

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

OCTOBER 2014

MONTHLY THEME: **“Preach the word; be at it urgently.”—2 Tim. 4:2.**

WEEK STARTING OCTOBER 13

Song 8 and Prayer

☐ Congregation Bible Study:

cl chap. 14 ¶10-15 (30 min.)

☐ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Deuteronomy 4-6 (10 min.)

No. 1: Deuteronomy 4:29-43 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Changes That Must Be Made to Please God—*rs* p. 369 ¶3–p. 370 ¶1 (5 min.)

No. 3: What the Bible Says About Homosexuality—*rs* p. 368 ¶4–p. 369 ¶2 (5 min.)

☐ Service Meeting:

Song 92

5 min: What Does It Mean to Preach With Urgency? Enthusiastic talk highlighting 2 Timothy 4:2. Use material in the March 15, 2012, *Watchtower*, pages 16-17, paragraphs 7-9.

10 min: Why Is Our Preaching Urgent? Talk by an elder based on the March 15, 2012, *Watchtower*, pages 15-16, paragraphs 3-6, and page 18, paragraphs 14-18. Emphasize how applying the direction in the series of *Kingdom Ministry* articles entitled “Improving Our Skills in the Ministry” can help us to preach with a sense of urgency.

15 min: “Seize Your Opportunities to Spread the Kingdom Message!” Questions and answers. When considering paragraph 3, invite audience to relate experiences they have had witnessing informally. Conclude by tying in the monthly theme. Encourage audience to read the two articles in the series “A Conversation With a Neighbor” that will be discussed at next week’s Service Meeting.

Song 97 and Prayer

Seize Your Opportunities to Spread the Kingdom Message!

¹ King David was someone who did not allow his circumstances to paralyze him. For example, David wanted to build a house for Jehovah. When he was prevented from doing so, David adjusted his goals and helped get

1. What lesson can we learn from David’s example?

things ready for Solomon to build the temple. (1 Ki. 8:17-19; 1 Chron. 29:3-9) Instead of dwelling on what he could not do, David focused on what he *could* do. How can we imitate David’s example as we look for ways to spread the Kingdom message?

² **Do What You Can:** Many have simplified their life in order to enroll as auxiliary or regular pioneers. (Matt. 6:22, ftn.) Could you join them? As you prayerfully examine your circumstances, you may see that “a large door that leads to activity” is open to you. If so, seize that opportunity!—1 Cor. 16:8, 9.

³ What, though, if your circumstances prevent you from pioneering? Do not overlook other opportunities available to you. For example, if your secular work brings you in contact with nonbelievers, why not seize an appropriate opportunity to witness to them? Or if you are dealing with health problems, can you take advantage of opportunities to witness to your health-care providers? Remember that there is a provision for those who are very limited in their activity because of age or a serious health condition to report field service time in 15-minute increments. When filling out your monthly field service report, be sure to include time spent witnessing informally as well as any literature placements, including individual tracts and Memorial and convention invitations. You may be surprised at how quickly the time from those seemingly small opportunities adds up!

⁴ Whatever our personal circumstances, let us seize every opportunity to spread the good news. We will thereby experience the satisfaction of knowing that we are doing all we can for the sake of the Kingdom.—Mark 14:8; Luke 21:2-4.

2. What self-examination could we make?

3. What opportunities to witness can we take advantage of even if our circumstances do not allow us to pioneer?

4. What is your determination?

8 *The Lord's Evening Meal* (Matthew 26:26-30)

1. Jehovah, our Father in heaven,
Oh, this is a most sacred night!
It was Nisan fourteen when your glory was seen,
Your love, justice, wisdom, and might.
The Passover lamb was then eaten,
And Israel's tribes went forth free.
Cent'ries later our Lord his own lifeblood outpoured
To fulfill this divine prophecy.
2. We're gathered together before you.
As sheep of your pasture, we came
To give praise for your love that brought Christ from
above,
To honor your most holy name.
We keep this Memorial occasion
Fixed firmly in heart and in mind.
Thus we'll walk ev'ry day as Christ showed us the
way,
And then life everlasting we'll find.

8:4-8) Hence, the Bible says: “It is not possible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take sins away.” (Hebrews 10:1-4) Such sacrifices were only pictorial, or symbolic, of the true ransom sacrifice that was to come.

“A Corresponding Ransom”

¹⁰ “In Adam all are dying,” said the apostle Paul. (1 Corinthians 15:22) The ransom thus had to involve the death of the exact equal of Adam—a perfect human. (Romans 5:14) No other kind of creature could balance the scales of justice. Only a perfect human, someone not under the Adamic death sentence, could offer “a corresponding ransom”—one corresponding perfectly to Adam. (1 Timothy 2:6) It would not be necessary for untold millions of individual humans to be sacrificed so as to correspond to each descendant of Adam. The apostle Paul explained: “Through *one man* [Adam] sin entered into the world and death through sin.” (Romans 5:12) And “since death is through a man,” God provided for the redemption of mankind “through a man.” (1 Corinthians 15:21) How?

¹¹ Jehovah arranged to have a perfect man voluntarily sacrifice his life. According to Romans 6:23, “the wages sin pays is death.” In sacrificing his life, the ransomer would “taste death for every man.” In other words, he would pay the wage for Adam’s sin. (Hebrews 2:9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24) This would have profound legal consequences. By nullifying the death sentence upon Adam’s

10. (a) To whom did the ransomer have to correspond, and why?
 (b) Why was only one human sacrifice necessary?

11. (a) How would the ransomer “taste death for every man”?
 (b) Why could Adam and Eve not have benefited from the ransom?
 (See footnote.)

obedient offspring, the ransom would cut off the destructive power of sin right at its source.*—Romans 5:16.

¹² To illustrate: Imagine that you live in a town where most of the residents are employed at a large factory. You and your neighbors are well paid for your labors and lead comfortable lives. That is, until the day the factory closes its doors. The reason? The factory manager turned corrupt, forcing the business into bankruptcy. Suddenly out of work, you and your neighbors are unable to pay the bills. Marriage mates, children, and creditors suffer because of that one man's corruption. Is there a way out? Yes! A wealthy benefactor decides to intervene. He appreciates the value of the company. He also feels for its many employees and their families. So he arranges to pay off the company's debt and reopen the factory. The cancellation of that one debt brings relief to the many employees and their families and to the creditors. Similarly, the cancellation of Adam's debt benefits untold millions.

Who Provides the Ransom?

¹³ Only Jehovah could provide "the Lamb . . . that takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29) But God did not send just any angel to rescue mankind. Instead, he sent the One who could furnish the ultimate,

* Adam and Eve could not have benefited from the ransom. The Mosaic Law stated this principle regarding a willful murderer: "You must take no ransom for the soul of a murderer who is deserving to die." (Numbers 35:31) Clearly, Adam and Eve deserved to die because they willingly and knowingly disobeyed God. They thereby gave up their prospect of everlasting life.

12. Illustrate how paying one debt can benefit many people.
 13, 14. (a) How did Jehovah provide the ransom for mankind?
 (b) To whom is the ransom paid, and why is such a payment necessary?

conclusive answer to Satan's charge against Jehovah's servants. Yes, Jehovah made the supreme sacrifice of sending his only-begotten Son, "the one he was specially fond of." (Proverbs 8:30) Willingly, God's Son "emptied himself" of his heavenly nature. (Philippians 2:7) Miraculously, Jehovah transferred the life and the personality pattern of his firstborn heavenly Son to the womb of a Jewish virgin named Mary. (Luke 1:27, 35) As a man, he would be called Jesus. But in a legal sense, he could be called the second Adam, for he corresponded perfectly to Adam. (1 Corinthians 15:45, 47) Jesus could thus offer himself up in sacrifice as a ransom for sinful mankind.

¹⁴ To whom would that ransom be paid? Psalm 49:7 specifically says that the ransom is paid "to God." But is not Jehovah the one who arranges for the ransom in the first place? Yes, but this does not reduce the ransom to a pointless, mechanical exchange—like taking money out of one pocket and putting it into another. It must be appreciated that the ransom is, not a physical exchange, but a legal transaction. By providing for the payment of the ransom, even at enormous cost to himself, Jehovah affirmed his unwavering adherence to his own perfect justice.—Genesis 22:7, 8, 11-13; Hebrews 11:17; James 1:17.

¹⁵ In the spring of 33 C.E., Jesus Christ willingly submitted to an ordeal that led to the payment of the ransom. He allowed himself to be arrested on false charges, judged guilty, and nailed to a stake of execution. Was it really necessary for Jesus to suffer so much? Yes, because the issue of the integrity of God's servants had to be settled. Significantly, God did not allow the infant Jesus to be killed by Herod. (Matthew 2:13-18) But when Jesus was an adult, he was able to withstand the brunt of Satan's attacks with

15. Why was it necessary for Jesus to suffer and die?

full comprehension of the issues.* By remaining "loyal, guileless, undefiled, separated from the sinners" in spite of horrific treatment, Jesus proved with dramatic finality that Jehovah does have servants who remain faithful under trial. (Hebrews 7:26) No wonder, then, that at the moment before his death, Jesus cried out triumphantly: "It has been accomplished!"—John 19:30.

Finishing His Redemptive Work

¹⁶ Jesus had yet to finish his redemptive work. On the third day after Jesus' death, Jehovah raised him from the dead. (Acts 3:15; 10:40) By this momentous act, Jehovah not only rewarded his Son for his faithful service but gave him the opportunity to finish his redemptive work as God's High Priest. (Romans 1:4; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8) The apostle Paul explains: "When Christ came as a high priest . . . , he entered, no, not with the blood of goats and of young bulls, but with his own blood, once for all time into the holy place and obtained an everlasting deliverance for us. For Christ entered, not into a holy place made with hands, which is a copy of the reality, but into heaven itself, now to appear before the person of God for us."—Hebrews 9:11, 12, 24.

¹⁷ Christ could not take his literal blood into heaven. (1 Corinthians 15:50) Rather, he took what that blood

* In order to counterbalance the sin of Adam, Jesus had to die, not as a perfect child, but as a perfect man. Remember, Adam's sin was willful, carried out with full knowledge of the seriousness of the act and its consequences. So in order to become "the last Adam" and cover that sin, Jesus had to make a mature, knowing choice to keep his integrity to Jehovah. (1 Corinthians 15:45, 47) Thus Jesus' entire faithful life course—including his sacrificial death—served as "one act of justification."—Romans 5:18, 19.

16, 17. (a) How did Jesus continue his redemptive work? (b) Why was it necessary for Jesus to appear "before the person of God for us"?

Reu'ben-ites and the Gad'ites,^a I have given from Gil'e-ad to the Ar'non Valley,* with the middle of the valley as a boundary, and as far as Jab'bok, the valley that is the boundary of the Am'mon-ites, **17** and the Ar'a-bah and the Jordan and the border, from Chin'ne-reth to the Sea of the Ar'a-bah, the Salt Sea,* at the base of the slopes of Pis'gah toward the east.^b

18 "I then gave you this command: 'Jehovah your God has given you this land to take possession of it. All your valiant men will take up arms and cross over before your brothers, the Israelites.^c **19** Only your wives, your children, and your livestock (I well know that you have a great deal of livestock) will continue dwelling in the cities that I have given you, **20** until Jehovah gives your brothers rest, as he does for you, and they also have taken possession of the land that Jehovah your God will give them across the Jordan. Then you will come back, each one to his possession that I have given you.'^d

21 "At that time I gave this command to Joshua:^e 'You have seen with your own eyes what Jehovah your God has done to these two kings. Jehovah will do the same thing to all the kingdoms into which you will cross over.^f **22** You must not be afraid of them, for Jehovah your God is the one fighting for you.'^g

23 "At that time I pleaded with Jehovah, saying, **24** 'O Sovereign Lord Jehovah, you have begun to show your servant your greatness and your mighty arm,^h for what god in the heavens or on the earth performs such mighty deeds as

CHAP. 3

- a Nu 32:33
Jos 22:9
b Nu 34:11, 12
c Nu 32:20-22
d Jos 1:14, 15
Jos 22:4, 8
e Nu 11:28
Nu 14:30
Nu 27:18
f Jos 10:25
g Ex 14:14
Ex 15:3
De 1:30
De 20:4
Jos 10:42
h Ex 15:16
De 11:2

Second Col.

- a Ex 15:11
2Sa 7:22
1KI 8:23
Ps 86:8
Jer 10:6, 7
b Ex 3:8
De 1:7
De 11:11, 12
c Nu 20:12
Nu 27:13, 14
De 4:21
Ps 106:32
d Nu 27:12
e De 34:1, 4
f Nu 27:18-20
De 1:38
De 31:7
g Jos 1:1, 2
h De 4:45, 46
De 34:5, 6

CHAP. 4

- i Le 18:5
j De 12:32
Pr 30:5, 6
Re 22:18, 19
k Nu 25:5, 9
Ps 106:28
Ho 9:10
1Co 10:7, 8
l Le 26:46
Nu 30:16
Nu 36:13
De 6:1
m 1KI 2:3
n Ps 111:10
o Ps 119:98,
100

you?^a **25** Please let me pass over and see the good land that is across the Jordan, this good mountainous region and Leb'anon.^b **26** But Jehovah was still furious with me because of you,^c and he would not listen to me. Rather, Jehovah said to me, 'Enough from you! Never speak to me again about this matter. **27** Go up to the top of Pis'gah,^d and look to the west and north and south and east and view the land with your eyes, for you will not cross over this Jordan.^e **28** Commission Joshua^f and encourage him and strengthen him, because he is the one who will cross over^g before this people and he is the one who will cause them to inherit the land that you will see.'^h **29** All this happened while we were dwelling in the valley in front of Beth-pe'or.^h

4 "Now, O Israel, listen to the regulations and the judicial decisions that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may liveⁱ and go in and take possession of the land that Jehovah, the God of your forefathers, is giving you. **2** You must not add to the word that I am commanding you, neither must you take away from it,^j so as to keep the commandments of Jehovah your God that I am commanding you.

3 "Your own eyes have seen what Jehovah did in the case of the Ba'al of Pe'or; Jehovah your God annihilated from your midst every man who walked after the Ba'al of Pe'or.^k **4** But you who are holding fast to Jehovah your God are all alive today. **5** See, I have taught you regulations and judicial decisions,^l just as Jehovah my God has commanded me, so that you may observe them in the land you will take possession of. **6** You must carefully follow them,^m because this will show wisdomⁿ and understanding^o on your part before

3:16 *Or "Wadi Arnon." 3:17 *That is, the Dead Sea.

the peoples who will hear about all these regulations, and they will say, "This great nation is undoubtedly a wise and understanding people."^a **7** For what great nation has gods as near to it as Jehovah our God is to us whenever we call on him?^b **8** And what great nation has righteous regulations and judicial decisions like this entire Law that I am putting before you today?^c

9 "Just be careful and watch yourself closely,* so that you may not forget the things that your eyes have seen and so that they may not depart from your heart all the days of your life. You must also make them known to your sons and to your grandsons.^d **10** On the day that you stood before Jehovah your God in Ho'reb, Jehovah said to me, "Congregate the people together to me so that I may let them hear my words,^e in order that they may learn to fear me^f all the days that they are alive on the ground and that they may teach their sons."^g

11 "So you came near and stood at the base of the mountain, and the mountain was burning with fire up to the very heavens;* there was darkness, cloud, and thick gloom.^h **12** And Jehovah began to speak to you out of the fire.ⁱ You heard the sound of words, but you saw no form—there was only a voice.^k **13** And he declared his covenant to you,^l which he commanded you to observe—the Ten Commandments.^m Afterward, he wrote them on two tablets of stone.ⁿ **14** At that time Jehovah commanded me to teach you regulations and judicial decisions, which you are to observe in the

4:9 *Or "and pay close attention to your soul." **4:11** *Lit., "up to the heart of the heavens." **4:13** *Lit., "the Ten Words." Also known as the Decalogue.

CHAP. 4

- a 1Ki 4:34
1Ki 10:4-7
Da 1:19, 20
b Ex 25:8
Le 26:12
De 5:26
2Sa 7:23
c Ps 147:19, 20
d Ge 18:19
De 6:6, 7
e Ex 19:9
f Ex 20:20
De 5:29
g Pr 22:6
Eph 6:4
h Ex 19:18
Heb 12:18, 19
i De 9:10
j Isa 40:18
Joh 1:18
Joh 4:24
k Ex 20:22
l Ex 19:5
De 5:2
De 9:9
Heb 9:19, 20
m Ex 20:1
Ex 34:28
De 10:4
n Ex 24:12
Ex 31:18
Ex 32:19
Ex 34:1

Second Col.

- a Ex 20:4
De 27:15
Isa 40:18
Ac 17:29
1Co 10:14
b De 5:8
Ro 1:22, 23
c 1Sa 5:4
d De 17:2, 3
2Ki 17:16
Eze 8:16
e Ex 19:5
f Ps 106:32
g Nu 20:12
De 31:1, 2
h De 3:27
i Ex 24:3
j Ex 20:4

land you will enter to take possession of.

15 "Therefore, watch yourselves closely*—since you did not see any form on the day Jehovah spoke to you in Ho'reb out of the middle of the fire—**16** that you may not act corruptly by making for yourselves any carved image having the form of any symbol, the representation of male or female,^a **17** the representation of any animal on the earth or the representation of any bird that flies in the sky,^b **18** the representation of anything creeping on the ground or the representation of any fish in the waters under the earth.^c **19** And when you raise your eyes to the heavens and see the sun and the moon and the stars—all the army of the heavens—do not get seduced and bow down to them and serve them.^d Jehovah your God has given them to all the peoples under the whole heavens. **20** But you are the ones Jehovah took and brought out of the iron-smelting furnace, out of Egypt, to become the people of his personal possession,^e as you are today.

21 "Jehovah became angry with me because of you,^f and he swore that I should not cross the Jordan or go into the good land that Jehovah your God is giving you as an inheritance.^g **22** For I am to die in this land; I will not cross the Jordan,^h but you will cross over and take possession of this good land. **23** Be careful that you do not forget the covenant of Jehovah your God that he made with you,ⁱ and do not make for yourselves a carved image, the form of anything forbidden to you by Jehovah your God.^j **24** For Jehovah

4:15 *Or "pay close attention to your souls." **4:20** *Or "of his inheritance."

your God is a consuming fire,^a a God who requires exclusive devotion.^b

25 "If you become father to sons and grandsons and you have lived a long time in the land and you act ruinously and make a carved image^c of any kind and you do what is evil in the eyes of Jehovah your God so as to offend him,^d **26** I do take the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you today that you will surely and quickly perish from the land that you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of. You will not last long on it, but you will be utterly annihilated.^e **27** Jehovah will scatter you among the peoples,^f and just a few of you will survive^g among the nations to which Jehovah will have driven you. **28** There you will have to serve gods of wood and stone made by human hands,^h gods that cannot see or hear or eat or smell.

29 "If you search for Jehovah your God from there, you will certainly find him,ⁱ if you inquire for him with all your heart and with all your soul.^j **30** When you are in great distress and all these things have happened to you in later times, then you will return to Jehovah your God and listen to his voice.^k **31** For Jehovah your God is a merciful God.^l He will not desert you or bring you to ruin or forget the covenant that he swore to your forefathers.^m

32 "Ask, now, about the former days before your time, from the day when God created man on the earth; search from one end of the heavens to the other end of the heavens. Has anything so great ever happened or has anything like it ever been heard of?ⁿ **33** Have any other people heard the voice of God speaking

CHAP. 4

- a Ex 24:17
De 9:3
Heb 12:29
b Ex 20:5
Ex 34:14
Nu 25:11
Lu 10:27
c Jg 18:30
2Ki 21:1, 7
d 2Ki 17:16, 17
e Le 18:24, 28
Le 26:27, 32
f De 28:64
Ne 1:8
g De 28:62
h De 28:15, 36
Jer 16:13
Eze 20:39
i 2Ch 15:4, 15
j De 30:1-3
De 30:8-10
1Ki 8:48, 49
Jer 29:13
Joe 2:12
k 2Ch 33:13
Ne 1:9
l Ex 34:6
De 30:3
2Ch 30:9
Ne 9:31
Isa 54:7
Isa 55:7
m Le 26:42
n Ps 44:1

Second Col.

- a De 5:26
b Ex 7:3
c Ex 15:3
d Ex 13:3
e De 26:8
Ps 78:43-51
f Ex 6:7
g Ex 15:11
De 32:39
1Sa 2:2
Isa 45:18
Mr 12:32
h Ex 19:18
Ex 20:22
i De 10:15
Ps 105:6
j Ex 23:28
De 7:1
De 9:1
Jos 3:10
k 2Ch 20:6
l Isa 44:6
m Ge 48:3, 4
n Nu 35:14
o Nu 35:22-24
p Nu 35:11, 25
De 19:4, 5
q Jos 21:8, 36

out of the fire the way you have heard it and kept on living?^a **34** Or has God ever attempted to take for himself a nation out of the midst of another nation along with judgments,^{*} with signs, with miracles,^b with war,^c with a mighty hand,^d with an outstretched arm, and with terrifying deeds,^e as Jehovah your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes? **35** You yourselves have been shown these things so you will know that Jehovah is the true God;^f there is no other besides him.^g **36** He made you hear his voice from the heavens to correct you, and on the earth he made you see his great fire, and his words you heard from out of the fire.^h

37 "Because he loved your forefathers and has chosen their offspring^{*} after them,ⁱ you were brought out of Egypt in his presence by his great power. **38** From before you he drove away nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in and give you their land as an inheritance, as it is today.^j **39** Know, therefore, on this day, and take it to heart that Jehovah is the true God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.^k There is no other.^l **40** You must keep his regulations and his commandments that I am commanding you today, in order that it may go well with you and your sons after you, so that you may long remain in the land that Jehovah your God is giving you."^m

41 At that time Moses set apart three cities on the eastern side of the Jordan.ⁿ **42** If any manslayer unintentionally kills his fellow man and he did not previously hate him,^o he must flee to one of these cities and live.^p **43** The cities are Be'zer^q in the wilderness on the

4:29 *See Glossary.

4:34 *Or "trials." 4:37 *Lit., "seed."

tableland* for the Reu'ben-ites, Ra'moth^a in Gil'e-ad for the Gad'-ites, and Go'lan^b in Ba'shan for the Ma-nas'sites.^c

44 Now this is the Law^d that Moses set before the people of Israel. **45** These are the reminders, the regulations, and the judicial decisions that Moses gave to the Israelites after they came out of Egypt,^e **46** in the region of the Jordan, in the valley opposite Beth-pe'or,^f in the land of King Si'hon of the Am'or-ites, who was dwelling in Hesh'-bon,^g whom Moses and the Israelites defeated after coming out of Egypt.^h **47** And they took possession of his land and of the land of King Ogⁱ of Ba'shan, the two kings of the Am'or-ites who were in the region east of the Jordan, **48** from A-ro'er,^j which is on the rim of the Ar'non Valley,^k up to Mount Si'on, that is, Her'mon,^k **49** and all the Ar'a-bah in the region east of the Jordan, and as far as the Sea of the Ar'a-bah,^{*} at the base of the slopes of Pis'gah.^l

5 Moses then summoned all Israel and said to them: "Hear, O Israel, the regulations and the judicial decisions that I am announcing to you today, and you must learn them and carefully observe them. **2** Jehovah our God made a covenant with us in Ho'reb.^m **3** It was not with our forefathers that Jehovah made this covenant, but with us, all of us alive here today. **4** Jehovah spoke face-to-face with you in the mountain, out of the fire.ⁿ **5** I was standing between Jehovah and you at that time^o to convey to you the word of Jehovah, for you were afraid because of the fire and did not go up the mountain.^p He said:

4:43 *Or "plateau." 4:48 *Or "Wadi Arnon." 4:49 *That is, the Salt Sea, or the Dead Sea.

CHAP. 4

- a Jos 21:8, 38
b Jos 21:27
c Jos 20:8, 9
d De 17:18
De 27:2, 3
Ga 3:24
e Le 26:46
De 4:1
f De 1:5
De 3:29
g Nu 21:26
h Nu 21:23, 24
i Nu 21:33
De 3:4
j De 2:36
De 3:12
k De 3:8, 9
l De 3:16, 17
De 34:1

CHAP. 5

- m Ex 19:5
Heb 9:19, 20
n Ex 19:9, 18
Ac 7:38
o Ex 20:19
Ga 3:19
p Ex 19:16

Second Col.

- a Ex 13:3
Ex 20:2
b Ex 20:3-6
2Ki 17:35
c Le 26:1
De 4:15, 16
De 4:23
De 27:15
Ac 17:29
d Ex 23:24
1Co 10:14
e Ex 34:14
De 4:24
Isa 42:8
Mt 4:10
f Ex 34:6, 7
g Ex 22:28
Le 19:12
h Ex 20:7
Le 24:16
i Ex 16:23
Ex 20:8-10
Ex 31:13
j Ex 34:21
k Ex 16:29
l Ne 13:15
m Ex 23:12
n De 10:17
Eph 6:9

6 "I am Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.^a **7** You must never have any other gods besides me."^b

8 "You must not make for yourself a carved image^c or a form* like anything that is in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. **9** You must not bow down to them nor be led to serve them,^d for I, Jehovah your God, am a God who requires exclusive devotion,^e bringing punishment for the error of fathers upon sons, upon the third generation and upon the fourth generation of those who hate me,^f **10** but showing loyal love* to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

11 "You must not take up the name of Jehovah your God in a worthless way,^g for Jehovah will not leave anyone unpunished who takes up his name in a worthless way.^h

12 "Observe the Sabbath day to keep it sacred, just as Jehovah your God commanded you.ⁱ **13** You are to labor and do all your work in six days,^j **14** but the seventh day is a sabbath to Jehovah your God.^k You must not do any work,^l neither you nor your son nor your daughter nor your slave man nor your slave girl nor your bull nor your donkey nor any of your domestic animals nor your foreign resident who is inside your cities,^m in order that your slave man and your slave girl may rest the same as you.ⁿ **15** Remember that you became a slave in the land of Egypt and that Jehovah your God brought you out of there

5:7 *Or "in defiance of me." Lit., "against my face." 5:8 *Or "representation." 5:10 *Or "loving-kindness." 5:14 *Lit., "gates."

with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.^a That is why Jehovah your God commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

16 "Honor your father and your mother,^b just as Jehovah your God has commanded you, so that you may live a long time and you may prosper* in the land that Jehovah your God is giving you.^c

17 "You must not murder.^d

18 "Neither must you commit adultery.^e

19 "Neither must you steal.^f

20 "Neither must you testify to a falsehood against your fellow man.^g

21 "Neither must you desire your fellow man's wife.^h Neither must you selfishly desire your fellow man's house nor his field nor his slave man nor his slave girl nor his bull nor his donkey nor anything that belongs to your fellow man.ⁱ

22 "These commandments* Jehovah spoke to all your congregation on the mountain, out of the fire, the cloud, and the thick gloom,^j with a loud voice, and he added nothing further; then he wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.^k

23 "But as soon as you had heard the voice out of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire,^l all the heads of your tribes and the elders approached me. **24** Then you said, 'Here Jehovah our God has shown us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the fire.^m Today we have seen that God can speak with man and he can keep living.ⁿ **25** Now, why should we die? For this great fire may consume us. If we continue hearing the voice of Jehovah our God,

5:16 *Or "and it may go well with you."

5:22 *Lit., "words."

CHAP. 5

- a Ex 6:6
De 4:34
b Ex 21:15
Le 19:3
De 27:16
Pr 1:8
Mr 7:10
c Ex 20:12
Eph 6:2, 3
d Ge 9:6
Ex 20:13
Nu 35:20, 21
Mt 5:21
Ro 13:9
e Ex 20:14
1Co 6:18
Heb 13:4
f Ex 20:15
Le 19:11
Pr 30:8, 9
1Co 6:10
Eph 4:28
g Ex 20:16
Ex 23:1
Le 19:16
De 19:16-19
Pr 6:16, 19
Pr 19:5
h Mt 5:28
i Ex 20:17
Lu 12:15
Ro 7:7
j Ex 19:9, 18
k Ex 24:12
Ex 31:18
De 4:12, 13
l Ex 20:18
Heb 12:18, 19
m Ex 24:17
n De 4:33, 36

Second Col.

- a Ex 20:19
Heb 12:18, 19
b De 18:16, 17
c De 10:12
Job 28:28
Pr 1:7
Mt 10:28
1Pe 2:17
d Pr 4:4
Pr 7:2
Ec 12:13
Isa 48:18
1Jo 5:3
e Ps 19:8, 11
Jas 1:25
f De 6:3, 25
De 8:1
g De 12:32
Jos 1:7, 8
h De 10:12
i De 4:40
De 12:28
Ro 10:5

we are sure to die. **26** For who is there of all flesh* who has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the fire as we did and yet goes on living? **27** You yourself must go near to hear all that Jehovah our God will say, and you will be the one to tell us all that Jehovah our God says to you, and we will listen and do it.^a

28 "So Jehovah heard the words you spoke to me, and Jehovah said to me, 'I have heard the words that this people have spoken to you. All they have said is good.^b **29** If only they would always have a heart inclined to fear me^c and to keep all my commandments;^d then it would go well with them and their sons forever!^e **30** Go say to them: "Return to your tents." **31** But you should stay here with me, and let me tell you all the commandments, the regulations, and the judicial decisions that you should teach to them and that they are to observe in the land that I am giving them to take possession of.' **32** Now you people should be careful to do just as Jehovah your God has commanded you.^f You must not turn to the right or to the left.^g

33 You should walk in all the way that Jehovah your God has commanded you,^h in order that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will take possession of.ⁱ

6 "Now these are the commandments, the regulations, and the judicial decisions that Jehovah your God has given to teach you, so that you may observe them when you cross over into the land that you are to take possession of, **2** in order that you may fear Jehovah your God and keep all his statutes and his commandments that I

5:26 *Or "all mankind."

am commanding you—you and your son and your grandson^a—all the days of your life, so that you may live a long time.^b

3 And you must listen, O Israel, and carefully observe them, so that you may prosper and become very many in the land flowing with milk and honey, just as Jehovah, the God of your forefathers, has promised you.

4 “Listen, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.^c **5** You must love Jehovah your God with all your heart and all your soul^{*d} and all your strength.^{#e}

6 These words that I am commanding you today must be on your heart, **7** and you must inculcate them in^{*} your sons^f and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up.^g **8** Tie them as a reminder on your hand, and they must be like a headband on your forehead.^{#h} **9** Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

10 “When Jehovah your God brings you into the land that he swore to your forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give youⁱ—great and fine cities that you did not build,^j **11** houses full of all sorts of good things that you did not work for, hewn cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant—and you have eaten and become satisfied,^k **12** be careful not to forget Jehovah,^l who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. **13** Jehovah your God you should fear,^m and him you should serve,ⁿ and by his name you should swear.^o **14** You must not follow after other gods, any gods of

6:5 *See Glossary. #Or “vital force; resources.” **6:7** *Or “repeat them to; impress them upon.” **6:8** *Lit., “between your eyes.”

CHAP. 6

- a Ge 18:19
De 4:9
b Pr 3:1, 2
c De 5:7
Isa 42:8
Zec 14:9
Mr 12:29, 32
1Co 8:6
d De 10:12
De 11:13
De 30:6
Mt 22:37
e Mr 12:30, 33
Lu 10:27
f Ge 18:19
De 4:9
Pr 22:6
Eph 6:4
g De 11:19
h De 11:18
i Ge 15:18
j Jos 24:13
Ps 105:44
k De 8:10
l Jg 3:7
m De 10:12
De 13:4
n Lu 4:8
o Jer 12:16

Second Col.

- a Ex 34:14
b Ex 20:5
De 4:24
c Ex 32:9, 10
Nu 25:3
De 11:16, 17
Jg 2:14
d 2Ki 17:18
e Mt 4:7
Lu 4:12
1Co 10:9
f Ex 17:2, 7
Ps 95:8, 9
Heb 3:8, 9
g Ge 15:18
h Ex 23:30
i Ex 7:3
j De 4:34
k Ex 13:5
De 1:8
l Ps 111:10
Pr 14:27
m Le 18:5
De 4:1
Ga 3:12

the peoples who are all around you,^a **15** for Jehovah your God who is in your midst is a God who requires exclusive devotion.^b Otherwise, the anger of Jehovah your God will blaze against you^c and he will annihilate you from the face of the earth.^d

16 “You must not put Jehovah your God to the test^e the way you put him to the test at Mas’sah.^f **17** You should diligently observe the commandments of Jehovah your God and his reminders and his regulations that he has commanded you to observe. **18** You must do what is right and good in Jehovah’s eyes, in order that you may prosper and that you may enter and take possession of the good land about which Jehovah has sworn to your forefathers,^g **19** by driving out all your enemies from before you, just as Jehovah has promised.^h

20 “In the future, when your son asks you, ‘What is the meaning of the reminders, the regulations, and the judicial decisions that Jehovah our God has commanded you?’ **21** then you will say to your son, ‘We became slaves to Phar’aoh in Egypt, but Jehovah brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. **22** So before our eyes Jehovah kept sending signs and miracles, great and devastating, upon Egypt,ⁱ upon Phar’aoh, and upon all his household.^j **23** And he brought us out from there in order to bring us here to give us the land about which he had sworn to our forefathers.^k **24** Then Jehovah commanded us to carry out all these regulations and to fear Jehovah our God for our lasting good,^l so that we could keep alive,^m as we are today. **25** And it will mean righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all these com-

mandments in obedience to* Jehovah our God, just as he has commanded us.^a

7 "When Jehovah your God brings you into the land you are about to enter and take possession of,^b he will also clear away populous nations from before you:^c the Hit'tites, the Gir'ga-shites, the Am'or-ites,^d the Ca'naan-ites, the Per'iz-zites, the Hi'vites, and the Jeb'u-sites,^e seven nations more populous and mightier than you are.^f **2** Jehovah your God will give them over to you, and you will defeat them.^g You should without fail devote them to destruction.^h You must not make any covenant with them nor show them any favor.ⁱ **3** You must not form any marriage alliances* with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons.^j **4** For they will turn your sons away from following me to serve other gods;^k then Jehovah's anger will blaze against you, and he will swiftly annihilate you.^l

5 "Instead, this is what you should do to them: Tear down their altars, break up their sacred pillars,^m cut down their sacred poles,ⁿ and burn up their graven images.^o **6** For you are a holy people to Jehovah your God, and Jehovah your God has chosen you to become his people, his special property,* out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.^p

7 "It was not because you were the most numerous of all the peoples that Jehovah showed affection for you and chose you,^q for you were the smallest of all the peoples.^r **8** Rather, it was because of Jehovah's love for you and because he kept the oath that he

CHAP. 6

a Ec 12:13
Ro 10:5

CHAP. 7

b De 31:3
c Ex 33:2
Jos 3:10
d Ge 15:16
e Ge 10:15-17
f De 20:1
g Nu 33:52
h Le 27:29
Jos 6:17
Jos 10:28
i Ex 23:32
Ex 34:15
De 20:16, 17
j Jos 23:12, 13
1Ki 11:1, 2
Ezr 9:2
k Ex 34:16
1Ki 11:4
l De 6:14, 15
m Ex 23:24
Ex 34:13
n De 16:21, 22
o De 7:25
De 12:2, 3
p Ex 19:5, 6
De 14:2
Am 3:2
q De 10:15
r De 10:22

Second Col.

a Ge 22:16, 17
b Ex 6:6
Ex 13:3, 14
c Ex 34:6, 7
d Pr 2:22
2Pe 3:7
e Le 26:9
f Le 26:4
g Ge 13:14, 15
h De 33:29
Ps 147:20
i Ex 23:26
De 28:11
Ps 127:3
j De 28:15, 27

had sworn to your forefathers^a that Jehovah brought you out with a mighty hand, to redeem you from the house of slavery,^b from the power* of Pharaoh king of Egypt. **9** You well know that Jehovah your God is the true God, the faithful God, keeping his covenant and loyal love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.^c **10** But those who hate him he will repay to their face with destruction.^d He will not be slow to deal with those who hate him; he will repay them to their face. **11** Therefore, take care to keep the commandments and the regulations and the judicial decisions that I am commanding you today, by observing them.

12 "If you continue listening to these judicial decisions and you observe them and carry them out, Jehovah your God will keep the covenant and the loyal love about which he swore to your forefathers. **13** He will love you and bless you and multiply you. Yes, he will bless you with many children*^e and with the produce of your soil, your grain, your new wine, your oil,^f the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks, in the land that he swore to your forefathers to give to you.^g **14** You will become the most blessed of all the peoples;^h no man or woman among you will be childless, nor will your livestock be without young.ⁱ **15** Jehovah will take away from you all sickness, and he will not bring upon you any of the terrible diseases that you have known in Egypt.^j Instead, he will bring them upon all those who hate you. **16** You are to destroy* all the peoples whom Jehovah your God gives

6:25 *Lit., "before." 7:3 *Or "not intermarry." 7:5 *See Glossary. 7:6 *Or "treasured possession."

7:8 *Lit., "hand." 7:13 *Lit., "bless the fruit of your womb." 7:16 *Lit., "devour."

the female and became violently inflamed in their lust toward one another, males with males, working what is obscene and receiving in themselves the full recompense, which was due for their error.”

1 Tim. 1:9-11: “Law is promulgated, not for a righteous man, but for persons lawless and unruly, ungodly and sinners, . . . fornicators, men who lie with males, . . . and whatever other thing is in opposition to the healthful teaching according to the glorious good news of the happy God.” (Compare Leviticus 20:13.)

Jude 7: “Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them, after they . . . [had] gone out after flesh for unnatural use, are placed before us as a warning example by undergoing the judicial punishment of everlasting fire.” (The name Sodom has become the basis for the word “sodomy,” which usually designates a homosexual practice. Compare Genesis 19:4, 5, 24, 25.)

What is the attitude of true Christians toward those who have a history of homosexuality?

1 Cor. 6:9-11: “Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men kept for unnatural purposes, nor men who lie with men . . . will inherit God’s kingdom. And yet that is what some of you were. But you have been washed clean, but you have been sanctified, but you have been declared righteous in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the spirit of our God.” (Regardless of such a background, if persons now abandon their former unclean practices, apply Jehovah’s righteous standards, and exercise faith in his provision for forgiveness of sins through Christ, they can enjoy a clean standing before God. After reforming, they may be welcomed in the Christian congregation.)

True Christians know that even deeply rooted wrong desires, including those that may have a genetic basis or that involve physical causes or environmental factors, are not insurmountable for persons who truly want to please Jehovah. Some people are by nature highly emotional. Perhaps in the past they gave free rein to fits of anger; but knowledge of God’s will, the desire to please him, and the help of his spirit enable them to develop self-control. A

person may be an alcoholic, but, with proper motivation, he can refrain from drinking and thus avoid becoming a drunkard. Likewise, a person may feel strongly attracted to others of the same sex, but by heeding the counsel of God's Word he can remain clean from homosexual practices. (See Ephesians 4:17-24.) Jehovah does not allow us to go on thinking that wrong conduct really makes no difference; he kindly but firmly warns us of the consequences and provides abundant help for those who want to "strip off the old personality with its practices, and clothe [themselves] with the new personality."—Col. 3:9, 10.

Is the Bible's view regarding sex perhaps old-fashioned and needlessly restrictive?

1 Thess. 4:3-8: "This is what God wills . . . that you abstain from fornication . . . So, then, the man that shows disregard is disregarding, not man, but God, who puts his holy spirit in you." (The Bible's view regarding sex is not simply something that was developed by certain humans who lived many years ago. It comes from mankind's Creator; it makes clear what is required in order to have his approval; it also provides guidelines that contribute to stable families and wholesome, happy relationships outside the family. Those who apply this counsel safeguard themselves against the deep emotional scars and loathsome diseases that go with immoral conduct. The Bible's counsel is very much up to date in meeting the needs of those who want a clean conscience before God and a life free from needless frustration.)

If Someone Says—

'What is your attitude toward homosexuality?'

You might reply: 'It is the viewpoint that is expressed here in the Bible. I believe that what it says is more important than any human opinion, because this gives us the thoughts of mankind's Creator. (1 Cor. 6:9-11) You will notice that some of these who became

you for your lack of self-regulation.” (What is wrong is thus shown to be fornication, not proper sexual relations between husband and wife.)

Are sexual relations before marriage wrong?

1 Thess. 4:3-8: “This is what God wills . . . that you abstain from fornication; that each one of you should know how to get possession of his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in covetous sexual appetite such as also those nations have which do not know God; that no one go to the point of harming and encroach upon the rights of his brother in this matter, because Jehovah is one who exacts punishment for all these things, just as we told you beforehand and also gave you a thorough witness. For God called us, not with allowance for uncleanness, but in connection with sanctification. So, then, the man that shows disregard is disregarding, not man, but God, who puts his holy spirit in you.” (The Greek word *por-nei'a*, translated “fornication,” refers to sexual intercourse between unmarried persons, also to extramarital relations on the part of married persons.)

Eph. 5:5: “No fornicator or unclean person or greedy person—which means being an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of the Christ and of God.” (This does not mean that anyone who *in the past* was a fornicator cannot enjoy the blessings of God’s Kingdom, but he must cease that way of life in order to have God’s approval. See 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.)

Does the Bible approve of living together as husband and wife without legal marriage?

See pages 248-250, under the heading “Marriage.”

What does the Bible say about homosexuality?

Rom. 1:24-27: “God, in keeping with the desires of their hearts, gave them up to uncleanness, that their bodies might be dishonored among them . . . God gave them up to disgraceful sexual appetites, for both their females changed the natural use of themselves into one contrary to nature; and likewise even the males left the natural use of

the female and became violently inflamed in their lust toward one another, males with males, working what is obscene and receiving in themselves the full recompense, which was due for their error.”

1 Tim. 1:9-11: “Law is promulgated, not for a righteous man, but for persons lawless and unruly, ungodly and sinners, . . . fornicators, men who lie with males, . . . and whatever other thing is in opposition to the healthful teaching according to the glorious good news of the happy God.” (Compare Leviticus 20:13.)

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True Christians know that even deeply rooted wrong desires, including those that may have a genetic basis or that involve physical causes or environmental factors, are not insurmountable for persons who truly want to please Jehovah. Some people are by nature highly emotional. Perhaps in the past they gave free rein to fits of anger; but knowledge of God’s will, the desire to please him, and the help of his spirit enable them to develop self-control. A

1. God has commanded us this day;
He has given us a charge to obey.
At all times, be ready to impart
The reason for the hope within your heart.

(CHORUS)

*So preach the Word,
Oh, how vital that all hear!
Preach the Word,
As this system's end draws near.
Preach the Word,
Help the meek to understand.
Preach the Word,
Throughout the land!*

2. Seasons of trouble we will face;
Opposition may bring shame and disgrace.
Though preaching may out of season seem,
Our trust is in our God, who is supreme.

(Chorus)

3. Seasons of favor we will see,
And the need for us to teach, there will be.
The way to salvation we proclaim
And help to sanctify Jehovah's name.

(Chorus)



MAINTAIN YOUR SENSE OF URGENCY

*“Preach the word,
be at it urgently.”*

—2 TIM. 4:2.

CAN YOU EXPLAIN?

Why did first-century Christians preach with urgency?

How can we maintain our sense of urgency?

Why is Kingdom preaching more urgent now than ever?

PEOPLE whose job it is to save lives usually work with a sense of urgency. For example, firefighters rush to an emergency call; they know that lives may be in danger.

² As Jehovah’s Witnesses, we hope to help people to be saved. To that end, we take seriously our commission to preach the good news of the Kingdom. Of course, we do not dash about frantically. Then what did the apostle Paul mean when he gave the admonition: “Preach the word, be at it urgently”? (2 Tim. 4:2) How can we preach with urgency? And why is our work so urgent?

WHY IS OUR PREACHING URGENT?

³ When you consider what stands to be gained or lost as a result of our preaching, you probably feel an urgent need to speak to others about the good news. (Rom. 10:13, 14) God’s Word says: “When I say to the wicked one: ‘You will positively die,’ and he actually turns back from his sin and carries on justice and righteousness, . . . he will positively keep living. He will not die. None of his sins with which he has sinned will be remembered against him.” (Ezek. 33:14-16) Indeed, the Bible tells those who teach the Kingdom message: “You will save both yourself and those who listen to you.”—1 Tim. 4:16; Ezek. 3:17-21.

⁴ To appreciate why Paul exhorted Timothy to preach with urgency, consider some of the context of our theme scripture. We read: “Preach the word,

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- 1, 2. What questions arise about the command to ‘be at our preaching urgently’?
 3. People’s accepting or rejecting the Kingdom message can bring what results?
 4. Why did apostasy make preaching in the first century urgent?

be at it urgently in favorable season, in troublesome season, reprove, reprimand, exhort, with all long-suffering and art of teaching. For there will be a period of time when they will not put up with the healthful teaching, but, in accord with their own desires, they will accumulate teachers for themselves to have their ears tickled; and they will turn their ears away from the truth." (2 Tim. 4:2-4) Jesus had foretold that an apostasy would develop. (Matt. 13:24, 25, 38) As that development approached, it was urgent for Timothy to "preach the word" even inside the congregation so that Christians would not be misled by the deceptive attractiveness of false teachings. Lives were at stake. What about today?

⁵ Apostasy from true worship has now grown and spread. (2 Thess. 2:3, 8) What teachings tickle people's ears today? In many places, the teaching of evolution has been promoted with religious fervor. Though evolution is usually presented in scientific language, it has become almost a secular religion, affecting how people view God and others. Another popular teaching is that God is not interested in us; thus, we do not need to be interested in him. Why are these teachings so attractive that they lull millions into spiritual sleep? They both carry the underlying message, 'You can do anything you want because you will not be called to account.' This truly is a message that has tickled the ears of many.—*Read Psalm 10:4.*

⁶ But there are other ways that people have their ears tickled. Some who still go to church like to have teachers who tell them, 'No matter what you do, God

loves you.' Priests and pastors tickle the ears of others by convincing them that ceremonies, Masses, fiestas, and images have God's blessing. Little do these churchgoers realize the danger of their situation. (Ps. 115:4-8) Yet, if we can awaken them spiritually so that they understand the Bible's true message, they can benefit from God's Kingdom.

WHAT DOES PREACHING WITH URGENCY MEAN?

⁷ A conscientious surgeon must give undivided attention to his work because lives are at stake. In our Christian ministry, we can demonstrate a sense of urgency by concentrating on our work, such as by thinking about what issues, questions, or information might interest the people we meet. A sense of urgency might also lead us to adjust our schedule so as to visit people when they are more disposed to receive us.—Rom. 1:15, 16; 1 Tim. 4:16.

⁸ Having a sense of urgency also involves setting priorities. (*Read Genesis 19:15.*) For example, imagine that after getting your test results back, your doctor called you into his office and earnestly said to you: "Look! Your situation is urgent. You have at most a month to do something about your illness." You likely would not charge out of his office like a fireman on an emergency call. But you would probably get his recommendations, go home, and give serious thought to your priorities.

⁹ We can gain insight into Paul's urgency by noting what he told the el-

7. How can we demonstrate our sense of urgency?

8. What does acting with urgency usually involve?

9. Why can we say that Paul preached with urgency while in Ephesus?

5, 6. We may encounter what popular ideas in our ministry?

ders from Ephesus about his preaching the good news in the district of Asia. (**Read Acts 20:18-21.**) Apparently from the first day he arrived, he got busy visiting people from house to house with the good news. In addition, for two years he followed a regular schedule of “daily giving talks in the school auditorium of Tyrannus.” (Acts 19:1, 8-10) Clearly, Paul’s sense of urgency influenced his routine. The call to ‘be at our ministry urgently’ is not intended to *overwhelm* us with our commission. Nevertheless, the preaching work should take priority in our lives.

¹⁰ The example of a small group of Bible Students who prior to 1914 set out to preach the good news illustrates what it means to have a sense of urgency. Although they were only a few thousand strong, they appreciated the urgency of the times and enthusiastically took up the Kingdom preaching work. They had sermons published in hundreds of newspapers and presented a program of color slides and motion pictures called the “Photo-Drama of Creation.” In this way, they reached millions with the good news. If they had not had a sense of urgency, how many of us would have heard the Kingdom message?—**Read Psalm 119:60.**

BEWARE OF LOSING YOUR SENSE OF URGENCY

¹¹ Distractions can keep a person from thinking about how important the preaching work is. Satan’s system is designed to get us absorbed in personal pursuits and side issues. (1 Pet. 5:8;

10. Why can we be pleased that Christians acted urgently some 100 years ago?

11. What has led some to lose their sense of urgency?

1 John 2:15-17) Some who at one time gave priority to Jehovah’s service lost their sense of urgency. For instance, the first-century Christian named Demas had been a ‘fellow worker’ with Paul, but Demas became distracted by the ungodly system of things. Instead of continuing to give priority to strengthening his brother in a time of trouble, Demas abandoned Paul.—Philem. 23, 24; 2 Tim. 4:10.

¹² If we are to maintain our sense of urgency, we need to fight the urge to enjoy more of what life offers. We ought to work at getting “a firm hold on the real life.” (1 Tim. 6:18, 19) You likely have no doubt that everlasting life on earth under God’s Kingdom will provide endless opportunities to enjoy interesting activities. But for now, the opportunity to help others to survive Armageddon is unique to our time.

¹³ Given that most in the world around us are unwisely sleeping in a spiritual sense, what can help us avoid losing our sense of urgency? We can reflect on the fact that we at one time were sleeping in darkness, as it were. But we were awakened, and Christ has shone on us, as Paul pointed out. We now have the privilege of being light bearers. (**Read Ephesians 5:14.**) After mentioning that, Paul wrote: “Keep strict watch that how *you* walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportune time for yourselves, because the days are wicked.” (Eph. 5:15, 16) Amid such wickedness, let us ‘buy out the time’ for activities that can keep us spiritually awake.

12. What opportunity is open now, and what opportunities will be opened to us forever?

13. Now that we have become Christians, how can we maintain our sense of urgency?

WE LIVE IN MOMENTOUS TIMES

¹⁴ The Christian ministry has always been urgent, but now it is more critical than ever. Since 1914, the composite sign described in God's Word has become clear. (Matt. 24:3-51) Mankind's survival is threatened as never before. Despite recent agreements, the superpowers still have some 2,000 nuclear warheads ready to launch. Authorities report hundreds of instances of nuclear material being "lost." Do terrorists have some of that? Observers say mankind could easily be annihilated by a war that a terrorist initiates. War, however, is not the only threat to man's existence.

¹⁵ "Climate change is the biggest global health threat of the 21st century," claims a 2009 report by *The Lancet* and University College London. It said: "Effects of climate change on health will affect most populations in the next decades and put the lives and wellbeing of billions of people at increased risk." The effect could be widespread destruction from rising sea levels, droughts, floods, epidemics, hurricanes, and wars over diminished resources. Yes, wars and disasters threaten civilization.

¹⁶ Some people might think that the threat of nuclear war could lead to events that fulfill "the sign." However, most do not understand the sign's real significance. It has been visible for decades now, which fact indicates that Christ's presence is a reality and that the end of this system of things is rapidly approaching. (Matt. 24:3) Never before have so many features of the sign been so clearly evident. It is time for people to awaken from spiritual slum-

ber. Our ministry can help awaken them.

¹⁷ Only a short time remains to prove our love for Jehovah and to finish the preaching work assigned for the last days. What Paul said to first-century Christians in Rome has even greater meaning today: "You people know the season, that it is already the hour for you to awake from sleep, for now our salvation is nearer than at the time when we became believers."—Rom. 13:11.

¹⁸ The events foretold for the last days can make individuals aware of their spiritual need. Others become conscious of man's need for help as they contemplate the failure of human governments to cope with economic disasters, nuclear threats, violent crime, or environmental destruction. Still others are made aware of their spiritual need by events in their own family, such as a health crisis, a divorce, or the death of a loved one. As we share in the ministry, we make ourselves available to help such people.

MOVED BY A SENSE OF URGENCY

¹⁹ A sense of urgency has moved many Christians to increase their share in the ministry. For example, a young Ecuadoran couple decided to simplify their life after they heard the 2006 special assembly day program "Keep Your Eye Simple." They made a list of things they did not need, and within three months they moved from their three-bedroom apartment to a single-bedroom place, sold some things, and became

17, 18. (a) How does "the season" affect us? (b) What could move people to change their view about the Kingdom message?

19, 20. How has a sense of urgency moved many Christians to change their lifestyle?

14-16. What makes Kingdom preaching more urgent now than ever?

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

OCTOBER 2014

MONTHLY THEME: **“Preach the word; be at it urgently.”—2 Tim. 4:2.**

WEEK STARTING OCTOBER 13

Song 8 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

cl chap. 14 ¶10-15 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Deuteronomy 4-6 (10 min.)

No. 1: Deuteronomy 4:29-43 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Changes That Must Be Made to Please God—*rs* p. 369 ¶3–p. 370 ¶1 (5 min.)

No. 3: What the Bible Says About Homosexuality—*rs* p. 368 ¶4–p. 369 ¶2 (5 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 92

5 min: What Does It Mean to Preach With Urgency? Enthusiastic talk highlighting 2 Timothy 4:2. Use material in the March 15, 2012, *Watchtower*, pages 16-17, paragraphs 7-9.

10 min: Why Is Our Preaching Urgent? Talk by an elder based on the March 15, 2012, *Watchtower*, pages 15-16, paragraphs 3-6, and page 18, paragraphs 14-18. Emphasize how applying the direction in the series of *Kingdom Ministry* articles entitled “Improving Our Skills in the Ministry” can help us to preach with a sense of urgency.

15 min: “Seize Your Opportunities to Spread the Kingdom Message!” Questions and answers. When considering paragraph 3, invite audience to relate experiences they have had witnessing informally. Conclude by tying in the monthly theme. Encourage audience to read the two articles in the series “A Conversation With a Neighbor” that will be discussed at next week’s Service Meeting.

Song 97 and Prayer

Seize Your Opportunities to Spread the Kingdom Message!

¹ King David was someone who did not allow his circumstances to paralyze him. For example, David wanted to build a house for Jehovah. When he was prevented from doing so, David adjusted his goals and helped get

1. What lesson can we learn from David’s example?

things ready for Solomon to build the temple. (1 Ki. 8:17-19; 1 Chron. 29:3-9) Instead of dwelling on what he could not do, David focused on what he *could* do. How can we imitate David’s example as we look for ways to spread the Kingdom message?

² **Do What You Can:** Many have simplified their life in order to enroll as auxiliary or regular pioneers. (Matt. 6:22, ftn.) Could you join them? As you prayerfully examine your circumstances, you may see that “a large door that leads to activity” is open to you. If so, seize that opportunity!—1 Cor. 16:8, 9.

³ What, though, if your circumstances prevent you from pioneering? Do not overlook other opportunities available to you. For example, if your secular work brings you in contact with nonbelievers, why not seize an appropriate opportunity to witness to them? Or if you are dealing with health problems, can you take advantage of opportunities to witness to your health-care providers? Remember that there is a provision for those who are very limited in their activity because of age or a serious health condition to report field service time in 15-minute increments. When filling out your monthly field service report, be sure to include time spent witnessing informally as well as any literature placements, including individual tracts and Memorial and convention invitations. You may be surprised at how quickly the time from those seemingly small opportunities adds up!

⁴ Whatever our personal circumstances, let us seize every opportunity to spread the good news. We will thereby experience the satisfaction of knowing that we are doing all we can for the sake of the Kingdom.—Mark 14:8; Luke 21:2-4.

2. What self-examination could we make?

3. What opportunities to witness can we take advantage of even if our circumstances do not allow us to pioneer?

4. What is your determination?

Forward, You Ministers of the Kingdom!

(2 Timothy 4:5)

1. Go forward in preaching the Kingdom
To people in ev'ry land.
With love in your hearts for your neighbor,
Help meek ones to take their stand.
Our service to God is a priv'lege;
His word we are glad to proclaim.
Go out in the field and keep preaching;
Give witness to God's holy name.

(CHORUS)

*Forward, boldly preach the
Kingdom message ever far and wide.
Forward, faithful, loyally remaining
on Jehovah's side.*

2. True ministers keep pressing forward
With God's prize of life in view.
We follow the steps of our Master
With hearts that have been made new.
The good news of God's coming Kingdom
Is something that all need to hear.
We preach in the strength of Jehovah;
With him there is nothing to fear!

(Chorus)

3. Together we press ever forward,
God's remnant and other sheep.
The old and the young men and women
In step with the truth do keep.
Our service we hold to be sacred;
Our worship is never routine.
To God may we prove ever worthy
By conduct that's holy and clean.

(Chorus)