 2:11
- Ga 2:6
- j Ro 2:13
- 1Co 12:13
- Ga 3:28
- k Ps 107:20
- Ps 147:18
- l Isa 52:7
- Na 1:15
- m Da 7:14
- Mt 28:18
- Ro 14:9
- Eph 1:20
- Re 19:16
- n Lu 4:14
- o Isa 11:2
- Isa 42:1
- Isa 61:1
- Mt 3:16
- Heb 1:9
- p Lu 13:16
- q Joh 3:2

Second Col.

- a Ac 2:23
- Ga 3:13
- b Jon 1:17
- Jon 2:10
- Ac 2:24
- 1Co 15:4
- c Joh 14:22
- d Lu 24:30
- Joh 21:13
- e Mt 28:19
- Ac 1:8
- f Joh 5:22
- Ac 17:31
- Ro 14:9
- 2Co 5:10
- 2Ti 4:1
- 1Pe 4:5
- g Isa 53:11
- Jer 31:34
- Eze 34:23
- Da 9:24
- Lu 24:27
- Re 19:10
- h Ro 10:11
- Ga 3:22
- i Ac 4:31
- Ac 8:15
- j Ga 3:14
- k Ac 2:4
- Ac 19:6
- l Mt 3:11
- Ac 8:36
- Ac 11:17
- m Mt 16:19
- Ac 2:38
- Ac 19:5

CHAP. 11

- n Zec 2:11
- Lu 2:32
- Ac 14:27

the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem; but they also did away with him by hanging him on a stake.^a **40** God raised this One up on the third day and granted him to become manifest,^b **41** not to all the people, but to witnesses appointed beforehand by God,^c to us, who ate and drank with him^d after his rising from the dead. **42** Also, he ordered us to preach^e to the people and to give a thorough witness that this is the One decreed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.^f **43** To him all the prophets bear witness,^g that everyone putting faith in him gets forgiveness of sins through his name.”^h

44 While Peter was yet speaking about these matters the holy spirit fell upon all those hearing the word.ⁱ **45** And the faithful ones that had come with Peter who were of those circumcised were amazed, because the free gift of the holy spirit was being poured out also upon people of the nations.^j **46** For they heard them speaking with tongues and magnifying God.^k Then Peter responded: **47** “Can anyone forbid water so that these might not be baptized^l who have received the holy spirit even as we have?” **48** With that he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.^m Then they requested him to remain for some days.

11 Now the apostles and the brothers that were in Jude’a heard that people of the nationsⁿ had also received the word of God. **2** So when Peter came up to Jerusalem, the supporters of circumcision^o began to contend with him, **3** saying he had gone into the house of men that were not circumcised and had eaten with them. **4** At this Pe-

o Ac 10:45; Ga 2:12.

ter commenced and went on to explain the particulars to them, saying:

5 "I was in the city of Jop'pa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, some sort of vessel descending like a great linen sheet being let down by its four extremities from heaven, and it came clear to me. 6 Gazing into it, I made observations and saw four-footed creatures of the earth and wild beasts and creeping things and birds of heaven.^a 7 I also heard a voice say to me, 'Rise, Peter, slaughter and eat!'^b 8 But I said, 'Not at all, Lord, because a defiled or unclean thing has never entered into my mouth.'^c 9 The second time the voice from heaven answered, 'You stop calling defiled the things God has cleansed.'^d 10 This occurred for a third time, and everything was pulled up again into heaven.^e 11 Also, look! at that instant there were three men standing at the house in which we were, they having been dispatched from Caes·a·re'a to me.^f 12 So the spirit^g told me to go with them, not doubting at all. But these six brothers also went with me, and we entered into the house of the man.^h

13 "He reported to us how he saw the angel stand in his house and say, 'Dispatch men to Jop'pa and send for Simon who is surnamed Peter,ⁱ 14 and he will speak those things to you by which you and all your household may get saved.'^j 15 But when I started to speak, the holy spirit fell upon them just as it did also upon us in the beginning.^k 16 At this I called to mind the saying of the Lord, how he used to say, 'John, for his part, baptized with water,^l but you will be baptized in holy spirit.'^m 17 If, therefore, God gave the same free gift to them as he also did to us who have believed upon

CHAP. 11

a Ac 10:12
b Ac 10:13
c Eze 4:14
Mt 15:11
Ac 10:14
d Ac 15:9
e Ac 10:16
f Ac 10:17
g Joh 16:13
Ac 10:19
h Ac 10:23
Ac 15:7
i Ac 10:30
j Ac 16:30
k Ac 2:4
l Mt 3:11
Mr 1:8
Lu 3:16
Ac 1:5
m Isa 44:3
Joe 2:28
Joh 1:33
Ac 2:17

Second Col.

a Ac 15:8
Ga 3:2
b Da 4:35
Ac 10:47
c Ac 21:14
d Lu 2:20
Ac 13:48
Ac 14:27
e Isa 11:10
Ac 17:30
Ac 20:21
Ro 10:12
Ro 15:9
f Ac 8:1
g Ac 21:2
h Ac 21:3
i Mt 10:6
j Ac 6:1
Ac 9:29
k Mr 13:10
Eph 3:8
l Lu 1:66
m Ac 2:47
Ac 9:35
n Ac 4:36
o Heb 12:15
p 3Jo 4
q Ac 13:43
Ac 14:22
r Ac 2:47
Ac 4:4
Ac 5:14
Ac 9:31
s Ac 21:39
t Ac 9:30
u Ac 9:2
v Ac 13:1
Ac 15:32
1Co 12:28
Eph 4:11
w Ac 21:10

the Lord Jesus Christ,^a who was I that I should be able to hinder God?"^b

18 Now when they heard these things, they acquiesced,^c and they glorified God,^d saying: "Well, then, God has granted repentance for the purpose of life to people of the nations also."^e

19 Consequently those who had been scattered^f by the tribulation that arose over Stephen went through as far as Phoeni'cia^g and Cy'prus^h and Antioch, but speaking the word to no one except to Jews only.ⁱ 20 However, out of them there were some men of Cy'prus and Cy-re'ne that came to Antioch and began talking to the Greek-speaking people,^j declaring the good news of the Lord Jesus.^k 21 Furthermore, the hand of Jehovah^l was with them, and a great number that became believers turned to the Lord.^m

22 The account about them got to the ears of the congregation that was in Jerusalem, and they sent out Bar'na·basⁿ as far as Antioch. 23 When he arrived and saw the undeserved kindness^o of God, he rejoiced^p and began to encourage them all to continue in the Lord with hearty purpose;^q 24 for he was a good man and full of holy spirit and of faith. And a considerable crowd was added to the Lord.^r 25 So he went off to Tarsus^s to make a thorough search for Saul^t 26 and, after he found him, he brought him to Antioch. It thus came about that for a whole year they gathered together with them in the congregation and taught quite a crowd, and it was first in Antioch that the disciples were by divine providence called Christians.^u

27 Now in these days prophets^v came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28 One of them named Ag'a·bus^w rose and

proceeded to indicate through the spirit that a great famine was about to come upon the entire inhabited earth;^a which, for that matter, did take place in the time of Claudius. **29** So those of the disciples determined, each of them according as anyone could afford it,^b to send a relief^c ministration to the brothers dwelling in Ju-de'a; **30** and this they did, dispatching it to the older men by the hand of Bar'na-bas and Saul.^d

12 About that particular time Herod the king applied his hands to mistreating^e some of those of the congregation. **2** He did away with James the brother of John^f by the sword.^g **3** As he saw it was pleasing to the Jews,^h he went on to arrest Peter also. (As it was, those were days of the unfermented cakes.)ⁱ **4** And laying hold of him, he put him in prison,^j turning him over to four shifts of four soldiers each to guard him, as he intended to produce him for the people after the passover.^k **5** Consequently Peter was being kept in the prison; but prayer^l to God for him was being carried on intently by the congregation.

6 Now when Herod was about to produce him, that night Peter was sleeping bound with two chains between two soldiers, and guards before the door were keeping the prison. **7** But, look! Jehovah's angel stood^m by, and a light shone in the prison cell. Striking Peter on the side, he roused him,ⁿ saying: "Rise quickly!" And his chains fell^o off his hands. **8** The angel^p said to him: "Gird yourself and bind your sandals on." He did so. Finally he said to him: "Put your outer garment^q on and keep following me." **9** And he went out and kept following him, but he did not know that what was happening through the angel was

CHAP. 11

- a Mt 24:7
Lu 4:25
- b 2Co 8:12
- c Le 25:35
Pr 3:27
Ac 24:17
Ro 15:26
1Co 16:1
Ga 2:10
- d Ac 12:25
Ga 2:1

CHAP. 12

- e Joh 15:20
Ac 4:3
- f Mt 4:21
- g Mt 20:23
Lu 11:49
- h Ac 24:27
- i Ex 12:15
Ex 23:15
Le 23:6
- j Lu 21:12
Ac 5:18
- k Ex 12:11
- l 2Co 1:11
Eph 6:18
1Th 5:17
Jas 5:16
- m Ps 34:7
Heb 1:14
- n 1Ki 19:7
- o Ac 16:26
- p Ac 5:19
- q Mr 10:50

Second Col.

- a Ac 11:5
- b Ac 16:26
- c Ps 34:7
Da 3:28
Da 6:22
Heb 1:14
- d 2Pe 2:9
- e Ac 13:5
Ac 15:37
Col 4:10
- f Ge 48:16
Mt 18:10
- g Ac 13:16
Ac 19:33
- h Mt 13:55
Ac 15:13
Ac 21:18
1Co 15:7
Ga 1:19
Ga 2:9
- i Ac 5:21
- j Ac 12:6
- k Ac 16:27

real. In fact, he supposed he was seeing a vision.^a **10** Going through the first sentinel guard and the second they got to the iron gate leading into the city, and this opened to them of its own accord.^b And after they went out they advanced down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. **11** And Peter, coming to himself, said: "Now I actually know that Jehovah sent his angel forth^c and delivered^d me out of Herod's hand and from all that the people of the Jews were expecting."

12 And after he considered it, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John who was surnamed Mark,^e where quite a few were gathered together and praying. **13** When he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to attend to the call, **14** and, upon recognizing the voice of Peter, out of joy she did not open the gate, but ran inside and reported that Peter was standing before the gateway. **15** They said to her: "You are mad." But she kept on strongly asserting it was so. They began to say: "It is his angel."^f **16** But Peter remained there knocking. When they opened, they saw him and were astonished. **17** But he motioned^g to them with his hand to be silent and told them in detail how Jehovah brought him out of the prison, and he said: "Report these things to James^h and the brothers." With that he went out and journeyed to another place.

18 Well, when it became day,ⁱ there was no little stir among the soldiers over what really had become of Peter. **19** Herod^j made diligent search for him and, when not finding him, he examined the guards and commanded them to be led off to punishment;^k and he went down from Ju-de'a to Caes-a-re'a and spent some time there.

20 Now he was in a fighting mood against the people of Tyre and of Si'don. So with one accord they came to him and, after persuading Blastus, who was in charge of the bedchamber of the king, they began suing for peace, because their country was supplied with food^a from that of the king. **21** But on a set day Herod clothed himself with royal raiment and sat down upon the judgment seat and began giving them a public address. **22** In turn the assembled people began shouting: "A god's voice, and not a man's!"^b **23** Instantly the angel of Jehovah struck him,^c because he did not give the glory to God;^d and he became eaten up with worms and expired.

24 But the word^e of Jehovah went on growing and spreading.^f

25 As for Bar'na-bas^g and Saul, after having fully carried out the relief^h ministrations in Jerusalem, they returned and took along with them John,ⁱ the one surnamed Mark.

13 Now in Antioch there were prophets^j and teachers in the local congregation, Bar'na-bas as well as Sym'e-on who was called Ni'ger, and Lucius^k of Cyre'ne, and Man'a-en who was educated with Herod the district ruler, and Saul. **2** As they were publicly ministering^l to Jehovah and fasting, the holy spirit said: "Of all persons set Bar'na-bas and Saul^m apart for me for the work to which I have called them." **3** Then they fasted and prayed and laid their handsⁿ upon them and let them go.

4 Accordingly these men, sent out by the holy spirit, went down to Se-leu'cia, and from there they sailed away to Cy'prus. **5** And when they got to be in Sal'a-mis they began publishing the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They had John^o also as an attendant.

CHAP. 12

a 1Ki 5:9
Eze 27:17b Eze 28:2
Jude 16c 2Sa 24:17
2Ch 32:21d Isa 42:8
1Co 1:29e Isa 55:11
Ac 6:7
Ac 19:20

f Col 1:6

g Ac 4:36

h Ac 11:29

i Ac 13:5
Ac 15:37

CHAP. 13

j Ac 11:27
Ac 15:32
1Co 12:28
Eph 4:11

k Ac 11:20

l Eph 3:7
1Ti 2:7m Ac 9:15
Heb 5:4n Ac 14:23
1Ti 4:14
2Ti 1:6

o Ac 12:25

Second Col.

a Mt 24:24

b 2Ti 3:8

c Mt 13:38
Joh 8:44
1Jo 3:8

d Ac 9:8

e Ac 19:38

f Ac 15:38

g Ac 12:12

h Ac 15:38

i Ac 16:13
Ac 17:2
Ac 18:4
Ac 19:8

j Ac 15:21

k Mr 5:22

l Ac 12:17
Ac 21:40
Ac 26:1

6 When they had gone through the whole island as far as Pa'phos, they met up with a certain man, a sorcerer, a false prophet,^a a Jew whose name was Bar-Je'sus, **7** and he was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. Calling Bar'na-bas and Saul to him, this man earnestly sought to hear the word of God. **8** But El'y-mas the sorcerer (that, in fact, is the way his name is translated) began opposing them,^b seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. **9** Saul, who is also Paul, becoming filled with holy spirit, looked at him intently **10** and said: "O man full of every sort of fraud and every sort of villainy, you son of the Devil,^c you enemy of everything righteous, will you not quit distorting the right ways of Jehovah? **11** Well, then, look! Jehovah's hand is upon you, and you will be blind, not seeing the sunlight for a period of time." Instantly a thick mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went around seeking men to lead him by the hand.^d **12** Then the proconsul,^e upon seeing what had happened, became a believer, as he was astounded at the teaching of Jehovah.

13 The men, together with Paul, now put out to sea from Pa'phos and arrived at Perga in Pam-phyl'i-a.^f But John^g withdrew from them and returned^h to Jerusalem. **14** They, however, went on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pi-sid'i-a and, going into the synagogueⁱ on the sabbath day, they took a seat. **15** After the public reading of the Law^j and of the Prophets the presiding officers^k of the synagogue sent out to them, saying: "Men, brothers, if there is any word of encouragement for the people that you have, tell it." **16** So Paul rose, and motioning^l with his hand, he said:

"Men, Israelites and YOU others that fear God, hear.^a **17** The God of this people Israel chose our forefathers, and he exalted the people during their alien residence in the land of Egypt and brought them out of it with an uplifted arm.^b **18** And for a period of about forty years^c he put up with their manner of action in the wilderness. **19** After destroying seven nations in the land of Ca'naan, he distributed the land of them by lot:^d **20** all that during about four hundred and fifty years.

"And after these things he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.^e **21** But from then on they demanded a king,^f and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin,^g for forty years. **22** And after removing him,^h he raised up for them David as king,ⁱ respecting whom he bore witness and said, 'I have found David the son of Jes'se,^j a man agreeable to my heart,^k who will do all the things I desire.'^l **23** From the offspring^m of this man according to his promise God has brought to Israel a savior,ⁿ Jesus, **24** after John,^o in advance of the entry of that One,^p had preached publicly to all the people of Israel baptism in symbol of repentance. **25** But as John was fulfilling his course, he would say, 'What do you suppose I am? I am not he. But, look! one is coming after me the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.'^q

26 "Men, brothers, YOU sons of the stock of Abraham and those others among you who fear God, the word of this salvation has been sent forth to us.^r **27** For the inhabitants of Jerusalem and their rulers did not know this One,^s but, when acting as judges, they fulfilled the things voiced by the Prophets,^t which things are read aloud every Sabbath, **28** and, although they found no

CHAP. 13

a Ac 13:26
 b Ex 6:6
 Ex 14:8
 De 7:6
 c Ex 16:35
 Nu 14:34
 De 2:7
 d De 7:1
 Jos 14:2
 e Jg 2:16
 1Sa 3:20
 f 1Sa 8:5
 g 1Sa 10:21
 1Sa 11:15
 h Ho 13:11
 i 1Sa 16:12
 2Sa 2:4
 Ps 89:20
 j 1Sa 16:1
 k 1Sa 13:14
 l Isa 44:28
 m 2Sa 7:12
 Isa 11:1
 n Lu 1:32
 Lu 1:69
 Ro 11:26
 o Mt 3:1
 Lu 16:16
 p Mt 1:21
 q Mt 3:11
 Lu 3:16
 r Mt 10:6
 Lu 24:47
 s Joh 16:3
 Ac 3:17
 t Ps 22:16
 Ps 41:9
 Isa 53:7
 Zec 11:12

Second Col.

a Mt 26:60
 Lu 23:15
 Joh 19:4
 b Mt 27:22
 Joh 19:15
 c Lu 18:31
 Joh 19:36
 d Joh 19:40
 e Mt 27:60
 f Mt 28:6
 Ac 2:24
 g Mt 28:16
 Ac 1:3
 Ac 3:15
 1Co 15:6
 h Ge 12:3
 Ac 13:23
 Ro 4:13
 i Ro 1:4
 j Ps 2:7
 Heb 1:5
 Heb 5:5
 k Isa 55:3
 l Ps 16:10
 Ac 2:31
 m Ac 2:34
 n 1Ki 2:10
 Ac 2:29
 o Ac 2:27
 p Da 9:24
 Lu 24:47
 Ac 5:31
 Ac 10:43
 q Ro 8:3
 Heb 7:19
 Heb 10:1
 r Isa 53:11
 Ro 3:28
 Ro 5:18

cause for death,^a they demanded of Pilate that he be executed.^b **29** When, now, they had accomplished all the things written about him,^c they took him down from the stake^d and laid him in a memorial tomb.^e **30** But God raised him up from the dead;^f **31** and for many days he became visible to those who had gone up with him from Gal'i-lee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people.^g

32 "And so we are declaring to you the good news about the promise made to the forefathers,^h **33** that God has entirely fulfilled it to us their children in that he resurrected Jesus;ⁱ even as it is written in the second psalm, 'You are my son, I have become your Father this day.'^j **34** And that fact that he resurrected him from the dead destined no more to return to corruption, he has stated in this way, 'I will give you people the loving-kindnesses to David that are faithful.'^k **35** Hence he also says in another psalm, 'You will not allow your loyal one to see corruption.'^l **36** For David,^m on the one hand, served the express will of God in his own generation and fell asleep in death and was laid with his forefathers and did see corruption.ⁿ **37** On the other hand, he whom God raised up did not see corruption.^o

38 "Let it therefore be known to you, brothers, that through this One a forgiveness of sins is being published to YOU;^p **39** and that from all the things from which you could not be declared guiltless by means of the law of Moses,^q everyone who believes is declared guiltless by means of this One.^r **40** Therefore see to it that what is said in the Prophets does not come upon you, **41** 'Behold it, you scorners, and wonder at it, and vanish away, because I am working a work in YOUR days, a work

that you will by no means believe even if anyone relates it to YOU in detail.’”^a

42 Now when they were going out, the people began entreating for these matters to be spoken to them on the following sabbath.^b **43** So after the synagogue assembly was dissolved, many of the Jews and of the proselytes who worshiped God followed Paul and Bar’na-bas,^c who in speaking to them began urging^d them to continue in the undeserved kindness of God.^e

44 The next sabbath nearly all the city gathered together to hear the word of Jehovah.^f

45 When the Jews got sight of the crowds, they were filled with jealousy^g and began blasphemously contradicting the things being spoken by Paul.^h **46** And so, talking with boldness, Paul and Bar’na-bas said: “It was necessary for the word of God to be spoken first to YOU.ⁱ Since YOU are thrusting it away^j from YOU and do not judge yourselves worthy of everlasting life, look! we turn to the nations.^k **47** In fact, Jehovah has laid commandment upon us in these words, ‘I have appointed you as a light of nations,^l for you to be a salvation to the extremity of the earth.’”^m

48 When those of the nations heard this, they began to rejoice and to glorify the word of Jehovah,ⁿ and all those who were rightly disposed for everlasting life became believers.^o **49** Furthermore, the word of Jehovah went on being carried throughout the whole country.^p **50** But the Jews^q stirred up the reputable women who worshiped God and the principal men of the city, and they raised up a persecution^r against Paul and Bar’na-bas and threw them outside their boundaries. **51** These shook the dust off their feet against them^s and went to I-co’ni-um. **52** And the

CHAP. 13

a Hab 1:5

LXX

b Ac 18:4

c Ac 17:4

d Ac 14:22

e Ac 11:23

Tit 2:11

f Ac 12:24

g Pr 27:4

h Ac 14:2

Ac 17:5

i Mt 10:6

Ac 3:26

Ro 1:16

j Mt 22:8

Lu 7:30

k Isa 55:5

Lu 2:32

Ac 18:6

Ro 10:19

l Isa 42:6

m Isa 49:6

Ac 1:8

n Isa 39:5

Isa 66:5

Ac 11:18

2Th 1:12

o Ro 8:29

p Ac 15:36

q Ac 14:2

Ac 14:19

r Mt 23:34

Ac 17:5

2Ti 3:11

s Mt 10:14

Lu 9:5

Ac 18:6

Second Col.

a Mt 5:12

1Th 1:6

CHAP. 14

b 2Ti 3:11

c Ac 13:5

d Ac 17:4

e Ac 13:45

f Ro 15:31

g Ac 5:12

Ac 19:11

Heb 2:4

h Ac 14:19

1Th 2:2

2Ti 3:11

i Mt 10:23

j 1Co 1:17

k Ac 3:2

l Mt 9:28

m Isa 35:6

Ac 3:8

n Ac 12:22

Ac 28:6

disciples continued to be filled with joy^a and holy spirit.

14 Now in I-co’ni-um^b they entered together into the synagogue^c of the Jews and spoke in such a manner that a great multitude of both Jews and Greeks^d became believers.

2 But the Jews that did not believe stirred up^e and wrongly influenced the souls of people of the nations against the brothers.^f

3 Therefore they spent considerable time speaking with boldness by the authority of Jehovah, who bore witness to the word of his undeserved kindness by granting signs and portents to occur through their hands.^g

4 However, the multitude of the city was split, and some were for the Jews but others for the apostles. **5** Now when a violent attempt took place on the part of both people of the nations and Jews with their rulers, to treat them insolently and pelt them with stones,^h **6** they, on being informed of it, fledⁱ to the cities of Lyc-a-o’ni-a, Lys’tra and Der’be and the country round about; **7** and there they went on declaring the good news.^j

8 Now in Lys’tra there was sitting a certain man disabled in his feet, lame from his mother’s womb,^k and he had never walked at all. **9** This man was listening to Paul speak, who, on looking at him intently and seeing he had faith^l to be made well, **10** said with a loud voice: “Stand up erect on your feet.” And he leaped up and began walking.^m **11** And the crowds, seeing what Paul had done, raised their voices, saying in the Lyc-a-o’ni-an tongue: “The godsⁿ have become like humans and have come down to us!” **12** And they went calling Bar’na-bas Zeus, but Paul Her’mes, since he was the one taking the lead in speaking. **13** And the priest of Zeus,

whose temple was before the city, brought bulls and garlands to the gates and was desiring to offer sacrifices^a with the crowds.

14 However, when the apostles Bar'na-bas and Paul heard of it, they ripped their outer garments and leaped out into the crowd, crying out **15** and saying: "Men, why are YOU doing these things? We also are humans^b having the same infirmities^c as YOU do, and are declaring the good news to YOU, for YOU to turn from these vain^d things to the living God,^e who made the heaven^f and the earth and the sea and all the things in them. **16** In the past generations he permitted all the nations to go on in their ways,^g **17** although, indeed, he did not leave himself without witness in that he did good,^h giving YOU rainsⁱ from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling YOUR hearts to the full with food and good cheer."^j **18** And yet by saying these things they scarcely restrained the crowds from sacrificing to them.

19 But Jews arrived from Antioch and I-co'ni-um and persuaded the crowds,^k and they stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, imagining he was dead.^l **20** However, when the disciples surrounded him, he rose up and entered into the city. And on the next day he left with Bar'na-bas for Der'be.^m **21** And after declaring the good news to that city and making quite a few disciples,ⁿ they returned to Lys'tra and to I-co'ni-um and to Antioch, **22** strengthening the souls of the disciples,^o encouraging them to remain in the faith and saying: "We must enter into the kingdom of God through many tribulations."^p **23** Moreover, they appointed older men^q for them in each congregation and, offering prayer with fastings,^r they committed them to

CHAP. 14

a Da 2:46
b Ac 10:26
c Jas 5:17
d De 32:21
1Sa 12:21
Jer 10:15
e 1Th 1:9
f Ge 1:1
Ex 20:11
Ps 33:6
Ps 146:6
Ac 4:24
g De 18:14
Ac 17:30
h Ac 17:27
Ro 1:20
i Ps 65:10
Ps 147:8
Jer 5:24
Mt 5:45
j Ps 145:16
k Ac 17:13
l 2Co 6:9
2Co 11:25
2Ti 3:11
m Ac 16:1
n Mt 28:19
o Ac 11:23
p Mt 10:38
Joh 15:19
Ro 8:17
1Th 3:4
q Tit 1:5
r Ac 13:3

Second Col.

a Ac 20:32
b Ac 13:13
c Ac 13:1
d 1Co 15:10
e Ac 15:4
Ac 21:19
f Ac 11:18
1Co 16:9

CHAP. 15

g Ga 2:12
h Ga 5:2
i Ge 17:10
Ex 12:48
Le 12:3
j Ac 11:30
Ac 16:4
Ga 2:1
k Ro 15:24
1Co 16:6
l Ac 13:4
Ac 14:27
m Ac 11:18
n Ac 21:17
o Ac 21:19
p Ac 11:2
q Ex 12:48

Jehovah^a in whom they had become believers.

24 And they went through Pisid'i-a and came into Pam·phyl'i-a,^b **25** and, after speaking the word in Perga, they went down to At-ta-li'a. **26** And from there they sailed off for Antioch,^c where they had been entrusted to the undeserved kindness of God for the work they had fully performed.^d

27 When they had arrived and had gathered the congregation together, they proceeded to relate^e the many things God had done by means of them, and that he had opened to the nations the door to faith.^f **28** So they spent not a little time with the disciples.

15 And certain men came down from Ju-de'a^g and began to teach the brothers: "Unless YOU get circumcised^h according to the custom of Moses,ⁱ YOU cannot be saved." **2** But when there had occurred no little dissension and disputing by Paul and Bar'na-bas with them, they arranged for Paul and Bar'na-bas and some others of them to go up to the apostles and older men in Jerusalem^j regarding this dispute.

3 Accordingly, after being conducted partway by the congregation,^k these men continued on their way through both Phoeni'cia and Sa-mar'i-a, relating in detail the conversion of people of the nations,^l and they were causing great joy to all the brothers.^m **4** On arriving in Jerusalem they were kindly receivedⁿ by the congregation and the apostles and the older men, and they recounted the many things God had done by means of them.^o **5** Yet, some of those of the sect of the Pharisees that had believed rose up from their seats and said: "It is necessary to circumcise them^p and charge them to observe the law of Moses."^q



*** w08 5/15 p. 30-p. 31 Highlights From the Book of Acts *** Jehovah's Word Is Alive

In 44 C.E., Agabus comes to Antioch, where Barnabas and Saul have been teaching “for a whole year.” Agabus foretells “a great famine,” which takes place two years later. (Acts 11:26-28) “After having fully carried out the relief ministrations in Jerusalem,” Barnabas and Saul return to Antioch. (Acts 12:25) In 47 C.E.—about 12 years after Saul’s conversion—Barnabas and Saul are sent out by the holy spirit on a missionary tour. (Acts 13:1-4) In 48 C.E., they return to Antioch, “where they had been entrusted to the undeserved kindness of God.”—Acts 14:26.

Scriptural Questions Answered:

14:8-13—Why did people in Lystra call “Barnabas Zeus, but Paul Hermes”? Zeus was the ruler of the gods in Greek mythology, and his son Hermes was known for his eloquence. Since Paul took the lead in speaking, the people of Lystra called him Hermes and Barnabas they called Zeus.

Lessons for Us:

12:5-11. We can and should pray for our brothers.

12:21-23; 14:14-18. Herod readily accepted glory that should be given only to God. How that differed from the immediate and emphatic rejection of undue praise and honor by Paul and Barnabas! We should not desire glory for whatever accomplishments we may have in Jehovah’s service.

14:5-7. Exercising prudence can help us remain active in service.—Matt. 10:23.

14:22. Christians expect tribulations. They do not try to escape them by compromising their faith.—2 Tim. 3:12.

*** w12 1/15 pp. 11-12 par. 14 Learn Watchfulness From Jesus’ Apostles ***

(Read Acts 12:1-6.)¹⁴ What can we learn from the response of Peter’s fellow Christians? Keeping on the watch involves praying not just for ourselves but for our brothers and sisters as well. (Eph. 6:18) Do you know of fellow believers who are beset by trials? Some may be enduring persecution, governmental bans, or natural disasters. Why not make them the subject of your heartfelt prayers? You may know of others who are undergoing less noticeable hardships. They may be struggling to cope with family troubles, discouragement, or ill health. Why not think of specific individuals whom you can mention by name as you speak to Jehovah, the “Hearer of prayer”?—Ps. 65:2.

(Read Acts 12:7-11.)¹⁶ Is it not faith-strengthening to contemplate Jehovah’s power to rescue his servants? Of course, we do not expect Jehovah to deliver us miraculously at this time. However, we have full faith that he uses his power in behalf of his people today. (2 Chron. 16:9) By means of his powerful holy spirit, he can make us equal to any trial we may face. (2 Cor. 4:7; 2 Pet. 2:9) And Jehovah will soon empower his Son to free countless millions from that most unyielding of prisons, death. (John 5:28, 29) Our faith in God’s promises can give us tremendous courage when we face trials today.

***** w12 3/1 p. 3 Are All “Christians” Christian? *****

The term “Christian” first came into use sometime after 44 C.E. The Bible historian Luke reported: “It was first in Antioch that the disciples were by divine providence called Christians.” (Acts 11:26) Note that those called Christians were Christ’s disciples. What makes a person a disciple of Jesus Christ? *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* explains: “Following Jesus as a disciple means the unconditional sacrifice of [one’s] whole life . . . for the whole of his life.” A true Christian, therefore, is one who follows the teachings and instructions of Jesus, the Founder of Christianity, totally and unconditionally.

***** w12 10/15 pp. 8-9 pars. 9-11 Meeting Today’s Adversities With Courage *****

⁹ We do well to remember that Satan wants to use the tribulations we suffer to undermine our faith. However, we must not allow him to sap our joy in this way. Proverbs 24:10 says: “Have you shown yourself discouraged in the day of distress? Your power will be scanty.” Meditating on Biblical examples, such as those discussed earlier, will help us to muster up courage in the face of adversities.

¹⁰ It is also good to keep in mind that we cannot remove all problems. In fact, we can expect to experience them. (2 Tim. 3:12) Acts 14:22 tells us: “We must enter into the kingdom of God through many tribulations.” Rather than becoming dejected, why not view them as opportunities to manifest courage based on your faith in God’s ability to help you?

¹¹ We need to focus on positive things. God’s Word tells us: “A joyful heart has a good effect on the countenance, but because of the pain of the heart there is a stricken spirit.” (Prov. 15:13)

***** w11 1/15 p. 19 pars. 8-9 Make the Most of Your Singleness *****

⁸ In his youth, John Mark also used his single years to good advantage. He and his mother, Mary, as well as his cousin Barnabas were early members of the Jerusalem congregation. Mark’s family may also have been comfortably situated, since they owned their own home in the city and had a servant. (Acts 12:12, 13; Acts 13:5)

⁹ Many young ones in the congregation today also gladly use their single years to expand their share in God’s service. Like Mark and Timothy, they appreciate that singleness allows for “constant attendance upon the Lord without distraction.” (1 Cor. 7:35) This is a real advantage. Opportunities abound—pioneering, serving where the need for Kingdom preachers is greater, learning a foreign language, assisting with Kingdom Hall or branch construction, attending Ministerial Training School, and serving at Bethel. If you are still young and unmarried, are you making the most of your opportunities?

***** w11 10/15 p. 8 pars. 1-2 Is Your Recreation Beneficial? *****

Jehovah wants us to be joyful, our hearts filled with “good cheer.”—Acts 14:16, 17.

² There is, therefore, no reason to feel guilty when we once in a while schedule some time to “observe intently the birds of heaven” and “the lilies of the field” or to enjoy some other activities that refresh us and enrich our life. (Matt. 6:26, 28; Ps. 8:3, 4)

***** w11 12/15 p. 24 pars. 10-11 Guided by God’s Spirit in the First Century and Today *****

¹⁰ Paul, who was “filled with holy spirit,” spoke boldly against a sorcerer. What an effect that had on the principal administrator of Cyprus, who was listening to the whole conversation! That proconsul accepted the truth, “as he was astounded at the teaching of Jehovah.” (Acts 13:8-12) Clearly, Paul knew well the importance of God’s holy spirit when it comes to speaking the truth. (Matt. 10:20) He later entreated the congregation in Ephesus to make supplication for him that “ability to speak” might be given him.—Eph. 6:18-20.

¹¹ Not only did holy spirit *enable* Paul to speak but, at times, it *forbade* him to speak in certain localities. As he embarked on his missionary journeys, Paul was guided by God’s spirit. (Acts 13:2; **read Acts 16:6-10.**) Jehovah still guides the preaching work by means of his spirit. Like Paul, all of Jehovah’s obedient servants strive to declare the truth with boldness and zeal. Even though God’s direction is not as obvious today as it was in Paul’s time, we can be sure that Jehovah is using his holy spirit to make sure that deserving ones hear the truth.—John 6:44.

*** w10 6/15 p. 14 par. 16 **Keep Building Up the Congregation** ***

¹⁶ Another Scriptural account shows that we should not harbor negative feelings against those who have disappointed us. John Mark, for example, bitterly disappointed the apostle Paul. How? When Paul and Barnabas began their first missionary journey, Mark went along to assist them. But at a certain point in their journey and for a reason not specified, John Mark left his companions and returned home. Paul was so disappointed about this decision that in the planning stages for a second journey, he had a disagreement with Barnabas about whether Mark should accompany them again. In view of what had happened on the first journey, Paul did not want Mark to travel with them.—Read **Acts 13:1-5, 13; 15:37, 38.**

*** km 9/12 p. 1 par. 3 **Use an Approach That Works** ***

³ **Prepare the Soil:** A person's heart is much like soil. (Luke 8:15) Some soil needs more preparation before seeds of Bible truth can take root and grow. First-century evangelizers successfully planted in all types of soil, and this brought them satisfaction and joy. (**Acts 13:48, 52**) We can experience similar success by giving attention to our approach.

*** be study 13 p. 124 par. 3-p. 125 par. 1 **Visual Contact** ***

The Scriptures also show that the apostle Paul keenly observed the reactions of those in his audience. On one occasion a man lame from birth was present when Paul spoke. **Acts 14:9, 10** states: "This man was listening to Paul speak, who, *on looking at him intently and seeing he had faith to be made well*, said with a loud voice: 'Stand up erect on your feet.'"

Suggestions for the Field Ministry. When you share in the field ministry, be friendly and warm as you approach people. Where appropriate, use thought-provoking questions to start a conversation on something that may be of mutual interest. As you do this, endeavor to establish eye contact—or at least to look the person in the face in a respectful and kindly way. A warm smile on the face of one whose eyes convey inner joy is very appealing. Such an expression may tell the individual much about what sort of person you are and help him to feel more relaxed as you converse.

*** bt chap. 1 p. 10 par. 20 **"Go . . . and Make Disciples"** ***

²⁰ Let us keep ever in mind that we have been commissioned to do an important work—to preach and make disciples. With each day that passes, the urgency of that commission becomes greater. The end of this system of things is rapidly approaching. Never before have so many lives been at stake. We do not know how many more rightly disposed ones may yet respond to our message. (**Acts 13:48**) But it is our responsibility to help such ones before it is too late.—1 Tim. 4:16.

*** bt chap. 10 p. 82 pars. 19-20 **"The Word of Jehovah Went On Growing"** ***

"Pride is before a crash." (Prov. 16:18) "Instantly the angel of Jehovah struck him," causing that puffed-up egomaniac to suffer a gruesome death. Herod "became eaten up with worms and expired." (**Acts 12:23**) Josephus too noted that Agrippa was stricken suddenly and added that the king concluded that he was dying because of accepting the flattery of the crowd. Josephus wrote that Agrippa lingered for five days before he expired.

²⁰ Sometimes it may seem that ungodly people get away with all manner of wickedness. That should not surprise us, since "the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." (1 John 5:19) Still, faithful servants of God are sometimes troubled when evil people seem to escape justice. That is one reason why accounts such as this one are comforting. In effect, we see Jehovah stepping in, reminding all his servants that he is a lover of justice. (Ps. 33:5) Sooner or later, his justice will prevail.

*“Make Sure of the
More Important Things”*
(Philippians 1:10)

1. How great our need today for discernment,
To know the things that are true,
To know which things have greater importance,
To know which things we must do!
Love what is good; Hate what is bad.
Make God’s heart glad;
Find all the joy that it brings. Always pray;
Study each day.
Yes, may we do these important things.
2. And what could be of greater importance
Than sharing Kingdom good news,
To find our Father’s lost little sheep,
And to help them his way to choose?
They need to hear; They need to know.
Oh, may we show
Love for our neighbors and help them to see,
Help them get free!
Preaching is such an important thing.

3. If we take care to do what's important,
Our faith will make us secure.
We'll know the peace beyond human thinking
And keep our hope ever sure.
True friends we'll find; True love we'll know.
This love will grow.
Oh, what rich blessings it brings when we learn,
When we discern,
And when we do the important things!

(See also Ps. 97:10; Matt. 22:37; John 21:15-17; Acts 10:42.)

“Ideas for Offering the Magazines in . . .”

We customarily have a monthly Service Meeting part about offering the magazines. Its purpose is not to review the contents of the magazines. Rather, this part is designed to *discuss ideas* for offering the magazines. Therefore, according to the instructions, the assigned brother gives a *very brief* introduction to stimulate enthusiasm for the magazines. Then, he obtains publishers’ suggestions on

one article (or series) at a time so that all can follow along and take note of ideas they want to use. Rather than inviting the audience to give an entire presentation, he requests several comments on an interest-arousing question to ask and then asks for some comments on a scripture to read. He concludes by having demonstrations for each magazine. We are encouraged to review the magazines in advance and to be ready to give our suggestions. If all prepare well, this part will help us to sharpen the face of one another.—Prov. 27:17.



THE WATCHTOWER® July 1 ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

“Many whom we talk to have their own religion. But others say that they have lost trust in religion altogether. How do you feel about religion? [Allow for response.] Jesus provided a standard to help us when examining a religion. [Read Luke 6:44a.] This magazine discusses some of the bad fruit that religion has produced. It also answers the question, *Is any religion deserving of trust?*”



Awake!® July

“We are visiting our neighbors to talk about a distressing problem—injustice. Some people fight injustice by protesting. Do you think that people who protest succeed in bringing about changes? [Allow for response.] Notice what the Bible says will bring real change to the earth. [Read Matthew 6:9, 10.] This magazine answers the question, *Is protest the answer?*”

Relate why the magazines will have appeal in the territory: (30-60 sec.)

1. _____

2. _____

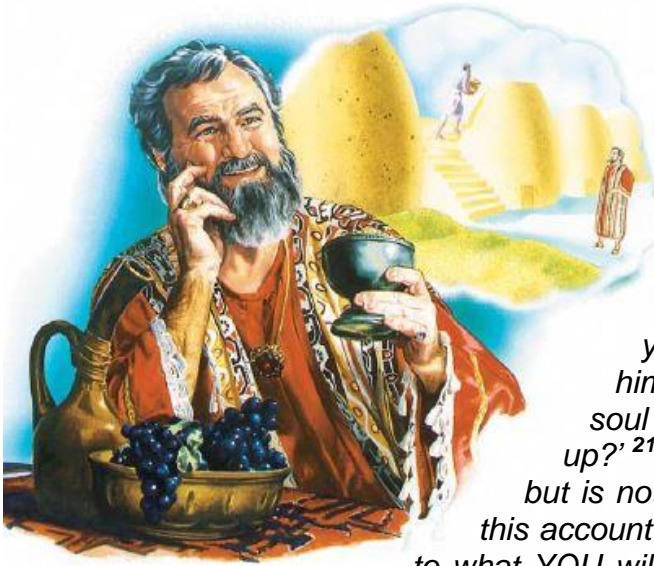
3. _____

Interest-arousing questions to ask & suggested Scriptures to read: (using the cover series)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



(Luke 12:16-31) With that he spoke an illustration to them, saying: “The land of a certain rich man produced well. ¹⁷ Consequently he began reasoning within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, now that I have nowhere to gather my crops?’ ¹⁸ So he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my storehouses and build bigger ones, and there I will gather all my grain and all my good things; ¹⁹ and I will say to my soul: “Soul, you have many good things laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, enjoy yourself.”’ ²⁰ But God said to him, ‘Unreasonable one, this night they are demanding your soul from you. Who, then, is to have the things you stored up?’ ²¹ So it goes with the man that lays up treasure for himself but is not rich toward God.” ²² Then he said to his disciples: “On this account I say to YOU, Quit being anxious about YOUR souls as to what YOU will eat or about YOUR bodies as to what YOU will wear.

²³ For the soul is worth more than food and the body than clothing. ²⁴ Mark well that the ravens neither sow seed nor reap, and they have neither barn nor storehouse, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more worth are YOU than birds? ²⁵ Who of YOU by being anxious can add a cubit to his life span? ²⁶ If, therefore, YOU cannot do the least thing, why be anxious about the remaining things? ²⁷ Mark well how the lilies grow; they neither toil nor spin; but I tell YOU, Not even Sol'o-mon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. ²⁸ If, now, God thus clothes the vegetation in the field that today exists and tomorrow is cast into an oven, how much rather will he clothe YOU, YOU with little faith! ²⁹ So quit seeking what YOU might eat and what YOU might drink, and quit being in anxious suspense; ³⁰ for all these are the things the nations of the world are eagerly pursuing, but YOUR Father knows YOU need these things. ³¹ Nevertheless, seek continually his kingdom, and these things will be added to YOU.

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 *** w07 8/1 p. 27 par. 6 Are You “Rich Toward God”? ***

⁶ Many of Jehovah’s servants today face situations very much like that of the rich man. True Christians strive to be honest, diligent, and conscientious workers. (Colossians 3:22, 23) Whether they are employed or they have their own business, they often do well, even excel in what they do. When promotions or new opportunities come along, they are confronted with a decision. Should they move up or expand? Likewise, many Witness youths do well in school. As a result, they may be offered awards or scholarships for advanced education at prestigious institutions. Should they simply go along and accept what is offered?

¹⁰ We do well to take the lesson to heart. Could we be like the man in the parable—work very hard to make sure that we would have “many good things” yet fail to do what is necessary to gain the prospect of having “many years”? (John 3:16; 17:3) The Bible says: “Valuable things will be of no benefit on the day of fury,” and “the one trusting in his riches—he himself will fall.” (Proverbs 11:4, 28) Therefore, Jesus added this final admonition to the parable: “So it goes with the man that lays up treasure for himself but is not rich toward God.”—**Luke 12:21**.

*** km 9/01 p. 4 par. 3 Is It an Obstacle to Preaching? ***

³ Because the world scene is always changing, a family head may be inclined to spend an excessive amount of time on the job, with a view to building up his financial reserves for unforeseen crises. (1 Cor. 7:31) While increased secular work may seem to provide extra material things or additional opportunities for recreation and entertainment, will this make the family happier and more contented if it is done at the expense of time for spiritual pursuits and regular meeting attendance? We would certainly want to avoid anything that would endanger our spirituality. Heeding Jesus’ counsel to ‘store up treasures in heaven’ and be “rich toward God” is the wise course.—Matt. 6:19-21; **Luke 12:15-21**.

***** km 8/97 p. 1 pars. 1-3 Older Ones Preach Without Letup *****

¹ As people grow older, many of them focus on retiring from their regular secular work and enjoying a carefree life during their remaining years. They may feel that they have worked hard enough and now deserve a rest. Or they may just want to enjoy life, whatever is left of it.—[Luke 12:19](#).

² As Jehovah's dedicated servants, we have a different focus on life. We know there is no retirement from God's service. Our outlook is positive because we keep "everlasting life in view." (Jude 21) Years of accumulated knowledge and experience may improve a person's discernment and insight. This could enable one to become wiser and more balanced and to manifest a deeper appreciation for life. All these attributes serve one well as a minister of the good news.

³ Growing old is not just a matter of physical aging; it also involves one's mental attitude. If you expect to live a long time and you strive to stay young in your outlook, your chances of doing both may increase. Older people can enrich their lives by increasing their spiritual knowledge and sharing it with others.—1 Cor. 9:23.

***** jd chap. 12 p. 159 pars. 13-14 "Keep in Expectation of It" *****

Jehovah was showing that whether a true worshipper is prosperous or not, he needs to guard against becoming so focused on the material aspects of life that he 'forgets God.'—[Luke 12:22-30](#).

¹⁴ From our vantage point in time and with so much Bible prophecy now fulfilled, we have added reason to be alert, ready, in expectation. What, though, if we have been in expectation for some time, perhaps decades? In the past we exerted ourselves in the ministry and made personal decisions that reflected our conviction that Jehovah's day was not far off. But it has not yet come. How is our sense of expectation holding up? To make it quite personal, ask yourself, 'Is my sense of expectation still intense, or has it cooled off considerably?'—Revelation 2:4.

***** cf chap. 11 p. 115 pars. 17-18 "Never Has Another Man Spoken Like This" *****

([Luke 12:24, 27, 28](#)) If Jehovah cares for birds and flowers, how much more will he care for humans who love and worship him! With such reasoning, Jesus no doubt touched the hearts of his listeners.

¹⁸ In our ministry, we want to use sound logic to refute false beliefs. We also want to use persuasive reasoning to teach positive truths about Jehovah. (Acts 19:8; 28:23, 24) Must we learn to employ sophisticated logic? Not at all. The lesson we learn from Jesus is that logical arguments presented in a simple manner are most effective.

***** rs p. 188 par. 3 Independence *****

([Luke 12:19-21](#)) (Material possessions do not bring lasting happiness. Efforts to gain riches often lead to unhappy families, broken health, spiritual ruin.)

***** g 5/09 p. 13 Does God Want You to Be Rich? *****

As in the first century, some faithful Christians today are wealthy. However, God warns them not to trust in their riches nor be distracted by them. (Proverbs 11:28; Mark 10:25; Revelation 3:17) Rich or poor, all should focus on doing God's will.—[Luke 12:31](#).

35 *Gratitude for Divine Patience* (2 Peter 3:15)

1. Great God, Jehovah, boundless in might,
 You have made known your love of right.
Wickedness rules on earth below,
 Causing you pain, as we well know.
You are not slow, as men may contend;
 Your time is near for badness to end.
We look to you in hope and trust,
 Grateful that you are patient and just.
2. One thousand years, from your point of view,
 Are like a day when they are through.
Time now proceeds to your great day;
 It will arrive without delay.
Though all transgression you do resent,
 Your heart is glad when sinners repent.
We look ahead with hope renewed,
 Praising your name in deep gratitude.