

- Song 37 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“Trust in Jehovah With All Your Heart”:** (10 min.) [Play the video *Introduction to Proverbs.*] Pr 3:1-4—Show loyal love and faithfulness (w00 1/15 23-24)

Pr 3:5-8—Cultivate complete trust in Jehovah (w00 1/15 24)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.) Pr 1:7, ftn.—In what way is the fear of Jehovah “the beginning of knowledge”? (w06 9/15 17 ¶1; it-2 180)

Pr 6:1-5—What is the wise course if we become ensnared by an unwise business agreement? (w00 9/15 25-26)

What does this week’s Bible reading teach me about Jehovah?

What points from this week’s Bible reading can I use in the field ministry?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Pr 6:20-35

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Prepare This Month’s Presentations:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play each sample presentation video, and then discuss the highlights. Encourage publishers to participate fully in the global effort to invite people to the weekend meeting.

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 107
- **Local Needs:** (8 min.) As an option, discuss the lessons learned from the *Yearbook.* (yb16 25-27)
- **Do Good to Those Who Attend Our Meetings (Pr 3:27):** (7 min.) Discussion. Play the video *What Happens at a Kingdom Hall?* (video category OUR MEETINGS AND MINISTRY). Then ask how we can contribute to a loving atmosphere at the Kingdom Hall, not just during the month of October but at all times.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) kr chap. 2 ¶1-12
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 143 and Prayer

PROVERBS 1-6 | “Trust in Jehovah With All Your Heart”

Jehovah is worthy of our complete trust. The meaning of his name builds our confidence in his ability to fulfill all of his promises. Prayer is an important part of building trust in him. Proverbs chapter 3 assures us that Jehovah will reward our trust in him by ‘making our paths straight.’

**3:5-7**

**One who is wise in his own eyes . . .**

- makes decisions without asking for Jehovah’s direction beforehand
- trusts in his own thinking or that of the world

**One who trusts in Jehovah . . .**

- cultivates a close relationship with him through Bible study, meditation, and prayer
- seeks his guidance by searching for Bible principles when making decisions

**WHICH COLUMN DESCRIBES THE WAY I MAKE DECISIONS?**

- FIRST:** I choose what I think is the wisest course
- SECOND:** I ask Jehovah to bless my decision

- FIRST:** I seek Jehovah’s direction through prayer and personal study
- SECOND:** I choose a course that is in harmony with Bible principles



*The Scriptures—Inspired of God*

(2 Timothy 3:16, 17)

Eb Eb/G Gb<sup>o</sup> Fm7 Ab Bb9/Ab Eb/G Bb7/F Eb  
 God's Word is a shin - ing in light,  
 That di - vine Word is spired,  
 By these Scrip - tures from a - bove,

Ab C7/G Fm Bb Bb/Ab Eb/G F7sus4 F7 Bb7sus4 Bb7  
 Guides our feet through earth's dark night.  
 Teach - es us what is re - quired.  
 We have come to know God's love.

Eb Bbm6/Db C Fm Fm7 Bb Bb/Ab  
 If we fol - low it faith - ful - ly,  
 Help it gives, set - ting all things straight,  
 Read - ing dai - ly will make us wise,

Eb/G Eb Bb7/F Gm7 Eb/G B7/F# Fm7 Bb7 Eb  
 Sure - ly its truth will set us free.  
 And for God's dis - ci - pline to wait.  
 Show - ing us how to gain life's prize.

**1** The proverbs of Sol'o-mon,<sup>a</sup> the son of David,<sup>b</sup> the king of Israel:<sup>c</sup>

- 2** To learn\* wisdom<sup>d</sup> and discipline;  
To understand wise sayings;
- 3** To acquire the discipline<sup>e</sup> that gives insight,  
Righteousness,<sup>f</sup> good judgment,<sup>g</sup> and uprightness;<sup>h</sup>
- 4** To impart shrewdness<sup>h</sup> to the inexperienced;  
To give a young man knowledge and thinking ability.<sup>i</sup>
- 5** A wise person listens and takes in more instruction;<sup>j</sup>  
A man of understanding acquires skillful direction<sup>\*k</sup>
- 6** To understand a proverb and a puzzling saying,<sup>\*</sup>  
The words of the wise and their riddles.<sup>l</sup>
- 7** The fear of\* Jehovah is the beginning of knowledge.<sup>m</sup>  
Only fools despise wisdom and discipline.<sup>n</sup>
- 8** Listen, my son, to the discipline of your father,<sup>o</sup>  
And do not forsake the instruction\* of your mother.<sup>p</sup>
- 9** They are an attractive wreath for your head<sup>q</sup>  
And a fine ornament for your neck.<sup>r</sup>
- 10** My son, if sinners try to entice you, do not consent.<sup>s</sup>
- 11** If they say: "Come with us.  
Let us set an ambush to shed blood.  
We will lie hidden, waiting for innocent victims without cause.
- 12** We will swallow them alive as the Grave\* does,  
Whole, like those going down to the pit.

1:2 \*Lit., "To know." 1:3 \*Or "what is just." #Or "fairness." 1:5 \*Or "wise guidance." 1:6 \*Or "a parable." 1:7 \*Or "reverence for." 1:8 \*Or "law." 1:12 \*Or "Sheol," that is, the common grave of mankind. See Glossary.

CHAP. 1  
a 1Ki 4:29, 32  
Ec 12:9  
b 2Sa 12:24  
c 1Ki 2:12  
d Pr 8:11  
e Pr 3:11, 12  
f Heb 12:11  
g 1Ki 3:28  
h Pr 15:5  
i Pr 2:11  
Pr 3:21  
Pr 8:12  
j Pr 9:9  
k 1Sa 25:32, 33  
Pr 24:6  
l Ec 12:11  
m Job 28:28  
Pr 9:10  
n Pr 5:12, 13  
Pr 18:2  
o De 6:6, 7  
Eph 6:4  
Heb 12:9  
p Le 19:3  
Pr 13:26  
2Ti 1:5  
q Pr 4:7, 9  
r Pr 3:21, 22  
s Ge 39:7, 8  
De 13:6-8

Second Col.

a Pr 4:14  
Pr 13:20  
1Co 15:33  
b Pr 6:16-18  
Ro 3:15  
c Pr 15:27  
d Ro 16:27  
1Co 1:20  
Jas 3:17  
e Mt 10:27  
f Pr 8:1-3  
Pr 9:1, 3  
g Joh 18:20  
Ac 20:20  
h Pr 5:12, 13  
Joh 3:20  
i Ps 141:5  
Re 3:19  
j Isa 54:13  
k Isa 65:12

- 13** Let us seize all their precious treasures;  
We will fill our houses with spoil.
- 14** You should join us,<sup>\*</sup>  
And we will all share equally what we steal.<sup>#</sup>
- 15** My son, do not follow them.  
Keep your feet off their path,<sup>a</sup>
- 16** For their feet run to do evil;  
They hurry to shed blood.<sup>b</sup>
- 17** It is surely in vain to spread a net in full sight of a bird.
- 18** That is why these lie in ambush to shed blood;  
They lie hidden to take the lives\* of others.
- 19** These are the ways of those seeking dishonest profit,  
Which will take away the life\* of those who obtain it.<sup>c</sup>
- 20** True wisdom<sup>d</sup> cries aloud in the street.<sup>e</sup>  
It keeps raising its voice in the public squares.<sup>f</sup>
- 21** At the corner\* of the busy streets it calls out.  
At the entrances of the city gates it says:<sup>g</sup>
- 22** "How long will you inexperienced ones love inexperience?  
How long will you ridiculers take pleasure in ridicule?  
And how long will you foolish ones hate knowledge?<sup>h</sup>
- 23** Respond to my reproof.<sup>\*i</sup>  
Then I will pour out my spirit for you;  
I will make my words known to you.<sup>j</sup>
- 24** Because I called out, but you kept refusing,  
I stretched out my hand, but no one was paying attention.<sup>k</sup>

1:14 \*Or "Throw in your lot with us." #Or "share a common bag (purse)." 1:18 \*Or "souls." 1:19 \*Or "soul." 1:21 \*Lit., "head." 1:23 \*Or "Turn back when I reprove."

- 25 You kept neglecting all my advice  
And rejecting my reproof.
- 26 I also will laugh when disaster strikes you;  
I will mock when what you dread comes,<sup>a</sup>
- 27 When what you dread comes like a storm,  
And your disaster arrives like a storm wind,  
When distress and trouble come upon you.
- 28 At that time they will keep calling me, but I will not answer;  
They will eagerly look for me, but they will not find me,<sup>b</sup>
- 29 Because they hated knowledge,<sup>c</sup>  
And they did not choose to fear Jehovah.<sup>d</sup>
- 30 They refused my advice;  
They disrespected all my reproof.
- 31 So they will bear the consequences\* of their way,<sup>e</sup>  
And they will be glutted with their own counsel.<sup>#</sup>
- 32 For the waywardness of the inexperienced will kill them,  
And the complacency of fools will destroy them.
- 33 But the one listening to me will dwell in security<sup>f</sup>  
And be undisturbed by the dread of calamity.<sup>g</sup>
- 2** My son, if you accept my sayings  
And treasure up my commandments,<sup>h</sup>
- 2 By making your ear attentive to wisdom<sup>i</sup>  
And inclining your heart to discernment;<sup>j</sup>
- 3 Moreover, if you call out for understanding<sup>k</sup>

1:31 \*Lit., "eat from the fruit." #Or "schemes; plans."

CHAP. 1  
a Jg 10:13, 14  
b La 3:44  
c Ho 4:6  
d Jg 5:8  
e Jer 6:19  
Ga 6:7  
f Isa 48:18  
g 2Ki 6:15, 16  
Isa 26:3  
2Pe 2:9

CHAP. 2  
h De 6:6, 8  
i Pr 1:5  
j Heb 5:14  
k 1Ki 3:11, 12  
Pr 9:10  
2Ti 2:7

Second Col.

a Php 1:9  
b Ps 19:9, 10  
c Job 28:15-18  
d Job 28:28  
Pr 8:13  
Jer 32:40  
e Jer 9:24  
1Jo 5:20  
f Ex 31:2, 3  
1Ki 4:29  
2Ti 3:16, 17  
Jas 3:17  
g Ps 41:12  
Pr 28:18  
h Ps 97:10  
i Ec 12:13  
Mic 6:8  
Mt 22:37-40  
j Ps 119:111  
k Ac 17:11  
l Ec 7:12  
m Pr 8:13  
n Joh 3:19

- And raise your voice for discernment;<sup>a</sup>
- 4 If you keep seeking for it as for silver,<sup>b</sup>  
And you keep searching for it as for hidden treasures;<sup>c</sup>
- 5 Then you will understand the fear of Jehovah,<sup>d</sup>  
And you will find the knowledge of God.<sup>e</sup>
- 6 For Jehovah himself gives wisdom;<sup>f</sup>  
From his mouth come knowledge and discernment.
- 7 He treasures up practical wisdom for the upright;  
He is a shield for those walking in integrity.<sup>g</sup>
- 8 He watches over the paths of justice,  
And he will guard the way of his loyal ones.<sup>h</sup>
- 9 Then you will understand what is righteous and just and fair,  
The entire course of what is good.<sup>i</sup>
- 10 When wisdom enters your heart<sup>j</sup>  
And knowledge becomes pleasant to your soul,<sup>\*k</sup>
- 11 Thinking ability will keep watch over you,<sup>l</sup>  
And discernment will safeguard you,
- 12 To save you from the bad course,  
From the man speaking perverse things,<sup>m</sup>
- 13 From those leaving the upright paths  
To walk in the ways of darkness,<sup>n</sup>
- 14 From those who rejoice in wrongdoing,  
Who find joy in the perverseness of evil,
- 15 Those whose paths are crooked  
And whose entire course is devious.

2:10 \*See Glossary.

- 16** It will save you from the wayward\* woman,  
From the smooth<sup>r</sup> words of the immoral<sup>a</sup> woman,<sup>a</sup>
- 17** Who abandons the close companion\* of her youth<sup>b</sup>  
And forgets the covenant of her God;
- 18** For her house sinks down into death,  
And her paths\* lead to those powerless in death.<sup>c</sup>
- 19** None of those having relations with\* her will return,  
Nor will they regain the pathways of life.<sup>d</sup>
- 20** So follow the way of good people  
And stay on the paths of the righteous,<sup>e</sup>
- 21** For only the upright will reside in the earth,  
And the blameless\* will remain in it.<sup>f</sup>
- 22** As for the wicked, they will be cut off from the earth,<sup>g</sup>  
And the treacherous will be torn away from it.<sup>h</sup>
- 3** My son, do not forget my teaching,\*  
And may your heart observe my commandments,  
**2** Because they will add many days  
And years of life and peace to you.<sup>i</sup>  
**3** Do not let loyal love and faithfulness\* leave you.<sup>j</sup>  
Tie them around your neck;  
Write them on the tablet of your heart;<sup>k</sup>  
**4** Then you will find favor and good insight  
In the eyes of God and man.<sup>l</sup>

2:16 \*Lit., "strange." Evidently, one morally estranged from God. <sup>r</sup>Or "seductive." <sup>a</sup>Lit., "foreign." Evidently, one morally alienated from God. 2:17 \*Or "the husband." 2:18 \*Lit., "tracks." 2:19 \*Lit., "going in to." 2:21 \*Or "the one who keeps integrity." 3:1 \*Or "law." 3:3 \*Or "truth."

- CHAP. 2  
a Ge 39:10-12  
Pr 6:23, 24  
Pr 7:4, 5  
b Ge 2:24  
Pr 5:18  
c Pr 5:3, 5  
Pr 5:20, 23  
Pr 9:16-18  
Eph 5:5  
d Ec 7:26  
Re 22:15  
e Pr 13:20  
f Ps 37:11, 29  
g Ps 104:35  
Pr 10:7  
Mt 25:46  
h De 28:45, 63

- CHAP. 3  
i De 5:16  
j Ho 12:6  
k De 6:6, 8  
l 2Co 8:21

Second Col.

- a Isa 26:4  
Jer 17:7  
b Pr 28:26  
Jer 10:23  
1Co 3:18  
c 1Sa 23:2, 4  
Ne 1:11  
Php 4:6  
d Jos 1:7  
Ps 25:9  
Jas 1:5  
e Pr 26:12  
Ro 12:16  
f Nu 31:50  
De 16:16  
Lu 16:9  
1Ti 6:18  
g Ex 23:19  
h 2Ch 31:10  
Mal 3:10  
i Pr 15:32  
Heb 12:5, 6  
j Ps 94:12  
k Re 3:19  
l De 8:5  
Heb 12:7, 9  
m Ec 7:12  
n Job 28:15, 18

- 5** Trust in Jehovah<sup>a</sup> with all your heart,  
And do not rely\* on your own understanding.<sup>b</sup>
- 6** In all your ways take notice of him,<sup>c</sup>  
And he will make your paths straight.<sup>d</sup>
- 7** Do not become wise in your own eyes.<sup>e</sup>  
Fear Jehovah and turn away from bad.
- 8** It will be a healing to your body\*  
And refreshment for your bones.
- 9** Honor Jehovah with your valuable things,<sup>f</sup>  
With the firstfruits\* of all your produce;<sup>g</sup>
- 10** Then your storehouses will be completely filled,<sup>h</sup>  
And your vats\* will overflow with new wine.
- 11** My son, do not reject the discipline of Jehovah,<sup>i</sup>  
And do not loathe his reproof.<sup>j</sup>
- 12** For those whom Jehovah loves he reproves,<sup>k</sup>  
Just as a father does a son in whom he delights.<sup>l</sup>
- 13** Happy is the man who finds wisdom<sup>m</sup>  
And the man who acquires discernment;
- 14** To gain it is better than gaining silver,  
And having it as profit is better than having gold.<sup>n</sup>
- 15** It is more precious than corals,\*  
Nothing you desire can compare to it.
- 16** Long life is in its right hand;  
Riches and glory are in its left hand.

3:5 \*Lit., "lean." 3:8 \*Lit., "navel." 3:9 \*Or "very best." <sup>r</sup>Or "income." 3:10 \*Or "winepresses." 3:15 \*See Glossary.

- 17 Its ways are pleasant,  
And all its paths are peaceful.<sup>a</sup>
- 18 It is a tree of life to those  
who take hold of it,  
And those who keep firm  
hold of it will be called  
happy.<sup>b</sup>
- 19 Jehovah founded the earth  
in wisdom.<sup>c</sup>  
He solidly established the  
heavens in discernment.<sup>d</sup>
- 20 By his knowledge the watery  
deeps were split apart  
And the cloudy skies dripped  
with dew.<sup>e</sup>
- 21 My son, do not lose sight of  
them.\*  
Safeguard practical wisdom  
and thinking ability;
- 22 They will give you\* life  
And be an adornment for  
your neck;
- 23 Then you will walk on your  
way in safety,  
And your foot will never  
stumble.<sup>\*f</sup>
- 24 When you lie down, you will  
have no fear;<sup>g</sup>  
You will lie down, and your  
sleep will be pleasant.<sup>h</sup>
- 25 You will not fear any sudden  
terror!<sup>i</sup>  
Nor the storm that is coming  
on the wicked.<sup>j</sup>
- 26 For Jehovah will prove to be  
your source of confidence;<sup>k</sup>  
He will keep your foot from  
being caught.<sup>l</sup>
- 27 Do not withhold good from  
those to whom you should  
give it<sup>\*m</sup>  
If it is within your power<sup>#</sup>  
to help.<sup>n</sup>

3:21 \*Evidently referring to God's qualities mentioned in the previous verses.  
3:22 \*Or "your soul." 3:23 \*Or "strike against anything." 3:27 \*Or "to whom it is owing." #Or "within the power of your hand."

## CHAP. 3

- a Pph 4:9  
b Ps 1:1, 2  
c Ps 104:24  
d Pr 8:27  
Jer 10:12  
e Job 36:27  
Job 38:37  
Jer 10:13  
f Isa 26:7  
g Ps 3:5  
Pr 6:22  
h Ec 5:12  
i Ps 27:1  
j Ps 73:12, 19  
k Pr 10:29  
Pr 28:1  
l Ps 91:14  
m Jas 2:15, 16  
n De 15:7, 8  
Pr 28:27

## Second Col.

- a Pr 6:16, 18  
b Pr 18:6  
Pr 20:3  
c Ro 12:18  
d Ps 37:1  
Pr 23:17  
e Pr 6:16, 17  
f Ps 15:1, 2  
Ps 24:3, 4  
Ps 25:14  
g De 28:15  
Jos 7:24, 25  
Es 9:24, 25  
h Job 42:12, 13  
Ps 37:25  
i Pr 19:29  
j Ps 37:11  
Ps 138:6  
Isa 57:15  
Jas 4:6  
k Es 6:11, 12  
Pr 12:8

## CHAP. 4

- l De 6:6, 7  
Pr 19:20  
Eph 6:1  
m 1Ch 28:9  
n 1Ki 2:12  
o 1Ki 1:16-21  
p De 4:9  
q Le 18:5  
r Ne 8:3, 8  
Pr 9:10

- 28 Do not say to your neighbor,  
"Go away; come back later!  
I will give it to you  
tomorrow,"  
If you can give it now.
- 29 Do not plot harm against  
your neighbor<sup>a</sup>  
When he lives in a sense of  
security with you.
- 30 Do not quarrel with a man  
for no reason<sup>b</sup>  
If he has done nothing bad  
to you.<sup>c</sup>
- 31 Do not envy the violent man<sup>d</sup>  
Nor choose any of his ways,
- 32 For Jehovah detests a  
devious person,<sup>e</sup>  
But His close friendship is  
with the upright.<sup>f</sup>
- 33 The curse of Jehovah is on  
the house of the wicked  
one,<sup>g</sup>  
But he blesses the home of  
the righteous.<sup>h</sup>
- 34 For he mocks those who  
ridicule,<sup>i</sup>  
But he shows favor to the  
meek.<sup>j</sup>
- 35 The wise will inherit honor,  
But the stupid ones glorify  
dishonor.<sup>k</sup>
- 4 Listen, my sons, to the  
discipline of a father;<sup>l</sup>  
Pay attention in order to  
gain understanding,
- 2 For I will give you good  
instruction;  
Do not forsake my  
teaching.<sup>\*m</sup>
- 3 I was a true son to my father<sup>n</sup>  
And the one especially loved  
by my mother.<sup>o</sup>
- 4 He taught me and said:  
"May your heart hold fast  
to my words.<sup>p</sup>  
Keep my commandments and  
continue living.<sup>q</sup>
- 5 Acquire wisdom, acquire  
understanding.<sup>r</sup>  
Do not forget, and do not  
turn aside from what I say.

4:2 \*Or "law."

- 6** Do not forsake it, and it will protect you.  
Love it, and it will safeguard you.
- 7** Wisdom is the most important\* thing,<sup>a</sup> so acquire wisdom,  
And with all you acquire, acquire understanding.<sup>b</sup>
- 8** Highly esteem it, and it will exalt you.<sup>c</sup>  
It will honor you because you embrace it.<sup>d</sup>
- 9** It will place an attractive wreath on your head;  
It will adorn you with a crown of beauty.<sup>e</sup>
- 10** Listen, my son, and accept my sayings,  
And the years of your life will be many.<sup>e</sup>
- 11** I will instruct you in the way of wisdom;<sup>f</sup>  
I will lead you in the tracks of uprightness.<sup>g</sup>
- 12** When you walk, your steps will not be hindered;  
And if you run, you will not stumble.
- 13** Hold on to discipline; do not let it go.<sup>h</sup>  
Safeguard it, for it means your life.<sup>i</sup>
- 14** Do not enter the path of the wicked,  
And do not walk in the way of evil men.<sup>j</sup>
- 15** Shun it, do not take it;<sup>k</sup>  
Turn away from it, and pass it by.<sup>l</sup>
- 16** For they cannot sleep unless they do what is bad.  
They are robbed of sleep unless they cause someone's downfall.
- 17** They feed themselves with the bread of wickedness,  
And they drink the wine of violence.

4:7 \*Or "the prime."

CHAP. 4

- a Ec 7:12  
b Pr 15:14  
Mt 13:23  
Heb 5:14  
c Da 1:17, 20  
d 1Ki 4:29  
e De 5:16  
f 1Ki 4:29  
g Isa 26:7  
h Pr 8:10  
Heb 2:1  
Heb 12:5, 6  
i De 32:45-47  
Heb 12:11  
j Ps 1:1  
1Co 15:33  
k Am 5:15  
Eph 5:11  
l Pr 5:3, 8  
1Th 5:22

Second Col.

- a 2Sa 23:3, 4  
Ps 119:105  
1Co 13:12  
2Co 4:6  
2Pe 1:19  
b Ps 40:8  
Pr 2:1  
c 1Ti 4:8  
d Jer 17:9  
Mr 7:21-23  
Eph 6:14  
e 1Pe 2:1  
f Mt 6:22  
g Eph 5:15  
h De 12:32  
Jos 1:7

CHAP. 5

- i 1Ki 4:29  
Jas 1:19

- 18** But the path of the righteous is like the bright morning light  
That grows brighter and brighter until full daylight.<sup>a</sup>
- 19** The way of the wicked is like the darkness;  
They do not know what makes them stumble.
- 20** My son, pay attention to my words;  
Listen carefully\* to my sayings.
- 21** Do not lose sight of them;  
Keep them deep within your heart,<sup>b</sup>
- 22** For they are life to those who find them<sup>c</sup>  
And health to their whole body.\*
- 23** Above all the things that you guard, safeguard your heart,<sup>d</sup>  
For out of it are the sources of life.
- 24** Put crooked speech away from you,<sup>e</sup>  
And keep devious talk far away from you.
- 25** Your eyes should look straight ahead,  
Yes, fix your gaze\* straight ahead of you.<sup>f</sup>
- 26** Smooth out\* the course of your feet,<sup>g</sup>  
And all your ways will be sure.
- 27** Do not incline to the right or the left.<sup>h</sup>  
Turn your feet away from what is bad.
- 5** My son, pay attention to my wisdom.  
Listen carefully\* to my discernment,<sup>i</sup>
- 2** So that you may guard your thinking abilities

4:20; 5:1 \*Lit., "Incline your ear." 4:22 \*Lit., "to all their flesh." 4:25 \*Or "beaming eyes." 4:26 \*Or possibly, "Carefully consider."

- And safeguard knowledge  
with your lips.<sup>a</sup>
- 3** For the lips of a wayward\*  
woman drip like a honey-  
comb,<sup>b</sup>  
And her mouth is smoother  
than oil.<sup>c</sup>
- 4** But in the end she is as bitter  
as wormwood<sup>d</sup>  
And as sharp as a two-edged  
sword.<sup>e</sup>
- 5** Her feet descend into death.  
Her steps lead straight to the  
Grave.\*
- 6** She gives no thought to the  
path of life.  
Her course wanders, but she  
does not know where.
- 7** Now, my sons, listen to me  
And do not turn away from  
what I am saying.
- 8** Stay far away from her;  
Do not go near the entrance  
of her house,<sup>f</sup>
- 9** So that you may not give  
your dignity to others<sup>g</sup>  
Nor reap years of what is  
cruel;<sup>h</sup>
- 10** So that strangers may not  
drain your resources\*<sup>i</sup>  
And what you labored for go  
to the house of a foreigner.
- 11** Otherwise, you will groan at  
the end of your life  
When your flesh and body  
waste away<sup>j</sup>
- 12** And you say: "How I hated  
discipline!  
How my heart despised  
reproof!
- 13** I did not listen to the voice  
of my instructors  
Or pay attention to my  
teachers.
- 14** I have come to the brink of  
complete ruin  
In the midst of the entire  
congregation."\*\*

5:3, 20 \*Lit., "strange." See Pr 2:16.  
5:5 \*Or "Sheol," that is, the common  
grave of mankind. See Glossary. 5:10  
\*Or "power." 5:14 \*Lit., "In the midst  
of the assembly and the congregation."

## CHAP. 5

- a Pr 15:7  
b Pr 7:14-21  
c Pr 9:16, 17  
d Ec 7:26  
e Pr 6:32, 33  
f Pr 9:14, 15  
g Pr 29:3  
h Pr 6:33-35  
Pr 7:23  
i Pr 31:3  
Lu 15:30  
j Pr 7:22, 23  
k Pr 6:27-29

## Second Col.

- a 1Co 7:3  
Heb 13:4  
b Pr 5:20  
c Ge 2:24  
d De 24:5  
Ec 9:9  
e Ca 2:9  
f Ge 26:8  
Ge 29:20  
Ca 8:6  
g Pr 22:14  
h 2Ch 16:9  
Ps 11:4  
Ps 17:3  
Jer 17:10  
Heb 4:13  
i Ps 7:14-16  
Ga 6:7

## CHAP. 6

- j Pr 17:18  
k Pr 11:15  
Pr 20:16  
l Pr 18:7

- 15** Drink water from your own  
cistern  
And flowing\* water from  
your own well.<sup>a</sup>
- 16** Should your springs be  
dispersed outside,  
Your streams of water in the  
public squares?<sup>b</sup>
- 17** Let them be for you alone,  
And not for strangers with  
you.<sup>c</sup>
- 18** May your own fountain\*  
be blessed,  
And may you rejoice with  
the wife of your youth,<sup>d</sup>
- 19** A loving doe, a graceful  
mountain goat.\*<sup>e</sup>  
Let her breasts satisfy<sup>f</sup>  
you at all times.  
May you be captivated by  
her love constantly.<sup>f</sup>
- 20** So why, my son, should  
you be captivated by  
a wayward\* woman  
Or embrace the bosom of  
an immoral<sup>g</sup> woman?<sup>g</sup>
- 21** For the ways of man are be-  
fore the eyes of Jehovah;  
He examines all his paths.<sup>h</sup>
- 22** The wicked one is ensnared  
by his own errors,  
And he will be caught in the  
ropes of his own sin.<sup>i</sup>
- 23** He will die for lack of  
discipline  
And go astray because of his  
excessive foolishness.
- 6** My son, if you have put up  
security\* for your neigh-  
bor,<sup>j</sup>  
If you have given your hand-  
shake<sup>k</sup> to a stranger,<sup>k</sup>
- 2** If you have been ensnared  
by your promise,  
Caught by the words of your  
mouth,<sup>l</sup>
- 3** Do this, my son, and free  
yourself,

5:15 \*Or "fresh." 5:18 \*Or "water  
source." 5:19 \*Or "ibex." \*Or "in-  
toxicate." 5:20 \*Lit., "foreign." See  
Pr 2:16. 6:1 \*Lit., "gone surety."  
\*That is, in a pledge.



For you have fallen into the hand of your neighbor:

Go and humble yourself and urgently plead with your neighbor.<sup>a</sup>

- 4 Do not allow your eyes to sleep,  
Nor your eyelids to slumber.
- 5 Free yourself like a gazelle from the hunter's hand,  
Like a bird from the hand of the birdcatcher.
- 6 Go to the ant, you lazy one;<sup>b</sup>  
Observe its ways and become wise.
- 7 Although it has no commander, officer, or ruler,
- 8 It prepares its food in the summer,<sup>c</sup>  
And it gathers its food supplies in the harvest.
- 9 How long, you lazy one, will you lie there?  
When will you rise up from your sleep?
- 10 A little sleep, a little slumbering,  
A little folding of the hands to rest,<sup>d</sup>
- 11 And your poverty will come like a bandit,  
And your want like an armed man.<sup>e</sup>
- 12 A useless and wicked man walks about with crooked speech;<sup>f</sup>
- 13 He winks with his eye,<sup>g</sup>  
signals with his foot, and motions with his fingers.
- 14 With a perverted heart,  
He is always scheming evil<sup>h</sup> and spreading contentions.<sup>i</sup>
- 15 Therefore, his disaster will come suddenly;  
In a moment he will be broken beyond healing.<sup>j</sup>
- 16 There are six things that Jehovah hates;  
Yes, seven things that he\* detests:

6:16 \*Or "his soul."

CHAP. 6

- a Mt 5:25
- b Pr 10:26  
Pr 26:13-15
- c Pr 30:24, 25
- d Pr 20:13  
Pr 24:33, 34  
Ec 4:5
- e Pr 13:4  
Pr 20:4  
Pr 24:30-34
- f Pr 16:27  
Jas 3:6
- g Pr 10:10  
Pr 16:30
- h Ps 36:1, 4  
Isa 32:7  
Mic 2:1
- i Pr 16:28  
Ro 16:17
- j Ps 73:12, 18

Second Col.

- a Ps 101:5  
Pr 8:13  
Pr 16:5
- b Pr 12:22  
Re 21:8
- c Ge 4:8, 10  
Nu 35:31  
De 27:25
- d Pr 11:20  
Zec 8:17  
Mal 2:16
- e Ex 23:1
- f Le 19:16  
Ga 5:20, 21  
Jas 3:14, 15
- g De 21:18, 21  
Eph 6:1
- h Ps 119:105
- i Isa 51:4
- j Pr 4:13  
Heb 12:11
- k Ec 7:26
- l Pr 5:3  
Pr 7:4, 5
- m Mt 5:28  
Jas 1:14, 15
- n Pr 29:3  
Lu 15:16, 30
- o Ga 6:7

- 17 Haughty eyes,<sup>a</sup> a lying tongue,<sup>b</sup> and hands that shed innocent blood,<sup>c</sup>
- 18 A heart plotting wicked schemes,<sup>d</sup> and feet that run quickly to evil,
- 19 A false witness who lies with every breath,<sup>e</sup>  
And anyone sowing contentions among brothers.<sup>f</sup>
- 20 Observe, my son, the commandment of your father,  
And do not forsake the instruction\* of your mother.<sup>g</sup>
- 21 Always bind them around your heart;  
Tie them about your neck.
- 22 When you walk about, it will lead you;  
When you lie down, it will stand guard over you;  
And when you awaken, it will speak to you.\*
- 23 For the commandment is a lamp,<sup>h</sup>  
And the law is a light,<sup>i</sup>  
And the reproofs of discipline are the way to life.<sup>j</sup>
- 24 They will guard you against the bad woman,<sup>k</sup>  
Against the seductive tongue of the immoral\* woman.<sup>l</sup>
- 25 Do not desire her beauty in your heart<sup>m</sup>  
Or allow her to captivate you with her alluring eyes,
- 26 For because of a prostitute, a man is reduced to a loaf of bread,<sup>n</sup>  
But the wife of another man preys on a precious life.\*
- 27 Can a man rake fire to his chest and not burn his garments?<sup>o</sup>
- 28 Or can a man walk on hot coals without scorching his feet?
- 29 It is the same with anyone having relations with his neighbor's wife;

6:20 \*Or "law." 6:22 \*Or "instruct you." 6:24 \*Lit., "foreign." See Pr 2:16. 6:26 \*Or "soul."

- No one who touches her will go unpunished.<sup>a</sup>
- 30** People do not despise a thief If he steals to satisfy himself\* when he is hungry.
- 31** Yet, when found, he will repay sevenfold; He will give up all the valuables of his house.<sup>b</sup>
- 32** Anyone committing adultery with a woman is lacking good sense;\* The one who does so brings ruin on himself.<sup>c</sup>
- 33** He will get only wounds and dishonor,<sup>d</sup> And his disgrace will not be wiped away.<sup>e</sup>
- 34** For jealousy makes a husband furious; He will show no compassion when he takes revenge.<sup>f</sup>
- 35** He will accept no compensation,\* He will not be appeased, no matter how large you make the gift.
- 7** My son, keep my sayings, And treasure up my commandments.<sup>g</sup>
- 2** Keep my commandments and live;<sup>h</sup> Guard my instruction\* like the pupil of your eye.
- 3** Tie them around your fingers; Write them on the tablet of your heart.<sup>i</sup>
- 4** Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," And call understanding "my relative,"
- 5** To guard you against the wayward\* woman,<sup>j</sup> Against the immoral\* woman and her smooth<sup>Δ</sup> words.<sup>k</sup>

6:30 \*Or "fill his soul." 6:32; 7:7 \*Lit., "in want of heart." 6:32 \*Or "his soul." 6:35 \*Or "ransom." 7:2 \*Or "law." 7:5 \*Lit., "strange." See Pr 2:16. <sup>#</sup>Lit., "foreign." See Pr 2:16. <sup>Δ</sup>Or "seductive."

## CHAP. 6

a 2Sa 11:4  
2Sa 12:10, 11  
Pr 6:32-35  
Heb 13:4

b Ex 22:1, 4

c Pr 2:18, 19  
Pr 5:20, 23  
Mal 3:5  
1Co 6:9, 10  
Heb 13:4

d Pr 5:8, 9

e 1Ki 15:5  
1Ch 5:1  
Mt 1:6

f Ge 39:19, 20

## CHAP. 7

g Pr 10:14

h Le 18:5  
De 5:16  
Isa 55:3  
Joh 12:50

i Pr 2:10, 11

j Pr 23:27, 28

k Pr 2:11, 16  
Pr 5:3  
Pr 6:23, 24

## Second Col.

a Pr 6:32  
Pr 9:16, 17

b Job 24:15

c Jer 4:30

d Pr 9:13-18

e Pr 23:27, 28

f Le 19:5

g Eze 27:7

h Ca 3:6  
Ca 4:14

- 6** From the window of my house, Through my lattice, I looked down,
- 7** And as I observed the naive<sup>#</sup> ones, I discerned among the youths a young man lacking good sense.<sup>\*a</sup>
- 8** He passed along the street near her corner, And he marched in the direction of her house
- 9** In the twilight, in the evening,<sup>b</sup> At the approach of night and darkness.
- 10** Then I saw a woman meet him, Dressed like\* a prostitute,<sup>c</sup> with a cunning heart.
- 11** She is loud and defiant.<sup>d</sup> She never stays\* at home.
- 12** One moment she is outside, next she is in the public squares, She lurks near every corner.<sup>e</sup>
- 13** She grabs hold of him and gives him a kiss; With a bold face, she says to him:
- 14** "I had to offer communion sacrifices.<sup>f</sup> Today I paid my vows.
- 15** That is why I came out to meet you, To look for you, and I found you!
- 16** I have spread fine covers upon my bed, Colorful linen from Egypt.<sup>g</sup>
- 17** I have sprinkled my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.<sup>h</sup>
- 18** Come, let us drink our fill of love until the morning; Let us enjoy passionate love together,

7:7 <sup>#</sup>Or "inexperienced." 7:10 \*Or "with the garment of." 7:11 \*Lit., "Her feet never stay."

- Song 37 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD**

- **“Trust in Jehovah With All Your Heart”:** (10 min.) [Play the video *Introduction to Proverbs.*] Pr 3:1-4—Show loyal love and faithfulness (w00 1/15 23-24)

Pr 3:5-8—Cultivate complete trust in Jehovah (w00 1/15 24)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.) Pr 1:7, ftn.—In what way is the fear of Jehovah “the beginning of knowledge”? (w06 9/15 17 ¶1; it-2 180)

Pr 6:1-5—What is the wise course if we become ensnared by an unwise business agreement? (w00 9/15 25-26)

What does this week’s Bible reading teach me about Jehovah?

What points from this week’s Bible reading can I use in the field ministry?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Pr 6:20-35

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Prepare This Month’s Presentations:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play each sample presentation video, and then discuss the highlights. Encourage publishers to participate fully in the global effort to invite people to the weekend meeting.

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 107
- **Local Needs:** (8 min.) As an option, discuss the lessons learned from the *Yearbook.* (yb16 25-27)
- **Do Good to Those Who Attend Our Meetings (Pr 3:27):** (7 min.) Discussion. Play the video *What Happens at a Kingdom Hall?* (video category OUR MEETINGS AND MINISTRY). Then ask how we can contribute to a loving atmosphere at the Kingdom Hall, not just during the month of October but at all times.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) kr chap. 2 ¶1-12
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 143 and Prayer

PROVERBS 1-6 | “Trust in Jehovah With All Your Heart”

Jehovah is worthy of our complete trust. The meaning of his name builds our confidence in his ability to fulfill all of his promises. Prayer is an important part of building trust in him. Proverbs chapter 3 assures us that Jehovah will reward our trust in him by ‘making our paths straight.’

**3:5-7**

**One who is wise in his own eyes . . .**

- makes decisions without asking for Jehovah’s direction beforehand
- trusts in his own thinking or that of the world

**One who trusts in Jehovah . . .**

- cultivates a close relationship with him through Bible study, meditation, and prayer
- seeks his guidance by searching for Bible principles when making decisions

**WHICH COLUMN DESCRIBES THE WAY I MAKE DECISIONS?**

- FIRST:** I choose what I think is the wisest course
- SECOND:** I ask Jehovah to bless my decision

- FIRST:** I seek Jehovah’s direction through prayer and personal study
- SECOND:** I choose a course that is in harmony with Bible principles



## October 3-9

### Treasures From God's Word

**Proverbs 3:1-4**—Show loyal love and faithfulness

Reference: *w00* 1/15 23-24.

### Cultivate Intimacy With Jehovah

“Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you,” wrote the disciple James. (James 4:8) And the psalmist David sang: “The intimacy with Jehovah belongs to those fearful of him.” (Psalm 25:14) Clearly, Jehovah God wants us to have an intimate relationship with him. Yet, not everyone worshiping God and obeying his laws necessarily feels close to him.

What about you? Do you have a close personal relationship with God? Undoubtedly, you want to draw closer to him. How may we cultivate intimacy with God? What would this mean for us? The third chapter of the Bible book of Proverbs provides answers.

### Manifest Loving-Kindness and Trueness

King Solomon of ancient Israel commences the third chapter of Proverbs with the words: “My son, my law do not forget, and my commandments may your heart observe, because length of days and years of life and peace will be added to you.” (**Proverbs 3:1, 2**) Since Solomon wrote under divine inspiration, this fatherly advice is really coming from Jehovah God and is directed to us. We are counseled here to abide by God's reminders—his law, or teaching, and his commandments—recorded in the Bible. If we do this, “length of days and years of life and peace will be added” to us. Yes, even now we can enjoy a peaceful life and can avoid pursuits that expose us to the danger of early death that often befalls evildoers. Moreover, we can entertain the hope of eternal life in a peaceful new world.—**Proverbs 1:24-31; 2:21, 22.**

Continuing, Solomon says: “May loving-kindness and trueness themselves not leave you. Tie them about your throat. Write them upon the tablet of your heart, and so find favor and good insight in the eyes of God and of earthling man.”—**Proverbs 3:3, 4.**

The original-language word for “loving-kindness” is alternatively rendered “loyal love” and entails fidelity, solidarity, and loyalty. Are we determined to remain attached to Jehovah come what may? Do we display loving-kindness in our relationships with fellow believers? Do we work to remain close to them? In day-to-day dealings with them, do we keep ‘the law of loving-kindness upon our tongue’ even under trying conditions?—Proverbs 31:26.

Being abundant in loving-kindness, Jehovah is “ready to forgive.” (Psalm 86:5) If we have repented of our past sins and are now making straight paths for our feet, we are assured that “seasons of refreshing” will come from Jehovah. (Acts 3:19) Should we not imitate our God by forgiving others of their trespasses?—**Matthew 6:14, 15.**

Jehovah is “the God of truth,” and he wants “trueness” from those seeking intimacy with him. (Psalm 31:5) Can we really expect Jehovah to be our Friend if we lead a double life—acting one way around Christian associates and another way when out of their sight—like “men of untruth” who hide what kind of people they are? (Psalm 26:4) How foolish that would be, since “all things are naked and openly exposed to the eyes” of Jehovah!—Hebrews 4:13. Loving-kindness and trueness are to be valued as a priceless necklace ‘tied about our throat,’ for they help us ‘find favor in the eyes of God and earthling man.’ We need not only to display these qualities outwardly but also to engrave them ‘on the tablet of our heart,’ making them an intrinsic part of our personality.

**Proverbs 3:5-8**—Cultivate complete trust in Jehovah

Reference: *w00* 1/15 24.

### Cultivate Implicit Trust in Jehovah

The wise king continues: “Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight.”—**Proverbs 3:5, 6.**

Jehovah is certainly worthy of our complete trust. As the Creator, he is “vigorous in power” and is the Source of “dynamic energy.” (**Isaiah 40:26, 29**) He is able to carry out all that he has purposed. Why, his very name literally means “He Causes to Become,” and it builds our confidence in his ability to fulfill what he has promised! The fact that “it is impossible for God to lie” makes him the very epitome of truth. (Hebrews 6:18) His dominant quality is love. (1 John 4:8) He is “righteous in all his ways and loyal in all his works.” (Psalm 145:17) If we cannot trust God, whom can we trust? Of course, to cultivate trust in him, we need to “taste and see that Jehovah is good” by applying what we learn from the Bible in our personal life and by reflecting upon the good that this produces.—Psalm 34:8. How may we ‘take notice of Jehovah in all our ways’? The inspired psalmist says: “I shall certainly meditate on all your activity, and with your dealings I will concern myself.” (Psalm 77:12) Since God is invisible, meditation on his great acts and on his dealings with his people is vital for cultivating intimacy with him.

Prayer is also an important way of taking notice of Jehovah. King David kept calling on Jehovah “all day long.” (Psalm 86:3) David often prayed through the night, as when he was a fugitive in the wilderness. (Psalm 63:6, 7) “Carry on prayer on every occasion in spirit,” exhorted the apostle Paul. (Ephesians 6:18) How often do we pray? Do we enjoy having personal heartfelt communication with God? When faced with trying situations, do we petition him for help? Do we prayerfully seek his guidance before making important decisions? Our sincere prayers to Jehovah endear us to him. And we have the assurance that he will listen to our prayer and ‘make our paths straight.’ How foolish it is to ‘lean upon our own understanding’ or that of prominent people in the world when we can place our complete confidence in Jehovah! “Do not become wise in your own eyes,” says Solomon. On the contrary, he admonishes: “Fear Jehovah and turn away from bad. May it become a healing to your navel and a refreshment to your bones.” (Proverbs 3:7, 8) The healthy fear of displeasing God ought to govern all our actions, thoughts, and emotions. Such reverential fear prevents us from doing what is bad and is spiritually healing and refreshing.

## Digging for Spiritual Gems

**Proverbs 1:7, footnote**—In what way is the fear of Jehovah “the beginning of knowledge”?

Reference: *w06 9/15 17 paragraph 1*.

Without the fear of Jehovah, there can be no knowledge, for he is the Creator of all things and the Author of the Scriptures. (Romans 1:20; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17) He is the very Source of all true knowledge. Hence, knowledge begins with the reverential fear of Jehovah. Godly fear is also the start of wisdom because there can be no wisdom without knowledge. Moreover, a person who lacks the fear of Jehovah will not use whatever knowledge he has to honor the Creator.

Reference: *it-2 180*.

## Knowledge

Essentially, knowledge means familiarity with facts acquired by personal experience, observation, or study. The Bible strongly urges the seeking for and treasuring of right knowledge, recommending it rather than gold. (Proverbs 8:10; 20:15) Jesus stressed the importance of truly knowing him and his Father, and knowledge is repeatedly emphasized in the books of the Christian Greek Scriptures.—John 17:3; Philipians 1:9; 2 Peter 3:18.

**Source of Knowledge.** Jehovah is actually the basic Source of knowledge. Life, of course, is from him and life is essential for one’s having any knowledge. (Psalm 36:9; Acts 17:25, 28) Furthermore, God created all things, so human knowledge is based on a study of God’s handiwork. (Revelation 4:11; Psalm 19:1, 2) God also inspired his written Word, from which man can learn the divine will and purposes. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) Thus the focal point of all true knowledge is Jehovah, and a person seeking it ought to have a fear of God that makes him careful not to incur Jehovah’s displeasure. Such fear is the beginning of knowledge. (Proverbs 1:7) Such godly fear puts one in position to gain accurate knowledge, whereas those who do not consider God readily draw wrong conclusions from the things that they observe.

The Bible repeatedly links Jehovah and knowledge, calling him “a God of knowledge” and describing him as “perfect in knowledge.”—1 Samuel 2:3; Job 36:4; 37:14, 16.

The role that Jehovah has assigned to his Son in the outworking of His purposes is of such importance that it can be said of Jesus: “Carefully concealed in him are all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge.” (Colossians 2:3) Unless a person exercises faith in Jesus Christ as God’s Son, he cannot grasp the real meaning of the Scriptures and see how God’s purposes are working out in harmony with what He has foretold.

**Proverbs 6:1-5**—What is the wise course if we become ensnared by an unwise business agreement?

Reference: *w00 9/15 25-26*.

## Safeguard Your Name

A man who designs beautiful buildings makes a name for himself as an expert architect. A young woman who excels scholastically becomes known as a brilliant student. Even a person who does nothing may make a name for himself as a sluggard. Emphasizing the value of making a favorable name, the Bible states: “A good name is more desirable than great riches, a good reputation than silver and gold.”—Proverbs 22:1, *An American Translation*.

A good name is developed by many small acts over a period of time. All that is needed to spoil it, though, is one foolish act. A single incident of sexual misconduct, for example, can sully a fine reputation. In the 6th chapter of the Bible book of Proverbs, King Solomon of ancient Israel provides a warning against attitudes and actions that can

spoil our reputation as well as damage our relationship with Jehovah God. Among these are thoughtless pledges, laziness, deceit, and sexual immorality—essentially things that Jehovah hates. Giving heed to this advice will help us safeguard our good name.

### **Deliver Yourself From Foolish Pledges**

The 6th chapter of Proverbs opens with the words: “My son, if you have gone surety for your fellowman, if you have given your handshake even to the stranger, if you have been ensnared by the sayings of your mouth, if you have been caught by the sayings of your mouth, take this action then, my son, and deliver yourself, for you have come into the palm of your fellowman: Go humble yourself and storm your fellowman with importunities.”—Proverbs 6:1-3.

This proverb counsels against getting involved in the business dealings of others, especially of strangers. Yes, the Israelites were to ‘sustain their brother who had grown poor and become financially weak.’ (Leviticus 25:35-38) But some enterprising Israelites got involved in speculative business ventures and obtained financial backing by convincing others to ‘go surety’ for them, thus making them liable for the debt. Similar situations may arise today. Financial institutions, for example, may require a cosigner before approving a loan they consider risky. How unwise to make such a commitment hastily in behalf of others! Why, it may entrap us financially, even giving us a bad name with banks and other creditors!

What if we find ourselves in the predicament of having taken an action that seemed wise at first but upon closer scrutiny appears foolish? The advice is to set aside pride and “storm your fellowman with importunities”—with persistent requests. We must do all we possibly can to set matters straight. One reference work points out: “Leave no stone unturned until you have agreed with your adversary and compromised the matter, so that your bond may not come against you or yours.” And this should be done without delay, for the king adds: “Do not give any sleep to your eyes, nor any slumber to your beaming eyes. Deliver yourself like a gazelle from the hand and like a bird from the hand of the birdcatcher.” (Proverbs 6:4, 5) Better it is to withdraw from an unwise commitment when possible than to be entrapped by it.

- Song 37 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD**

- **“Trust in Jehovah With All Your Heart”:** (10 min.) [Play the video *Introduction to Proverbs.*] Pr 3:1-4—Show loyal love and faithfulness (w00 1/15 23-24) Pr 3:5-8—Cultivate complete trust in Jehovah (w00 1/15 24)
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**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

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- SECOND:** I ask Jehovah to bless my decision

- FIRST:** I seek Jehovah’s direction through prayer and personal study
- SECOND:** I choose a course that is in harmony with Bible principles





# Our Christian Life and Ministry

## MEETING WORKBOOK

### Sample Presentations



#### AWAKE!

**Question:** Some people doubt whether Jesus really existed, while others are convinced he did. Still others say there's no way to know for sure. What's your opinion?

**Offer:** This issue of *Awake!* considers what the evidence shows.



#### TEACH THE TRUTH

**Question:** What happens when we die?

**Scripture:** **Joh 11:11-14**

**Truth:** When a person dies, his life ends. So we do not need to fear an afterlife. Jesus compared death to sleep. Just as he did with Lazarus, Jesus will “wake up” our dead loved ones so that they can enjoy life on earth again.—Job 14:14.



#### CONGREGATION MEETING INVITATION (*inv*)

**Offer:** I'd like to invite you to a free Bible talk. It will be given at the local Kingdom Hall, our place of worship. [Offer the meeting invitation, point out the time and location of the weekend meeting, and mention the theme of the public talk.]

**Question:** Have you been to a Kingdom Hall before? [If appropriate, show the video *What Happens at a Kingdom Hall?*]

#### BUILD YOUR OWN PRESENTATION

**Question:**

**Scripture:**

**Offer:**



## Come to Jehovah's Mountain

(Isaiah 2:2-4)

Bb Gm Cm/Eb F Bb/D F7/C Bb F/A Gm C F F/Eb

Raise your eyes and be-hold, Far a-bove the high-est hill.  
Je-sus gave the com-mand To go forth and preach the word.

Bb/D Cm11 Bb Fm/Ab G7 G+5/F Cm/Eb Ebm6 Bb/D Gm7 Cm7 F

There stands Je-ho-vah's moun-tain Lift-ed up in this day.  
Good news a-bout the King-dom Reach-es all men to-day.

Bb Gm Cm/Eb F Bb/D F7/C Bb F/A Gm C F F/Eb

Peo-ple come from a-far, Ev-'ry-where from sea to sea,  
Christ now rules from on high, Urg-ing all to take his side.

Bb/D Cm11 Bb Fm/Ab G7 G+5/F Cm/Eb Ebm6 Bb/D Gm7 Cm7 F7 Bb

Call-ing to one an-oth-er, 'Come serve God and o-bey.' Now the  
Meek ones who hear his voice Let God's Word show them the way. What a

## Come to Jehovah's Mountain

*E♭/B♭*      *B♭ma7*      *E♭/B♭*      *B♭ma7*

time has ar-rived For the small, a great na-tion to be. As we  
joy to be-hold How a great crowd con-tin-ues to grow! Yes, we

*E♭/B♭*      *Dsus4*      *D*      *Gm*      *G♭7*      *F*

grow and we thrive, God's di-rec-tion and bless-ing we see.  
all have a share, Help-ing oth-ers Je-ho-vah to know.

*B♭*      *Gm*      *Cm/♭E♭*      *F*      *B♭/D F7/C*      *B♭ F/A*      *Gm C*      *F*      *F/♭E♭*

Mil-lions now come to God And ac-cept his sov-'reign-ty.  
Let us lift up the voice, Call-ing out for all to hear,

*B♭/D Cm1*      *B♭ Fm/♭A♭*      *G7*      *G+5/F*      *Cm/♭E♭*      *E♭m6*      *B♭/D Gm7*      *Cm7 F7*      *B♭*

Loy-al they vow to be And from his side nev-er stray.  
'Come to Je-ho-vah's moun-tain, Here for-ev-er to stay.'

# The Light Keeps Getting Brighter

BECAUSE true worshippers acknowledge Jehovah as the Source of spiritual light, they eagerly pray that God's 'light and truth' will lead and guide them. (Ps. 43:3) While the world is in dense spiritual darkness, the true God continues to shed light upon his people. As a result, their path "is like the bright morning light that grows brighter and brighter." (Prov. 4:18) Increasing light from Jehovah continues to illuminate their way organizationally, doctrinally, and morally. What are some of our beliefs that have been clarified in recent years?

## 2012



**Mordecai and Esther "divide spoil"**—Gen. 49:27  
w12 1/1 p. 29



**Toes of image in  
Nebuchadnezzar's dream**  
—Dan. 2:41-43  
w12 6/15 p. 16

---

**"All these kingdoms"**

—Dan. 2:44  
w12 6/15 p. 17

---

**Ruin caused by  
"fierce-looking king"**

—Dan. 8:23, 24  
w12 6/15 p. 16



---

**When the seventh  
world power emerged**

w12 6/15 pp. 15, 19

# 2013

<b>“Faithful and discreet slave”</b> —Matt. 24:45-47	w13 7/15 pp. 8, 20-25
<b>“Evil slave”</b> —Matt. 24:48-51	w13 7/15 p. 24
<b>Anointed not to survive Armageddon on earth</b>	w13 7/15 p. 5
<b>‘Assyrian invades our land’</b> —Mic. 5:5	w13 11/15 p. 20
<b>Chosen ones gathered</b> —Matt. 24:31; Mark 13:27	w13 7/15 p. 5
<b>Great tribulation</b>	w13 7/15 pp. 3-8



**Illustration of the wheat and the weeds**—Matt. 13:24-30 w13 7/15 pp. 13-14

**Jesus comes, arrives**  
—Matt. chaps. 24 and 25  
w13 7/15 pp. 7-8, 24



**Jesus inspects spiritual temple**  
**1914-1919**—Mal. 3:1-4  
w13 7/15 pp. 11-12

יהוה

**Meaning of name Jehovah**  
*New World Translation* p. 1735

# 2014

**Appointment of elders and ministerial servants** w14 11/15 pp. 28-29

---

**Basis first-century Jews had for being “in expectation” of the Messiah**—Luke 3:15 w14 2/15 pp. 26-27;  
w14 6/15 p. 22

---

**Duration of cleansing of spiritual temple**—Mal. 3:1-4 w14 11/15 p. 30

---

**Marriage in the resurrection**—Luke 20:34-36 w14 8/15 pp. 29-30

---



**“Solid foundation of God”**—2 Tim. 2:19  
w14 7/15 pp. 8-9, 13



**Two witnesses**—Rev. chap. 11 w14 11/15 p. 30

---

# 2015

**Gog of Magog**—Ezek. chaps. 38 and 39 w15 5/15 pp. 29-30

---

**Head covering for sister conducting a Bible study** w15 2/15 p. 30

---



**Illustration of the talents**

—Matt. 25:14-30  
w15 3/15 pp. 20-24

---

**Illustration of the ten virgins**—Matt. 25:1-13

w15 3/15 pp. 13-16



**Types and antitypes**

w15 3/15 pp. 9-11, 17-18; w15 6/15 p. 32

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# The Kingdom Is Born in Heaven

# 2

DO YOU ever wonder what it might have been like to live during some great turning point in history? Many do. But consider: If you had lived in such a momentous time, would you have personally witnessed the key events that brought about change? Perhaps not. Events that spell doom for old regimes and fill the pages of history books often take place out of the public eye. In a sense, much of history unfolds behind closed doors—in throne rooms, in private council chambers, or in government offices. Nonetheless, such changes affect millions of lives.

<sup>2</sup> What about the greatest event ever to occur in the history of the world? That event has touched millions of lives. Yet, it took place out of human view. We refer, of course, to the birth in heaven of God’s Kingdom, the long-promised Messianic government that will soon bring this whole world system to its end. **(Read Daniel 2:34, 35, 44, 45.)** Since humans did not witness that momentous birth, should we conclude that Jehovah hid the event from mankind? Or, rather, did he prepare his loyal people for it beforehand? Let us see.

## “My Messenger . . . Will Clear Up a Way Before Me”

<sup>3</sup> From ancient times, Jehovah purposed to prepare his people for the birth of the Messianic Kingdom. For instance, consider the prophecy of Malachi 3:1: “Look! I am sending my messenger, and he will clear up a way before me. And suddenly the true Lord, whom you are seeking, will come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant will come, in whom you take delight.”

<sup>4</sup> In the modern-day fulfillment, when did Jehovah, “the true Lord,” come to inspect those who were serving in the earthly courtyard of his spiritual temple? The prophecy explains that Jehovah would come with “the messenger of the

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### FOCUS OF CHAPTER

How God’s people were prepared for the birth of the Kingdom

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1, 2. What was the greatest event ever to occur in world history, and why is it not surprising that it went unseen by human eyes?

3-5. (a) Who was “the messenger of the covenant” mentioned at Malachi 3:1? (b) What would happen before “the messenger of the covenant” would come to the temple?

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6. Who acted as the foretold “messenger” that came first to prepare God’s people for the events ahead?

7, 8. (a) During the 1800’s, who began to expose the falseness of the immortality of the soul doctrine? (b) C. T. Russell and his close associates exposed what other teachings as false?

9. How did *Zion’s Watch Tower* expose as false the Trinity doctrine?

covenant.” Who was that? None other than the Messianic King, Jesus Christ! (Luke 1:68-73) As the newly installed Ruler, he would inspect and refine God’s people on earth. —1 Pet. 4:17.

5 Who, though, was the other “messenger,” the first one mentioned at Malachi 3:1? This prophetic figure would be on the scene well before the Messianic King’s presence. In the decades before 1914, did anyone “clear up a way” before the Messianic King?

6 Throughout this publication, we will find answers to such questions in the thrilling history of Jehovah’s modern-day people. This history shows that in the latter part of the 19th century, one small group of faithful people was emerging as the only body of genuine Christians in a vast field of imitations. That group came to be known as the Bible Students. Those taking the lead among them—Charles T. Russell and his close associates—did, indeed, act as the foretold “messenger,” giving spiritual direction to God’s people and preparing them for the events ahead. Let us consider four ways in which the “messenger” did so.

### Worshipping in Truth

7 Those Bible Students studied prayerfully; they agreed on, collected together, and published clear doctrinal truths. For centuries, the world of Christendom had been enveloped in spiritual darkness; many of its teachings were rooted in paganism. A prime example is the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. During the 1800’s, though, a few sincere students of the Bible scrutinized that teaching and saw that it had no support in God’s Word. Henry Grew, George Stetson, and George Storrs wrote and lectured boldly, exposing that satanic lie.<sup>[1]</sup> Their work, in turn, had a profound impact on C. T. Russell and his close associates.

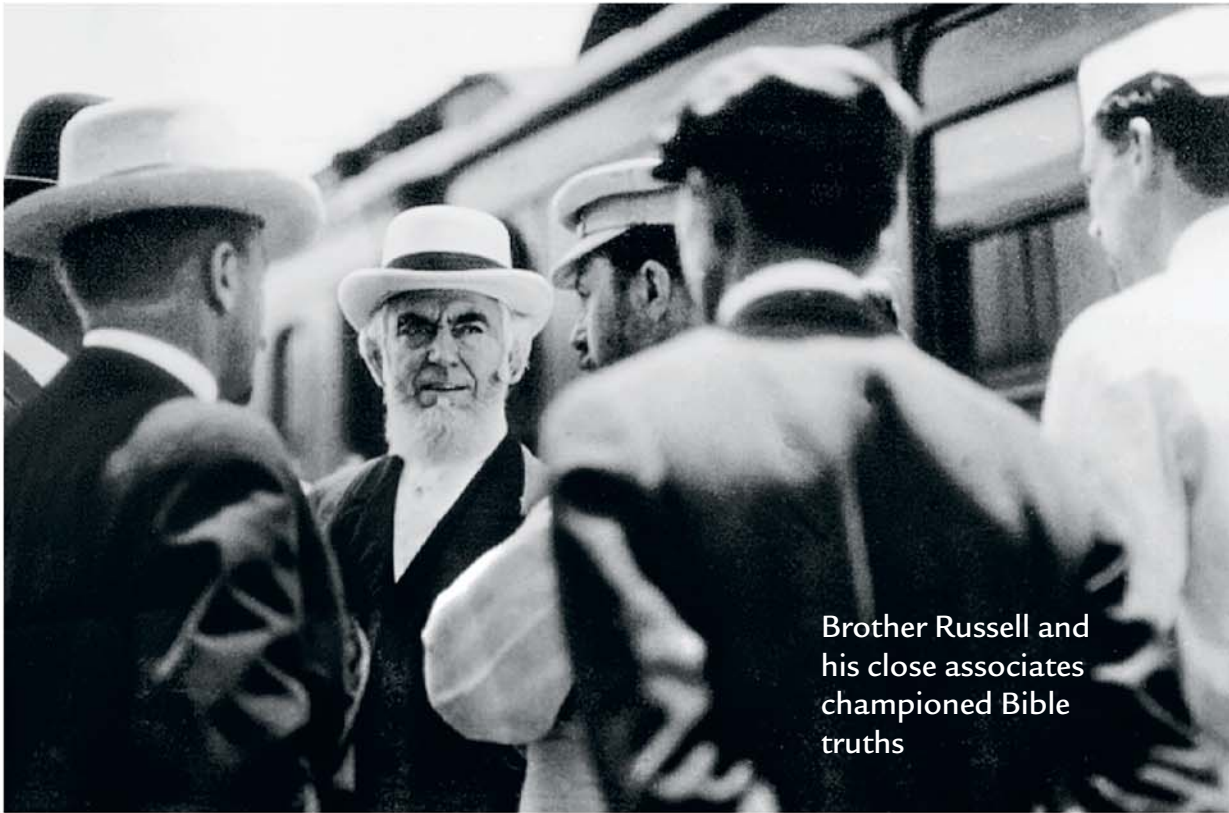
8 The little group of Bible Students found that other doctrines linked to the immortality of the soul were likewise confusing and false—for example, the teaching that all good people go to heaven or that God torments the immortal souls of the wicked in eternal hellfire. Russell and his close associates boldly exposed those lies in numerous articles, books, pamphlets, tracts, and published sermons.

9 Likewise, the Bible Students exposed as false the widely revered Trinity doctrine. In 1887, *Zion’s Watch Tower* remarked: “The Scriptures are very clear concerning the distinct individuality and exact relationship of Jehovah and

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#### FOOTNOTE

[1] To learn more about Grew, Stetson, and Storrs, see the book *Jehovah’s Witnesses—Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom*, pages 45-46.



Brother Russell and his close associates championed Bible truths

our Lord Jesus.” The article then noted how amazing it was that “the idea of a triune God—three Gods in one, and at the same time, one God in three—should ever have gained prominence and general acceptance. But the fact that it is so, only goes to show how soundly the church slept while the enemy bound her in the chains of error.”

<sup>10</sup> As its full title suggested, the journal *Zion’s Watch Tower and Herald of Christ’s Presence* was deeply concerned with prophecies pertaining to Christ’s presence. The faithful anointed writers who contributed to that journal saw that Daniel’s prophecy regarding the “seven times” had a bearing on the timing of the fulfillment of God’s purposes regarding the Messianic Kingdom. As early as the 1870’s, they pointed to 1914 as the year when those seven times would end. (Dan. 4:25; Luke 21:24) Although our brothers of that era did not yet grasp the full significance of that marked year, they proclaimed what they knew far and wide, with long-lasting effects.

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10. How did the *Watch Tower* point to 1914 as a marked year?



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11, 12. (a) To whom did Brother Russell give credit for what he taught?

(b) How important was the work carried out by Russell and his associates in the decades prior to 1914?

13, 14. (a) How did the “messenger” help to prepare the way for the Messianic King? (b) What can we learn from our brothers of more than a century ago?

15. The Bible Students gradually came to what realization? (See also footnote.)

<sup>11</sup> Neither Russell nor his faithful associates claimed credit for uncovering and grasping those vital spiritual truths. Russell gave much credit to others who had come before him. Above all, he gave credit to Jehovah God, the one responsible for teaching His people what they need to know when they need to know it. Clearly, Jehovah did bless the efforts of Russell and his associates to sift out truth from falsehood. As the years passed, they stood ever more apart and distinct from Christendom.

<sup>12</sup> The work those faithful men did in championing doctrinal truth in the decades before 1914 was simply amazing! Looking back, *The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence* of November 1, 1917, commented: “Millions of people today find themselves free from the burden of fear, imposed upon them by the teachings of hell fire and other false doctrines . . . The tide of Truth, which began more than forty years ago, is still steadily rising and will continue to rise until it fills the whole earth; and its opponents might as well try to sweep back with an ordinary broom the waves of a mighty ocean as to prevent the Truth from spreading throughout the earth.”

<sup>13</sup> Consider this: Would people have been prepared for the beginning of Christ's presence if they were not able to distinguish Jesus from his Father, Jehovah? Surely not! Nor would they have been prepared if they thought that immortality was the automatic possession of all and not a precious gift bestowed on only relatively few of Christ's footstep followers; nor if they thought that God tormented people in hellfire for all eternity with no hope of relief! Without doubt, the “messenger” prepared the way for the Messianic King!

<sup>14</sup> And what about us today? What can we learn from our brothers of more than a century ago? We likewise need to be avid readers and students of God's Word. (John 17:3) As this materialistic world becomes emaciated, spiritually speaking, may our appetite for spiritual food grow ever stronger!—**Read 1 Timothy 4:15.**

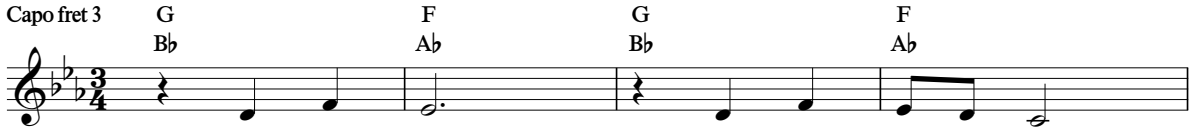
### **“Get Out of Her, My People”**

<sup>15</sup> **The Bible Students taught that it was necessary to break away from worldly churches.** In 1879, the *Watch Tower* referred to the “Babylon church.” Was it talking about the papacy? The Roman Catholic Church? Protestant denominations had for centuries made such applications of Babylon as a prophetic type in Scripture. However, the

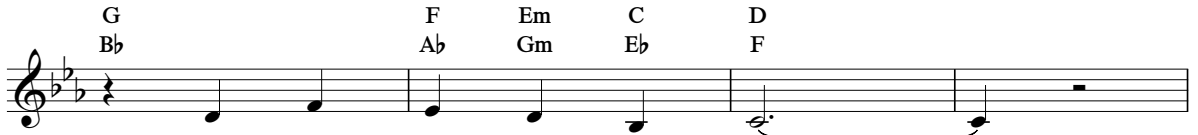
*Light in a Darkened World*

(2 Corinthians 4:6)

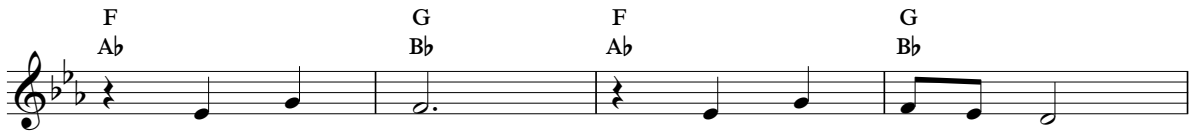
Capo fret 3



In these days, dark and law-less days,  
Those who sleep need a wak-en-ing



Shines a light we can see.  
As the time ebbs a way.



Like the dawn of an-oth-er day  
We give hope and en-cour-age-ment.



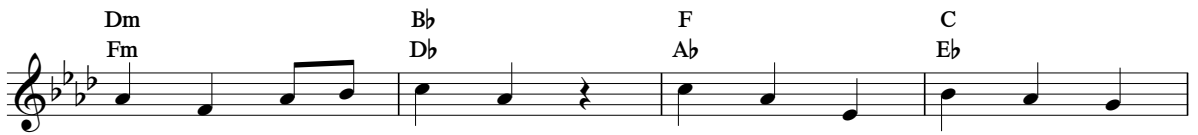
That will soon come to be.  
For their fu-ture we'll pray.



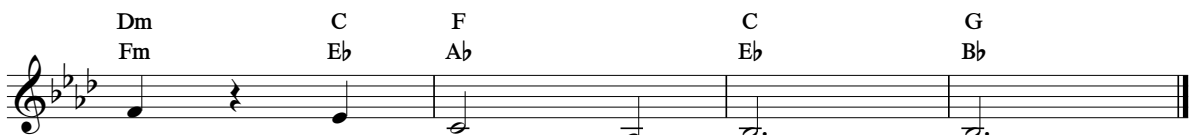
Shin-ing through the dark-ness, Ours is a mes-sage so



bright. It of-fers hope and light—



Spark-ling like the day-light, Bring-ing to-mor-row in



sight— So ends the night.

AUGUST 2016

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
SEPTEMBER 26–OCTOBER 23, 2016



COVER IMAGE:  
**HUNGARY**

What a pleasure it is to give a witness in the morning hours along the Danube River! These happy publishers are sharing the Kingdom message with an appreciative listener at Vigadó Square in Budapest, Hungary

PUBLISHERS  
**22,582**

PIONEERS  
**1,980**

BIBLE STUDIES  
**12,163**

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Making Christian Marriage a Success

The origin of marriage, how it was regulated under the Mosaic Law, and the pattern Jesus set for Christian wedlock are matters discussed in the first article. The second article considers what the Scriptures say about the roles of husbands and wives.

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**18** Seek Something Much Better Than Gold

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**20** WEEK OF **OCTOBER 10-16**  
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Do You See the Need to Train Others?

We rejoice in the advancement of the Kingdom-preaching work. But do we see how this sets before us opportunities for increased service to God? How can we ourselves make spiritual progress and at the same time help our Bible students to do so? Why is there a need to train others? Such important matters are discussed in these articles.

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To make a donation, please visit [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org).



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

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August 2016  
Vol. 137, No. 12 ENGLISH

# Now We Are One

(Genesis 2:23, 24)

Db Absus4/Db Ab7/Db Bbm9 Bbm Gb

This is at last bone of my bone, Flesh of my flesh; Now I'm not a - lone.

Ebm Fm Ebm/Gb Bbm Dbma7/Ab Gb Gb/Ab Ab7

God has pro - vid - ed a part - ner, Some - one to call my own.

Db Ab7sus4/Db Ab7/Db Bbm9 Bbm Gb

Now we are one; Now we can be All that Je - ho - vah made us to be.

Ebm Fm Ebm/Gb Bbm Dbma7/Ab Gb Gb/Ab Ebm6/Gb

As man and wom - an to - geth - er, We are a fam - i - ly.

# Now We Are One

Fsus4 F Bbm/F Fsus4 F Fsus4 F F/C Bb/C C7

Ev - 'ry day we'll serve our God a - bove. As he

Fsus4 F Bbm/F C/E E° Ebm7 Gb/Ab Db

shows the way, un - fail - ing love we'll dis - play. As we have vowed,

Ab7sus4/Db Ab7/Db Bbm9 Bbm Gb Ebm Fm Ebm/Gb Bbm Dbma7/Ab

so may it be. Sea - sons of joy, may we come to see. Oh, may we hon - or Je - ho - vah,

Gb Ebm7 Gb/Ab Fm/Ab Ab7 Db

And may you al - ways be my love.



# Making Christian Marriage a Success

*“Each one of you must love his wife as he does himself; . . . the wife should have deep respect for her husband.”—EPH. 5:33.*

WHEN a lovely bride appears before her handsome bridegroom on their wedding day, words can hardly describe their joy. During courtship, their love has grown so much that they are ready to vow that they will be faithful to each other in marriage. Of course, adjustments are needed as two lives are blended and a new household is established. But God’s Word provides wise advice for all who choose to get married, for the loving Originator of marriage wants each couple to have a good measure of success and happiness in their married life. (Prov. 18:22) Yet, the Scriptures clearly tell us that imperfect humans who get married “will have tribulation in their flesh.” (1 Cor. 7:28) How can such tribulation be kept to a minimum? And what will make Christian marriage a success?

<sup>2</sup> The Bible emphasizes the importance of love. Tender affection (Greek, *phi-li’a*) is needed in a marriage. Romantic

1. Although marriage usually begins with joy, what can those who marry expect to experience? (See opening picture.)
2. What kinds of love should marriage mates show?

SONGS: 87, 3

## HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

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What responsibilities did God give husbands and wives?

---

Why are love and tenderness very important in a marriage?

---

How can the Bible help if there are problems in a marriage?

love (*e'ros*) brings delight, and love for family (*stor·ge'*) is vital when children enter the picture. However, it is love based on principle (*a-ga'pe*) that ensures the success of a marriage. Concerning this love, the apostle Paul wrote: "Each one of you must love his wife as he does himself; on the other hand, the wife should have deep respect for her husband."—Eph. 5:33.

### A CLOSER LOOK AT THE ROLES OF MARRIAGE MATES

<sup>3</sup> Paul wrote: "Husbands, continue loving your wives, just as the Christ also loved the congregation and gave himself up for it." (Eph. 5:25) Imitating Jesus' example requires that his followers love one another just as he loved them. **(Read John 13:34, 35; 15:12, 13.)** Marital love shown by Christians should therefore be so strong that either mate would be willing, if necessary, to die for the other. That may be the last thing one would be inclined to do if a serious disagreement were to develop. Nevertheless, *a-ga'pe* love "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." Yes, "love never fails." (1 Cor. 13:7, 8) Remembering their vow to love each other and to be faithful to each other will help God-fearing marriage mates work together in harmony with Jehovah's lofty principles to resolve any problems that may arise.

<sup>4</sup> Focusing on the personal duties of each marriage mate, Paul wrote: "Let wives be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord, because a husband is

3. How strong should love be in a marriage?  
4, 5. (a) What is a husband's responsibility as a family head? (b) How should a wife view headship? (c) What adjustments did one married couple need to make?

head of his wife just as the Christ is head of the congregation." (Eph. 5:22, 23) This arrangement does not make a wife inferior to her husband. It actually helps her to fulfill the role God had in mind for a wife when he said: "It is not good for the man [Adam] to continue to be alone. I am going to make a helper for him, as a complement of him." (Gen. 2:18) Just as Christ, the "head of the congregation," displays love, a Christian husband is to exercise loving headship. When he does so, his wife feels secure and finds satisfaction in being respectful, supportive, and submissive.

<sup>5</sup> Admitting that marriage calls for adjustments, Cathy<sup>[1]</sup> says: "As a single sister, I was independent and took care of myself. Marriage was an adjustment for me as I learned to rely on my husband. It has not always been easy, but we have drawn so much closer as a couple by doing things Jehovah's way." Her husband, Fred, says: "Making decisions was never easy for me. In marriage, taking two people into consideration adds to the challenge. But by seeking Jehovah's guidance in prayer and really listening to my wife's input, it gets easier every day. I feel that we are a real team!"

<sup>6</sup> A solid marriage is made up of two people who make allowances for each other's imperfections. They 'continue putting up with each other and forgiving each other freely.' Yes, both mates will make mistakes. When that happens, however, there are opportunities to learn from these errors, to be forgiving, and to let love have full sway as "a perfect bond of union." (Col. 3:13, 14) Moreover, "love is patient and kind.

6. How does love serve as "a perfect bond of union" when problems develop in a marriage?



. . . It does not keep account of the injury.” (1 Cor. 13:4, 5) Misunderstandings should be cleared away as soon as possible. A Christian couple, therefore, should try to settle any issue between them before the day ends. (Eph. 4:26, 27) Sincerely saying “I am sorry for hurting you” takes humility and courage, but it goes a long way in solving problems and drawing marriage partners closer together.

### A SPECIAL NEED FOR TENDERNESS

<sup>7</sup> The Bible gives sound counsel that can help a couple to have a balanced view of the marital due. **(Read 1 Corinthians 7:3-5.)** Loving consideration of the mate’s feelings and needs is essential. If a wife is not treated tenderly, she may find it difficult to enjoy this aspect of marriage. Husbands are told to deal with their wives “according to knowledge.” (1 Pet. 3:7) Sexual relations should never be forced or demanded but should come naturally. The man can often respond more quickly than the woman, but emotionally the time should be right for both mates.

<sup>8</sup> Although the Bible does not provide specific rules about the kinds and limits of love play that might be associated with natural sexual intimacy, it mentions displays of affection. (Song of Sol. 1:2; 2:6) Christian marriage partners should treat each other with tenderness.

<sup>9</sup> Strong love for God and neighbor will not allow anyone or anything to interfere with the marriage bond. Some

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7, 8. (a) What advice does the Bible give regarding sexual relations in marriage? (b) Why do marriage mates need to show tenderness?

9. Why is sexual interest in anyone who is not one’s own marriage mate unacceptable?

marriages have been strained or even ruined by a mate’s addiction to pornography. Any tendency toward being attracted to this or toward sexual interests of any sort outside marriage should be firmly resisted. Even giving the appearance of flirting with someone to whom one is not married is unloving and should be avoided. Remembering that God is aware of all our thoughts and actions will reinforce our desire to please him and to remain chaste.—**Read Matthew 5:27, 28; Hebrews 4:13.**

### WHEN MARRIAGE TIES ARE STRAINED

<sup>10</sup> Serious problems that persist in marriage may lead one mate or both mates to consider separation or divorce. In some lands, more than half of all marriages end in divorce. This trend is not as common in the Christian congregation, but increasing marital problems among God’s people are a cause for concern.

<sup>11</sup> The Bible gives these instructions: “A wife should not separate from her husband. But if she does separate, let her remain unmarried or else be reconciled with her husband; and a husband should not leave his wife.” (1 Cor. 7:10, 11) Separating from one’s marriage partner should not be viewed lightly. Though separation may seem to be the answer when serious difficulties arise, it often causes more problems. After repeating what God had stated about a man leaving his father and his mother and sticking to his wife, Jesus said: “What God has yoked together, let no

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10, 11. (a) How common is divorce? (b) What does the Bible say about separation? (c) What will help a marriage mate not to separate quickly?

man put apart.” (Matt. 19:3-6; Gen. 2:24) This also means that neither a husband nor a wife should ‘put apart what God has yoked together.’ Jehovah views marriage as a lifelong bond. (1 Cor. 7:39) Bearing in mind that all of us will render an account to God should move marriage mates to make earnest efforts to resolve problems quickly so that these do not become more serious.

<sup>12</sup> Unrealistic expectations may be at the root of a marital problem. When dreams about a happy marriage do not come true, a person may feel dissatisfied, cheated, even bitter. Differences in emotional nature and upbringing may become issues, or disagreements may arise regarding money, in-laws, and child-rearing. However, it is commendable that the vast majority of Christian married couples find mutually acceptable solutions for all such problems because they let God guide them.

<sup>13</sup> Separation might at times be justified. Willful nonsupport, extreme physical abuse, and the absolute endangerment of one’s spiritual life are exceptional situations that some have viewed as reasons for separation. Christian marriage mates who have serious problems should seek help from the elders. These experienced brothers can assist married couples to apply the counsel of God’s Word. In resolving marital problems, we should also pray for Jehovah’s spirit and his help in applying Bible principles and displaying the fruitage of his spirit.—Gal. 5:22, 23.<sup>[2]</sup>

12. What may lead a marriage mate to consider separation?

13. What are valid reasons for separation?

<sup>14</sup> In some cases, a Christian is married to one who is not yet a servant of Jehovah. Under those circumstances, the Bible gives good reasons why they should remain together. (**Read 1 Corinthians 7:12-14.**) Whether the unbelieving mate realizes it or not, he or she is “sanctified” because of being married to a believer. Any children born to them are considered “holy” and thus have a standing with God. Paul reasons: “Wife, how do you know whether you will save your husband? Or, husband, how do you know whether you will save your wife?” (1 Cor. 7:16) Nearly every congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses has married couples in which the Christian has been instrumental in ‘saving’ his or her mate.

<sup>15</sup> The apostle Peter counsels Christian wives to be in subjection to their husbands, “so that if any are not obedient to the word, they may be won without a word through the conduct of their wives, because of having been eye-witnesses of your chaste conduct together with deep respect.” By conduct reflecting “the quiet and mild spirit, which is of great value in the eyes of God,” a wife may do more to win her husband over to true worship than she would by being too forward in speaking about Christian beliefs.—1 Pet. 3:1-4.

<sup>16</sup> What if an unbelieving marriage mate chooses to separate? The Bible says: “If the unbelieving one chooses to depart, let him depart; a brother or

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14. What does the Bible say to Christians married to mates who are not worshippers of Jehovah?

15, 16. (a) What counsel does the Bible give Christian wives whose husbands are not servants of God? (b) What is the position of a Christian “if the unbelieving one chooses to depart”?

Giving priority to spiritual matters can increase the happiness of your marriage  
(See paragraph 17)



a sister is not bound under such circumstances, but God has called you to peace.” (1 Cor. 7:15) This does not mean that the Christian is now Scripturally free to remarry, but there is no obligation to try to force the unbelieving mate to remain. Separation may bring a measure of peace. And the Christian can hope that the departing mate will return with a willingness to work together in preserving the marriage and will eventually become a fellow believer.

#### MARRIAGE AND OUR FIRST PRIORITY

<sup>17</sup> Because we are living deep in “the last days,” we are experiencing “critical times hard to deal with.” (2 Tim. 3:1-5) Yet, keeping spiritually strong will do much to offset this world’s negative influences. “The time left is reduced,” wrote Paul. “From now on, let those who have wives be as though they had none,

17. What should be the first priority of Christian married couples?

... and those making use of the world as those not using it to the full.” (1 Cor. 7:29-31) Paul was not telling married couples to neglect their marital duties. In view of the reduced time, however, they needed to give priority to spiritual matters.—Matt. 6:33.

<sup>18</sup> Although we are living in very trying times and marital relationships are failing all around us, it is possible for us to make marriage happy and successful. Indeed, married Christians who stick with Jehovah’s people, apply Scriptural counsel, and accept the guidance of Jehovah’s holy spirit can preserve “what God has yoked together.”—Mark 10:9.

18. Why is it possible for Christians to have a happy and successful marriage?

#### ENDNOTES:

[1] (paragraph 5) Names have been changed.

[2] (paragraph 13) See the book “Keep Yourselves in God’s Love,” appendix, “The Bible’s View on Divorce and Separation,” pp. 219-221.

# "God Is Love"

(1 John 4:7, 8)

E♭ E♭/G Fm7 E♭ E♭ E♭/G B♭/A♭ A♭ Fm7 B♭7 A♭/B♭ E♭

God is love, and he in - vites us, 'Walk with me and love my way.'  
 Love of truth moves us to ac - tion; Love of God moves us to love.  
 Nev - er let re - sent - ment lead you; May it nev - er take your hand.

Fm C7/E Fm E♭/G Fm/A♭ E♭/B♭ B♭ Fm A♭m7/E♭ B♭7/D B♭7 Fm7 B♭7 E♭

When we love both God and neigh - bor, Gra - cious deeds will fill each day.  
 When we fail he seeks to help us; By his strength we rise a - bove.  
 Look to God, and he will guide you; He will teach you these com - mands:

B G#m7 C#m7 D° B/D# E♭ Cm7 Fm7 F#° E♭/G B♭7/F

There - in lies the key to liv - ing; There - in lies the life we seek.  
 Love is pure and nev - er jeal - ous; Love is kind and bears all things.  
 Love of God and love of neigh - bor, Ev - 'ry - thing that love should be.

E♭ E♭/G B♭/A♭ A♭ Fm9 Fm E♭/G Fm/A♭ Fm7 Fm/B♭ Gm/B♭ B♭7 E♭

Christ - like love will nev - er fail us. Christ - like love through us will speak.  
 May we grow to love our broth - er. May we taste what true love brings.  
 May we al - ways show to oth - ers God - like love, yes, ten - der - ly.