

WEEK STARTING NOVEMBER 4

Song 116 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

jl Lessons 3-4 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Titus 1–Philemon (10 min.)

No. 1: Titus 2:1-15 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Is Belonging to an Organized Religion Necessary?—*rs* p. 326 ¶2—p. 327 ¶2 (5 min.)

No. 3: Why We Should Not “Pay Attention to False Stories”—1 Tim. 1:3, 4; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4 (5 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 95

10 min: Ideas for Offering the Magazines in November. Discussion based on the following questions: When appropriate, why should we offer the magazines on weekends while sharing in the distribution of *Kingdom News* No. 38? What would be appropriate opportunities to do so? What could we say to make the transition from the *Kingdom News* to the magazines? Demonstrate how each issue may be offered along with *Kingdom News* No. 38.

10 min: Local needs.

10 min: The Word of God Exerts Power. (Heb. 4:12) Discussion based on the 2013 Yearbook, page 57, paragraph 1, to page 59, paragraph 3. Invite audience to comment on the lessons learned.

Song 114 and Prayer

Announcements

■ Literature offer for **October:** The *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. **November:** Special campaign distribution of *Kingdom News* No. 38. If the congregation works all of its territory or places its entire supply of *Kingdom News*, publishers should offer *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* or *Would You Like to Know the Truth?* **December:** *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* or *Would You Like to Know the Truth?* **January:** Feature one of the following 32-page brochures: *Good News From God!*, *Listen to God*, or *Listen to God and Live Forever*.

■ Many publishers and interested persons have benefited personally from literacy classes arranged by the body of elders. When there is a need, the elders may organize such classes “to teach people how to read and write in order for them to engage in personal Bible study and to teach others the truth.”—*km* 10/11 p. 4; *be* pp. 21-23.

Sample Presentations

Kingdom News No. 38

“I’m sharing in a worldwide campaign to distribute this important message. Here is your copy.”

Note: In order to cover the territory, keep your presentation brief. However, in some cases the householder may show genuine interest and may wish to converse. If so, you can ask his opinion about the question on the front, read to him the Bible’s answer as shown inside, and consider a portion of the tract’s contents, as time allows. Before leaving, show him the “To Think About” question on the back and arrange to return and discuss it.

THE WATCHTOWER® November 1 ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH’S KINGDOM

“In your opinion, what’s the biggest lie that has been told about God? [Allow for response.] According to the Bible, God wants people to love and trust him. [Read Isaiah 41:13.] This magazine exposes three common lies about God that have made it difficult for some to draw close to him.”

Awake!® November

“We are making a brief visit because many people are concerned that moral values seem to be eroding. Do you think that society has lowered its moral standards? [Allow for response.] The Bible foretold that people’s attitude and behavior would change. [Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5.] This magazine discusses why we can trust the moral values found in the Bible.”

Field Service Highlights

In April 2013, special metropolitan public witnessing in the United States was expanded to include Atlanta, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. These cities join Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York City, where the program has already been established. From September 2012 through March 2013, publishers at these displays placed 90,896 magazines and 66,263 books. Additionally, 5,173 Bible studies were requested. Jehovah is clearly blessing this new initiative to reach people with the good news.—1 Tim. 2:4.



1. The prophets of old sought to learn of the Christ,
The hope of all groaning creation.
God's spirit revealed that Messiah would come,
Providing the means of salvation.
The time has arrived, the Messiah now reigns,
The proof of his presence is clear.
How great is the favor of learning such things;
Into these even angels would peer!

(CHORUS)

*Our path now becomes ever brighter;
We walk in the full light of day.
Behold what our God is revealing;
He guides us each step of the way.*

2. Our Lord has appointed a trustworthy slave,
Through whom He gives food in due season.
The light of the truth has grown brighter with time,
Appealing to heart and to reason.
Our path ever clearer, our steps ever firm,
We walk in the brightness of day.
All thanks to Jehovah, the Source of all truth,
We most gratefully walk in his way.

(Chorus)



Bible Students, 1870's



First issue of *The Watchtower*, 1879



The Watchtower today

How Was Bible Truth Rediscovered?

The Bible foretold that after the death of Christ, false teachers would arise among the early Christians and corrupt Bible truth. (Acts 20:29, 30) In time, that is exactly what happened. They mixed Jesus' teachings with pagan religious ideas, and a counterfeit form of Christianity developed. (2 Timothy 4:3, 4) How can we be sure that today we have a correct understanding of what the Bible *really* teaches?

The time came for Jehovah to reveal the truth. He foretold that during 'the time of the end, the true knowledge would become abundant.' (Daniel 12:4) In 1870 a small group of truth-seekers recognized that many church doctrines were not Scriptural. Therefore, they began searching for an understanding of the Bible's original teachings, and Jehovah blessed them with spiritual insight.

Sincere men carefully studied the Bible. Those earnest Bible Students, our predecessors, pursued a method of study that we still use today. They discussed the Bible subject by subject. When they came across a Bible passage that was difficult to understand, they looked for other verses to explain it. When they arrived at a conclusion that harmonized with the rest of the Scriptures, they wrote it down. By thus letting the Bible interpret itself, they rediscovered the truth about God's name and Kingdom, his purpose for mankind and the earth, the condition of the dead, and the hope of the resurrection. Their search set them free from many false beliefs and practices.—John 8:31, 32.

By 1879 the Bible Students discerned that the time had come to make the truth widely known. So in that year, they began producing the magazine that we still publish today, *The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom*. Now we are sharing Bible truths with people in more than 230 lands and in over 600 languages. Never before has true knowledge been so abundant!

- After the death of Christ, what happened to Bible truth?
- What has enabled us to rediscover the truth from God's Word?

Why Have We Produced the *New World Translation*?

For decades, Jehovah's Witnesses used, printed, and distributed various versions of the Bible. But then we saw the need to produce a new translation that would better help people to learn the "accurate knowledge of truth," which is God's will for everyone. (1 Timothy 2:3, 4) Thus, in 1950 we began to release portions of our modern-language Bible, the *New World Translation*. This Bible has been faithfully and accurately translated into over 100 languages.

A Bible was needed that was easy to understand.

Languages change over time, and many translations contain obscure or obsolete expressions that are difficult to understand. Also, ancient manuscripts that are more accurate and closer to the originals have been discovered, resulting in a better comprehension of Biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

A translation was needed that was loyal to God's word.

Rather than taking liberties with God's inspired writings, Bible translators should be faithful to the original text. However, in most versions, the divine name, Jehovah, is not used in the Holy Scriptures.

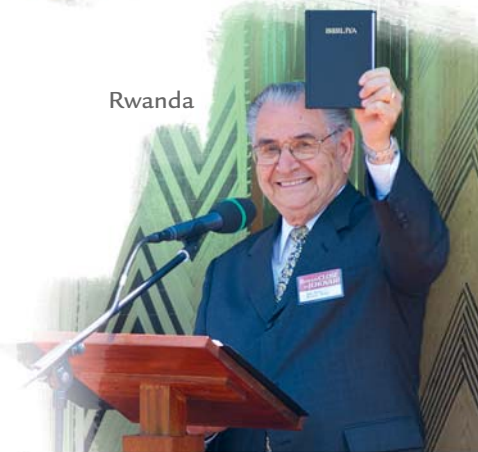
A Bible was needed that gives credit to its Author.

(2 Samuel 23:2) In the *New World Translation*, Jehovah's name has been restored where it appears some 7,000 times in the oldest Bible manuscripts as illustrated in the example below. (Psalm 83:18) The result of years of diligent research, this Bible is a pleasure to read, as it clearly conveys God's thinking. Whether you have the *New World Translation* in your language or not, we encourage you to get into a good routine of reading Jehovah's Word every day.—Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2, 3.

- Why did we decide that a new translation of the Bible was needed?
- What daily practice is good for anyone wanting to learn God's will?



Congo (Kinshasa)



Rwanda

FIND OUT MORE

Read the foreword of the *New World Translation*, and answer the question: "With what sense of responsibility did the translation committee produce this Bible?" Then compare their rendering of the following verses with that of other translations that you may possess: Genesis 25:29; Isaiah 14:23; Matthew 5:3; 11:12; 1 Corinthians 10:24, 25; Philippians 1:8.



Symmachus fragment containing the divine name at Psalm 69:31, third or fourth century C.E.

the work of an evangelizer,* fully accomplish your ministry.^a

6 For I am already being poured out like a drink offering,^b and the time for my releasing^c is imminent. **7** I have fought the fine fight,^d I have run the race to the finish,^e I have observed the faith. **8** From this time on, there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness,^f which the Lord, the righteous judge,^g will give me as a reward in that day,^h yet not to me only, but also to all those who have loved his manifestation.

9 Do your utmost to come to me shortly. **10** For De'mas' has forsaken me because he loved the present system of things,* and he has gone to Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca, Cres'cens to Ga-la'ti-a, Titus to Dal-ma'tia. **11** Only Luke is with me. Bring Mark along with you, for he is helpful to me in the ministry. **12** But I have sent Tych'i-cusⁱ off to Eph'e-sus. **13** When you come, bring the cloak I left at Tro'as with Carpus, and the scrolls, especially the parchments.*

14 Alexander the copper-

4:5 *Or "keep preaching the good news." 4:10 *Or "present age." See Glossary. 4:13 *That is, the leather scrolls.

CHAP. 4

a Ro 15:19
Col 1:25

b Nu 28:6, 7

c Php 1:23

d 1Co 9:26
1Ti 6:12

e Php 3:14

f 1Co 9:25
Jas 1:12

g Joh 5:22

h 1Pe 5:4
Re 2:10

i Col 4:14
Phm 23, 24

j Eph 6:21
Col 4:7

Second Col.

a Ps 28:4
Ps 62:12
Pr 24:12

b Ac 9:15

c Ps 22:21

d Re 20:4

e Ro 16:3

f 2Ti 1:16

g Ac 19:22

h Ac 21:29

smith did me a great deal of harm. Jehovah* will repay him according to his deeds.^a **15** You too should be on guard against him, for he opposed our message to an excessive degree.

16 In my first defense no one came to my side, but they all forsook me—may they not be held accountable. **17** But the Lord stood near me and infused power into me, so that through me the preaching might be fully accomplished and all the nations might hear it;^b and I was rescued from the lion's mouth.^c **18** The Lord will rescue me from every wicked work and will save me for his heavenly Kingdom.^d To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

19 Give my greetings to Pris'ca and Aq'ui-la^e and the household of On-e-siph'o-rus.^f

20 E-ras'tus^g stayed in Corinth, but I left Troph'i-mus^h sick at Mi-le'tus. **21** Do your utmost to arrive before winter.

Eu-bu'lus sends you his greetings, and so do Pu'dens and Li'nus and Clau'di-a and all the brothers.

22 The Lord be with the spirit you show. His undeserved kindness be with you.

4:14 *See App. A5.

TO TITUS

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Greetings (1-4)
Titus to appoint elders in Crete (5-9)
Reprove rebellious ones (10-16)</p> <p>2 Sound teaching for young and old (1-15)
Reject ungodliness (12)
Zeal for fine works (14)</p> | <p>3 Proper subjection (1-3)
Be prepared for fine works (4-8)
Reject foolish arguments and sects (9-11)
Personal instructions and greetings (12-15)</p> |
|---|--|

1 Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ according to the faith of God's chosen ones and the accurate knowledge of the truth that is according to godly devotion **2** and is based on a hope of the everlasting life^a that God, who cannot lie,^b promised long ago; **3** but in his own due time, he made his word known through the preaching entrusted to me^c according to the command of our Savior, God; **4** to Titus, a genuine child according to the faith we share:

May you have undeserved kindness and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

5 I left you in Crete so that you would correct the things that were defective* and make appointments of elders in city after city, as I instructed you: **6** if there is any man free from accusation, a husband of one wife, having believing children who are not accused of debauchery* or rebelliousness.^d **7** For as God's steward, an overseer must be free from accusation, not self-willed,^e not quick-tempered,^f not a drunkard, not violent,^g not greedy of dishonest gain, **8** but hospitable,^g a lover of goodness, sound in mind,^h righteous, loyal, self-controlled,ⁱ **9** holding firmly to the faithful word^a as respects his art of teaching,^k so that he may be able both to encourage^m by the teaching that is wholesome^Δ and to reprove^m those who contradict.

10 For there are many rebellious men, profitless talkers, and deceivers, especially those who adhere to the circumcision.ⁿ **11** It is necessary to shut their

1:5 *Or "deficient." 1:6 *Or "wildness." 1:7 *Or "a smiter." 1:8 *Or "having good judgment; sensible." 1:9 *Or "the trustworthy message." *Or "exhort." 1:9; 2:1 ΔOr "healthful; beneficial."

CHAP. 1

a Ro 6:23

b Nu 23:19

c Ac 9:15

d 1Ti 3:2-7

e 2Pe 2:10

f Jas 1:19

g 1Pe 4:9

h Ro 12:3

1Ti 3:2

i 1Ti 2:8

j 2Ti 2:24

Jas 3:13

k 1Ti 4:16

1Ti 6:3, 4

l 1Ti 1:9, 10

2Ti 1:13

m 1Ti 5:20

2Ti 4:2

Tit 1:13

Re 3:19

n Ac 15:1

Second Col.

a Ro 14:14

b Mt 15:11

c Mt 7:16-18

CHAP. 2

d 1Ti 4:16

2Ti 1:13

e 1Co 14:34, 35

1Pe 3:1, 2

f Ro 12:3

1Pe 5:5

g 2Ti 2:15

mouths, because these very men keep on subverting entire households by teaching things they should not for the sake of dishonest gain. **12** A certain one of them, their own prophet, said: "Cre'tans are always liars, injurious wild beasts, idle gluttons."

13 This witness is true. For this very reason, keep on reproofing them with severity so that they may be healthy in the faith, **14** paying no attention to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. **15** All things are clean to clean people;^a but to those who are defiled and faithless, nothing is clean, for both their minds and their consciences are defiled.^b **16** They publicly declare that they know God, but they disown him by their works,^c because they are detestable and disobedient and not approved for good work of any sort.

2 You, however, keep on speaking what is consistent with wholesome^Δ teaching.^d **2** Let the older men be moderate in habits, serious, sound in mind, healthy in faith, in love, in endurance. **3** Likewise, let the older women be reverent in behavior, not slanderous, not enslaved to a lot of wine, teachers of what is good, **4** so that they may advise^e the younger women to love their husbands, to love their children, **5** to be sound in mind, chaste, working at home,^f good, subjecting themselves to their own husbands,^e so that the word of God may not be spoken of abusively.

6 Likewise, keep on urging the younger men to be sound in mind,^f **7** showing yourself to be an example of fine works in every way. Teach what is pure* with all seriousness,^g **8** using

2:4 *Or "recall to their senses; train." 2:5 *Or "caring for their homes." 2:7 *Or possibly, "Teach with purity."

wholesome* speech that cannot be criticized,^a so that those who oppose may be put to shame, having nothing negative[#] to say about us.^b **9** Let slaves be in subjection to their owners in all things,^c trying to please them, not talking back, **10** not stealing from them,^d but showing complete trustworthiness, so that in every way they may adorn the teaching of our Savior, God.^e

11 For the undeserved kindness of God has been manifested, bringing salvation to all sorts of people.^f **12** It trains us to reject ungodliness and worldly desires^g and to live with soundness of mind and righteousness and godly devotion amid this present system of things,^h **13** while we wait for the happy hopeⁱ and glorious manifestation of the great God and of our Savior, Jesus Christ, **14** who gave himself for us^j to set us free^{*k} from every sort of lawlessness and to cleanse for himself a people who are his own special possession, zealous for fine works.^l

15 Keep on speaking these things and exhorting* and reproofing with full authority.^m Do not let anyone look down on you.

3 Continue reminding them to be in subjection and to be obedient to governments and authorities,ⁿ to be ready for every good work, **2** to speak injuriously of no one, not to be quarrelsome, but to be reasonable,^o displaying all mildness toward all men.^p **3** For we too were once senseless, disobedient, led astray, being slaves to various desires and pleasures, carrying on in badness and envy, detestable, hating one another.

4 However, when the kindness of our Savior, God,^q and

2:8 *Or "healthful; beneficial." #Or "vile." 2:12 *Or "this present age." See Glossary. 2:14 *Lit., "to ransom us; to redeem us." 2:15 *Or "encouraging."

CHAP. 2

- a Col 3:8
- b 1Pe 2:15
- c Eph 6:5
- 1Ti 6:1
- 1Pe 2:18
- d Eph 4:28
- e Mt 5:16
- f Ro 5:18
- g 1Jo 2:16
- h Ro 12:2
- i 1Pe 1:13
- j Mt 20:28
- 1Ti 2:5, 6
- k Eph 1:7
- Col 1:13, 14
- l Eph 2:10
- Heb 9:14
- m 2Ti 4:2

CHAP. 3

- n Mr 12:17
- Ro 13:1
- 1Pe 2:13, 14
- o Php 4:5
- Jas 3:17
- p Pr 15:1
- Ga 6:1
- Eph 4:1, 2
- 1Ti 6:11
- 2Ti 2:24, 25
- 1Pe 3:15
- q Lu 6:35
- Ro 2:4
- Eph 4:32

Second Col.

- a De 9:5
- Ro 3:10
- Ga 3:21
- b Ro 5:15, 21
- Ro 6:23
- c Ro 5:18
- d Joh 3:5
- Ro 8:23
- 2Co 5:17
- e Ac 2:33
- f Ro 3:24
- Ga 2:15, 16
- g Ro 8:17
- h Ro 6:23
- i 1Ti 1:3, 4
- 1Ti 6:3-5
- j 1Co 11:19
- Re 2:6
- k Ro 16:17
- 2Jo 10
- l 2Ti 4:2
- m Ac 20:4
- Eph 6:21
- 2Ti 4:12
- n 1Co 9:14
- Ga 6:6
- Heb 13:16
- o 1Co 9:11
- p Col 1:10

his love for mankind were manifested **5** (not because of any righteous works we had done,^a but because of his own mercy),^b he saved us by means of the bath that brought us to life^c and by making us new by holy spirit.^d **6** He poured this spirit out richly* on us through Jesus Christ our Savior,^e **7** so that after being declared righteous through the undeserved kindness of that one,^f we might become heirs^g according to a hope of everlasting life.^h

8 These words are trustworthy, and I want you to keep stressing these matters, so that those who have believed God may keep their minds focused on maintaining fine works. These things are fine and beneficial to men.

9 But have nothing to do with foolish arguments and genealogies and disputes and fights over the Law, for they are unprofitable and futile.ⁱ **10** As for a man who promotes a sect,^j reject him^k after a first and a second admonition,^l **11** knowing that such a man has deviated from the way and is sinning and is self-condemned.

12 When I send Ar'te-mas or Tych'i-cus^m to you, do your utmost to come to me at Ni-cop'o-lis, for that is where I have decided to spend the winter. **13** Carefully supply Ze'nas, who is versed in the Law, and Apol'los so that they may lack nothing for their trip.ⁿ **14** But let our people also learn to maintain fine works so as to help in cases of urgent need,^o so that they may not be unproductive.^p

15 All those with me send you their greetings. Give my greetings to those who have affection for us in the faith.

May the undeserved kindness be with all of you.

3:6 *Or "generously." 3:10 *Or "warning." 3:14 *Lit., "unfruitful."

TO PHILEMON

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

Greetings (1-3)
Philemon's love and faith (4-7)
Paul's appeal for Onesimus (8-22)
Final greetings (23-25)

1 Paul, a prisoner^a for the sake of Christ Jesus, and Timothy^b our brother, to Philemon our beloved fellow worker, **2** and to Ap'phi-a our sister, and to Ar-chip'pus^c our fellow soldier, and to the congregation that is in your house:^d

3 May you have undeserved kindness and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I always thank my God when I mention you in my prayers,^e **5** as I keep hearing of your faith and the love that you have for* the Lord Jesus and for* all the holy ones. **6** I pray that your sharing in the faith may move you to acknowledge every good thing that we have through Christ. **7** For I received much joy and comfort on hearing of your love, because the hearts* of the holy ones have been refreshed through you, brother.

8 For this very reason, though I have great freeness of speech in connection with Christ to order you to do what is proper, **9** I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love, seeing that I am Paul an older man, yes, now also a prisoner for the sake of Christ Jesus. **10** I am

5 *Or "toward." 7 *Or "tender affections."

a Eph 4:1

b Ac 16:1, 2
Heb 13:23

c Col 4:17

d Ro 16:5
1Co 16:19

e Eph 1:15, 16
1Th 1:2

Second Col.

a 1Co 4:15

b Col 4:9

c Eph 6:19, 20
Php 1:7

d 2Co 9:7

e 1Co 7:22

f 1Ti 6:2

appealing to you for my child, whose father I became^a while in prison,* O-nes'i-mus.^b **11** He was formerly useless to you, but now he is useful to you and to me. **12** I am sending him back to you, yes him, my very own heart.*

13 I would like to keep him here for myself so that he might take your place in ministering to me during my imprisonment for the sake of the good news.^c

14 But I do not want to do anything without your consent, so that your good deed may be done, not under compulsion, but of your own free will.^d **15** Perhaps this is really why he broke away for a short while,* so that you may have him back forever, **16** no longer as a slave,^e but as more than a slave, as a brother who is beloved,^f especially so to me, but how much more so to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. **17** So if you consider me a friend,* receive him kindly the same way you would me. **18** Moreover, if he did you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to my account. **19** I, Paul, am writing with my own hand: I will pay it back—not to mention that you owe me even your own self. **20** Yes, brother,

10 *Lit., "in the bonds." 12 *Or "my tender affections." 15 *Lit., "an hour." 17 *Lit., "a sharer."

may I receive this assistance from you in connection with the Lord; refresh my heart* in connection with Christ.

21 I am confident that you will comply, so I am writing you, knowing that you will do even more than what I say.

22 But along with that, also prepare a place for me to stay, for I am hoping that through your

20 *Or “tender affections.”

Second Col.

a Php 2:24

b Col 1:7

Col 4:12, 13

c Ac 19:29

Ac 27:2

Col 4:10

d 2Ti 4:10

e Col 4:14

prayers I will be given back to you.*^a

23 Sending you greetings is Ep'a-phras,^b my fellow captive in union with Christ Jesus, **24** also Mark, Ar-is-tar'chus,^c De'mas,^d and Luke,^e my fellow workers.

25 The undeserved kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ be with the spirit you show.

22 *Or “set free for you.”

TO THE

HEBREWS

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 God speaks by means of his Son (1-4)
The Son superior to the angels (5-14)</p> <p>2 Pay more than the usual attention (1-4)
All things subjected to Jesus (5-9)
Jesus and his brothers (10-18)
Chief Agent of their salvation (10)
A merciful high priest (17)</p> <p>3 Jesus greater than Moses (1-6)
All things constructed by God (4)
Warning against lack of faith (7-19)
“Today if you listen to his voice” (7, 15)</p> <p>4 Danger of not entering into God's rest (1-10)
Exhortation to enter into God's rest (11-13)
God's word is alive (12)
Jesus, the great high priest (14-16)</p> <p>5 Jesus superior to human high priests (1-10)
In the manner of Melchizedek (6, 10)
Learned obedience from suffering (8)
Responsible for everlasting salvation (9)
Warning against immaturity (11-14)</p> <p>6 Press on to maturity (1-3)
Those falling away nail the Son to the stake again (4-8)</p> | <p>Make your hope sure (9-12)
Certainty of God's promise (13-20)
God's promise and oath unchangeable (17, 18)</p> <p>7 Melchizedek, unique king and priest (1-10)
Superiority of Christ's priesthood (11-28)
Christ able to save completely (25)</p> <p>8 Tabernacle having heavenly significance (1-6)
Old and new covenants contrasted (7-13)</p> <p>9 Sacred service in the earthly sanctuary (1-10)
Christ enters heaven with his blood (11-28)
Mediator of a new covenant (15)</p> <p>10 Animal sacrifices ineffectual (1-4)
Law, a shadow (1)
Christ's sacrifice once for all time (5-18)
A new and living way of entry (19-25)
Not forsaking our meeting together (24, 25)
Warning against willful sin (26-31)
Confidence and faith to endure (32-39)</p> <p>11 Definition of faith (1, 2)
Examples of faith (3-40)
Impossible to please God without faith (6)</p> |
|--|---|

idols? . . . “Therefore get out from among them, and separate yourselves,” says Jehovah, “and quit touching the unclean thing”; “and I will take you in.””

Rev. 18:4, 5: “I heard another voice out of heaven say: ‘Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues. For her sins have massed together clear up to heaven, and God has called her acts of injustice to mind.’” (For details, see the main heading “Babylon the Great.”)

Is belonging to an organized religion necessary?

Most religious organizations have produced bad fruitage. It is not the fact that groups are organized that is bad. But many have promoted forms of worship that are based on false teachings and are largely ritualistic instead of providing genuine spiritual guidance; they have been misused to control the lives of people for selfish objectives; they have been overly concerned with money collections and ornate houses of worship instead of spiritual values; their members are often hypocritical. Obviously no one who loves righteousness would want to belong to such an organization. But true religion is a refreshing contrast to all of that. Nevertheless, to fulfill the Bible’s requirements, it must be organized.

Heb. 10:24, 25: “Let us consider one another to incite to love and fine works, not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, as some have the custom, but encouraging one another, and all the more so as you behold the day drawing near.” (To carry out this Scriptural command, there must be Christian meetings that we can attend on a consistent basis. Such an arrangement encourages us to express love toward others, not only concern about self.)

1 Cor. 1:10: “Now I exhort you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you should all speak in agreement, and that there should not be divisions among you, but that you may be fitly united in the same mind and in the same line of thought.” (Such

unity would never be achieved if the individuals did not meet together, benefit from the same spiritual feeding program, and respect the agency through which such instruction was provided. See also John 17:20, 21.)

1 Pet. 2:17: “Have love for the whole association of brothers.” (Does that include only those who may meet together for worship in a particular private home? Not at all; it is an international brotherhood, as shown by Galatians 2:8, 9 and 1 Corinthians 16:19.)

Matt. 24:14: “This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come.” (For all nations to be given the opportunity to hear that good news, the preaching must be carried out in an orderly way, with suitable oversight. Love for God and for one’s fellowman has caused people around the earth to unite their efforts to do this work.)

See also the main heading “Organization.”

Is loving one’s fellowman what really counts?

There is no doubt about it, such love is important. (Rom. 13:8-10) But being a Christian involves more than simply being kind to our neighbor. Jesus said that his true disciples would be outstandingly identified by their love for one another, for fellow believers. (John 13:35) The importance of that is emphasized repeatedly in the Bible. (Gal. 6:10; 1 Pet. 4:8; 1 John 3:14, 16, 17) However, Jesus showed that even more important is our love for God himself, which is shown by our obedience to his commandments. (Matt. 22:35-38; 1 John 5:3) To demonstrate such love, we need to study and apply God’s Word and assemble with fellow servants of God for worship.

Is having a personal relationship with God the really important thing?

It certainly is important. Merely attending religious services in a formalistic way cannot take the place of it. But we need to be careful. Why? In the first century, there were people who thought they had a good relationship with God but whom Jesus showed to be badly mistaken. (John 8:41-44) The apostle Paul wrote about

95 “Taste and See That Jehovah Is Good” (Psalm 34:8)

1. Our service to God we cherish;
We value our priv’lege to preach.
We buy out the time and give God our best,
For many we still need to reach.

(CHORUS)

*God’s Word invites us: ‘Come taste and see—
See that Jehovah is good.’
Godly devotion brings greatest gain,
We know we’ve done all we could.*

2. For those in the full-time service,
Rich blessings and treasures abound.
By trusting in God to care for their needs,
In all things contentment is found.

(Chorus)

who was holding the *Listen and Live* brochure in his hand approached her and thanked her for giving it to his children. “This saved my children’s lives!” he said. The sister, not aware of the initial conversation, asked what had happened. The father explained that the youngsters had planned to attack a certain village. In accord with local custom, they intended to avenge an assault on one of their friends. However, when the boys read the brochure, they learned that people who fight with others will not inherit the coming Paradise. So they calmed down, abandoned their plan, and went home. A potentially dangerous conflict had been avoided because of the Bible’s message in the brochure.

A Transvestite Makes Changes

Rek grew up in a traditional family in **Cambodia**, but from a very young age, both he and his twin brother felt that they were female. They played with dolls and were interested in dressing in girls’ clothing. Their mother was confused and ashamed and did not know how to stop them. They would leave for school dressed as boys but immediately change into girls’ clothing once they got there. At the age of 16, the twins entered a beauty contest for transvestites and were noticed by the entertainment industry. This led to their being featured in television shows and comedy acts. Soon, Rek adopted a homosexual lifestyle and associated with other transvestites.

Rek's mother began attending church and made Rek go with her. Although he agreed to wear men's clothing, he refused to cut his long hair. The pastor often made demeaning comments to Rek and ridiculed his lifestyle. Even so, Rek thought that he would try to study the Bible at the church. The first week, he got up early and cycled several miles to the church, but the pastor did not feel up to teaching and excused himself. Rek was disgusted when the pastor did not even show up the second week.

However, when Rek got home, his twin brother told him that a woman had visited and offered a free home Bible study. She had left the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* The twins began studying with the sister and her husband. After six months, Rek's brother felt that he was not ready to change his lifestyle, and he stopped studying. Rek, on the other hand, was deeply affected by 1 Corinthians 6: 9, 10, and saw clearly what he had to do. By means of diligent study, Bible reading, prayer, and meeting attendance, he was able to clean up his life. Rek's mother is also studying and making good progress. When Rek was baptized, his mother said, with tears in her eyes, "I'm so happy to see my son get baptized as a man." He now serves as a regular pioneer.

A Spiritist Changes Her Ways

Or-Ya was a practicing spiritist, healer, counselor, and fortune-teller. A special pioneer couple serving in Haifa, **Israel**, met her in the house-to-house ministry. She greeted them with the words: "If it's about God, come in!" Her home was full of items connected with spiritism and mysticism. She claimed that

she received messages from God, some through the “spirit” of a deceased rabbi.

“You’ve got just two months to get me ready for baptism!”

The offer of a home Bible study in the *Bible Teach* book appealed to her. Just two days before the couple called at her home, she had prayed to God to send her someone who could teach her the Bible free of any rabbinical interpretations. Within a month, she asked, “Are there other people who share your beliefs?” She attended a congregation meeting and was impressed by the warmth and love shown to her. She has attended regularly ever since.

After two months of study, Or-Ya asked about an upcoming assembly: “Isn’t it at assemblies that one can get baptized? If so, you’ve got just two months to get me ready for baptism!” As a first step, she threw out all her expensive spiritistic paraphernalia. She then quit working in that field and began witnessing to others, presenting the *Bible Teach* book and magazines to all her former patients and clients. When she fell sick, she refused to turn to her previous healing methods. Giving up her former profession left her without an income for four months. Yet, she set certain conditions for work—four days a week, six hours a day—to allow for theocratic activities, and she eventually found suitable employment. Then she sold her large house and rented a small apartment.

In due course, Or-Ya qualified for baptism, but a week before the assembly, she broke her leg. Undaunted, she was baptized anyway, but with her

leg in a cast. Today Or-Ya is an active publisher, witnessing to former clients and conducting Bible studies.

A Cult Member Finds the Truth

A Bible study was started with deaf twin brothers in a remote mountain area of the **Philippines**. Both belonged to a cult that believed that weapons could not harm the members as long as they wore certain amulets and scarves for protection. They had been trained in the use of knives, bolos, and guns and had participated in many battles against rebel groups in the mountains. The cult allowed them to study the Bible with the understanding that the Witnesses would not force them to leave the cult.

The brothers, of course, encouraged the twins to make their own decision based on what they were learning from the Bible. One of the twins felt that he could not make the necessary adjustments in his life in order to serve God acceptably. The other, however, kept studying. To encourage him, the brother studying with him opened the Bible and explained in sign language: "Your name, Samuel, is in the Bible. The Samuel in the Bible served the true God, Jehovah, until he was very old. You too can faithfully obey Jehovah." This touched Samuel's heart. "If my name is in the Bible," he reasoned, "then I too must take Jehovah's side." He informed the cult that he was leaving the mountains, and he burned all his amulets and spiritistic items and made rapid progress. He is now a baptized servant of Jehovah, zealously helping other deaf ones to learn Bible truth.

114 *God's Own Book—A Treasure*

(Proverbs 2:1)

1. There is a book that by its many pages,
 Brings peace and joy and hope to humankind.
 Its wondrous thoughts
 are charged with such great power;
 It brings life to the “dead,” sight to the “blind.”
That precious book is God's own Holy Bible.
 Its words were penned
 by men whom God inspired,
 By men who truly loved their God Jehovah,
 And by his holy spirit they were fired.
2. They wrote a record true of God's creations,
 How by his might this universe appeared.
 They also told how man at first was sinless
 But how his Paradise then disappeared.
They further told about a certain angel
 Who challenged God and spurned his sov'reignty.
 That challenge led to sin and man's great sorrow,
 But soon will come Jehovah's victory.
3. Today we live in times of joy unbounded.
 God's Kingdom now is here with Christ as Lord.
 This is the day Jehovah grants salvation
 To all who come to him in full accord.
Within his book are found these cheerful tidings;
 A sacred banquet feast on which to feed.
 It offers peace beyond all human thinking;
 This Living Treasure beckons all to read.